



Hagan Newsletter JUNE 2015 [Visit CampHagan.com](http://CampHagan.com)

Singing Grace

Sandy Dempsey (Hagan 1958-1967)

We were on our way to take our son, Noah, to dinner to celebrate his finishing up his Freshman year at Temple University. When we pulled into the parking lot of our local Japanese restaurant, [A Prairie Home Companion](#) was on the radio. The Goshen College Chamber Choir began singing "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." We all just remained silent and listened. I was transported to Sunday lunch in Great Hall, where we all stood in our starched Sunday whites to sing Grace. The choir's two-minute version is a bit different from Hagan's, but it brought back the same feelings. When you click on the link below, you'll be taken to the Prairie Home Companion site. There will be a list of songs from the show on the right. "Praise God...." is the second one. Just click on that and see what happens to you. What memories come flooding back when you think about singing grace at Hagan?


[Click here, turn up the volume and listen to this beautiful music.](#)

Reflections on Singing Grace

Connie Wiegmann Robinson (Hagan 1959-1970)

Great Hall, of timber-framed simplicity, became one more Hagan sanctuary of nourishment for girls and young women, all longing for friendship, respect, goodness, reverence, love, awe and peace. As we sang grace before meals, some 250+ voices soared through the wood beams, fostered and echoed an intimate simplicity, yet with no less a passion of voice that





too vibrates through the vaulted arches of ancient cathedrals.

Our lives are often unbearably aware of the passage of time ... hour after hour, day after day, year after year ... one long relentless progression from one moment to the next - time marked by its duration, as a quantity.

Yet we also experience time by its content, with depth, and marked by its quality - as in a good time, a dangerous time, or the "best of times," the "worst of times." This is holy time, unbidden as a gift, pointing to a reality buried within and beyond the obvious. This is a truth fettered not by form, syntax or genre, but rather a truth given to us as a prayer of sorts ... opening us to realize that the sacred is on the loose, and remains on the loose within the Hagan community.

In singing grace, melodies move us to listen and to feel the wordless qualities of time, framing moments of stillness, enabling us to intentionally set our work and play aside to open our gracious minds and hearts to all our many sources of nourishment ... for "not every hunger is of the stomach, not every thirst is evident in a parched mouth, not every alienation is geographic or tribal, not every imprisonment is behind bars. If we are honest, we do know that we are not self-sufficient, nor are our lives unrelated."

Human beings have a deep desire, a need even, to hear the sound of another's heartbeat, of another's voice. To be held by words and melodies allows us to remember that we are not alone in the world. At a very primal level, our spirituality finds its voice through the act of listening.

While singing grace, while praising God through the beauty of music, we become the harmony, the poetry and at one with each other. The sound of the rain, the wind through the trees, and the stillness of the day near the water's edge ... these too are words of Alleluia.

For many, there are moments of recognition, experienced in the "fullness of time" of what had always been, that suddenly come to light. The eternal legend, the incarnation of the divine continues to permeate the flesh of our existence through art and music and literature and culture and even ourselves. With no need to parse or prune, this is truth ... often subtle and evasive, at times realized by no more than the tone of a voice that no language can capture.

May we each remember singing grace in Hagan's Great Hall as living moments, opening and embracing our very selves, "and all that dwells therein."

Hagan Campers "On Grace"

Singing Grace was one of my favorite things about Hagan. I think my favorite Grace, as it's the one that stuck with me, was "Johnny Appleseed." I also remember how fast everyone sat down and the scrape of the chairs across the floor afterwards.

Karen Blickwede Knowlton, Hagan 1959-1964



Singing grace was a nice way to begin a meal..... something we all did together.

Phyllis Kaspareit Davidson, Hagan 1941-1951

Just before EVERY meal, a DP stood in the center of Great Hall, raised her hand for silence, and announced how the campers and counselors should give thanks. Out of the mouths of the assembled group came angelic voices, often singing in harmony, to give thanks for an apple seed, a new day, or bread. No choir master was needed; everyone knew her part. Ahhmen.

Molly LeVan, Hagan 1959-1970

I remember well how we would all quiet down and sing grace; only then could we sit and eat. Unfortunately the only grace I can pull up from memory is the Doxology --

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise Him all creatures here below

Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts

Praise Father, Son & Holy Ghost

Betty Stefany (Stef) MacAdam, Hagan 1938-1947

My memories of singing Grace are tied to "Johnny Appleseed" and the Doxology. I remember the Doxology was always the one we sang at Sunday lunch after the church service. I always liked hearing the harmony that many of the Haganites were able to put to the basic melody of the various graces.

Susan Davit Maxwell, Hagan 1958-1969

My favorite grace was "For health and strength," which we sang in rounds.

Pat Sloan Haven, Hagan 40's to 50's

At camp we always sang grace at every meal. Most of them have been forgotten, but not this one --

"God has created a new day
Silver and green and gold
Live that the sunset shall find us
Worthy his gifts to hold."

That grace captured the essence of Camp Hagan. As we left Great Hall, the early sun-filled mornings were truly silver and green and gold. From the beginning of the day to the end, the program and the relationships from counselor to camper and between campers inspired me to reach inside myself and try to become worthy of our camp's ideals.

Ruth(ie) Clegg Whitsel, Hagan 1947-1956

I have very fond memories of singing "Johnny Appleseed," a true classic. I thought it was so cool to "sing" Grace, since I grew up in a household which recited faithfully, "God is great, God is good," another classic. I had not heard, sung, or thought of "Johnny Appleseed" in many years until I met my husband's family for the first time. Being the "girlfriend" at that time and feeling "on display," I was quite nervous as you can well imagine. And then a magical thing happened. As we gathered around the table for Sunday dinner, the family broke into song. Yep, "Johnny Appleseed"! That put me completely at ease, and I fell totally in love with the Quinn family forever -- and made a very unique connection between Hagan and the love of my life, David.

