



GARDNER NEWSLETTER

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MEMORABLE SUMMER VACATION FOR KELSIE GRIFFES INSPIRED BY THE GARDNER NEWSLETTER

Freckles, red hair, a striped turtleneck, an unzipped winter coat, and a stray braid clearly positioned off to the side; the whole ensemble illustrating a whimsical, silly attitude, even worn by an 8 year old. "Always the artist," declared Greg after seeing the childhood family picture. Little did I know, his words would linger throughout the length of my summer at the Rosser residence.

Cousin Geri and I have the Gardner newsletter to thank for the chance to connect. Last fall, I was working on an article detailing the Gardner family's connection to ENC (Eastern Nazarene College) and decided to interview Geri about her experiences. As you may recall, Geri and I are fellow musicians and music majors, so we had a nice chat. "You should come and work on 'improv' with me for a summer," Geri mused. "That would

be fun," I responded. Days passed, and I couldn't banish the idea from memory. Eager for a summer adventure, I asked, "Were you serious, Geri?" "I would love it," she exclaimed! And



Kelsie Griffes

with that, we began making plans for an epic road trip-destination - Columbus, Ohio.

Grandma Beulah, my Dad (Jay), and I set out at 5:00 am for the longest road

trip we have taken in years. We were more than up to the challenge. Travel through the most beautiful stretch of New England, Vermont, gave us a chance to indulge in our favorite delicacy, maple candy. We were happy to have so much time together just to poke fun and listen to music. Then, when we finally reached our destination, the warmth on everyone's faces when they hugged their Aunt Beulah: first Geri, Greg, and later Ruth Anne, made the best welcome. A home-made pancake breakfast only sweetened the deal. Even more memorable, was Uncle Henry's game of "pinkety-stinkety." Uncle Henry and Aunt Ruth were present in spirit. We also made sure to pay tribute to Grandpa Gardner by eating a round of ice cream from Graeter's, a tradition that is as much in the bones of Ohioans as the Buckeyes and the Red's. I'm sure a

... continued on Page 5

The Spanish Civil War - 1936-1939

The Causes

Spain was once the World's most powerful country. By the 20th century it was a poor