Sara Beth Overbay Quinn, Hagan 1962-1970; Miller-Hagan, 1971



Camper Profile

Rosemary "Rosie" Wenzler Milgate

Hagan 1954-1960



Camp Hagan - my summer home from 1954 - 1960. Those were the days, my friend! Before I get on the Memory Trail, let me introduce myself and give you a glimpse of my life since then. After my high school graduation and last summer at Hagan, I went to Wittenberg University,

majored in English with a minor in Secondary Ed, joined Delta Zeta Sorority, where I served as Social Chairman my junior year and President my senior year, fell in love with my future husband, Gary Milgate, and graduated in 1964. Vietnam was in full swing and it looked like Gary would be drafted, so we married after his senior year and my junior year. He ended up enlisting under the Officer Candidate Program and remained affiliated with the military until his retirement from the Army Reserves as a LTC. We produced two lovely daughters who have made me a grandmother four times. I taught high school English for thirty years before retiring in 2003. Gary and I were fortunate in being able to travel - we took high school students on European trips, took many car adventures through Europe staying in B&B's and ended up loving cruises after our retirements. Gary developed lung cancer in 2007 and passed away in 2008.

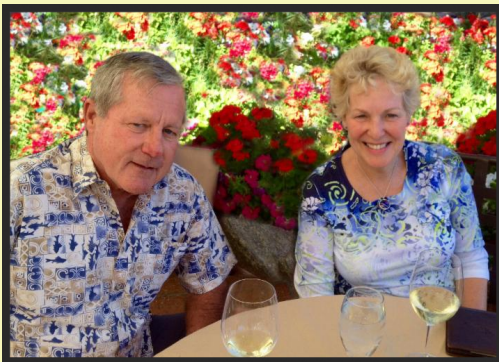
I continued to travel and met my now significant other, Bernie, on a cruise to the South Pacific. This romantic shipboard romance has grown and matured into a wonderful relationship! We go back and forth between Scottsdale, Arizona (Bernie's home) and Mt. Gretna (my home). We both love to cruise and do so many times each year. In 2012 we did a World Cruise, which was the trip of a lifetime. OK, my Hagan Hags, that gives you the shortened account of the life of Rosemary "Rosie" Wenzler Milgate. Now on to my memories of Hagan.

Of all my life experiences aside from family, Camp Hagan probably was the most influential in producing the woman I am today. It was there that I learned the value of friendship, the strength of being able to do anything I wanted, the importance of traditions, an appreciation for God's Earth and the joy of having a rip-roaring good time. Even now, my home is in a forest community that is very small, has a lake and looks a lot like Hagan! I remember the red lantern swinging from Bloody Mary's Tomb (who knew it was the CIT's) and also being scared to death to walk over that very skinny plank to get onto it; the hikes to Bushkill; diaper pins holding our voluminous shorts together; bug juice; scrub day on Fridays; the flag ceremony every day; services in the outdoor Chapel; camp fires; the CIT canoe trip; the JC tent shared with Jeannie Worth, Nancy Kostas and Marilyn Morgan; candles floating down the Delaware; Special Days; Miller dances; Sandy Beach with the Miller guys; days off in East Stroudsburg and the very best memory - Hagan Christmas. Carols at night, the early morning dance around the flagpole, gifts

made in Arts and Crafts, the ceramic gifts at the banquet (I still have many of them and they are a part of my holiday decorations) all made Christmas in August as wonderful as Christmas in December.

In 1955 Hurricane Diane hit the East coast and Hagan was in the path of an out of control and raging Delaware River. We were literally shut off from the rest of the world. I vividly remember watching houses, dead animals, and all sorts of debris floating down the river. The water came close to the top of the bank, but never overflowed at Hagan. Other camps were not so fortunate. Milk and food supplies got to us somehow, but the order to evacuate to higher ground was both frightening and exciting. Each of the senior campers got a junior or intermediate buddy. We made up our bedrolls and hiked to Camp Minnie where we slept in the barn (I think). The Salvation Army was the group who really helped, although the Red Cross got most of the credit. We finally were told we could go back to camp and get ready to be taken by buses to Allentown where our parents could pick us up. My parents were attending a formal event when my aunt heard the news. She called them; they left and drove to our pick up spot. I probably was the only camper whose dad was wearing a tux and mother a cocktail dress. As the buses pulled in, we were told to start singing so our parents would know we were OK. I made it clear to my parents that they shouldn't have come to get me as we had heard that if the parents couldn't come, the State Police would drive us home. That sounded like much more fun. I really don't know if that was true or just a rumor.

At the end of every summer I had "Hagan Withdrawal" and shed many a tear because, "there'll be no Camp Hagan until the next season, so cheer up my girls, bless them all."



Bernie and Rosemary



Rosemary and Bernie



Susan Rozelle "Chopper"

Did you have a nickname at Hagan?

We want to compile a list of all of them.

You can indicate your real name, along with your nickname, or remain anonymous.

Email Sandy Dempsey at
HaganGathering@gmail.com

Coming Soon

- Specific details about the September Gathering (September 22-24, 2015)
- Another Photo Gallery from one of our Hagan Elders, Rosie Hallman Steen (Hagan 1943-1955)
- Have you registered at the Shawnee Inn? Make sure you call them directly and say you are part of the Hagan event.
- There is still time to have your memories sealed in the Hagan Time Capsule? Send your story to HaganGathering@gmail.com
- It's never too late to add your "Then & Now" photos to the CampHagan.com website. Send your photos to HaganGathering@gmail.com

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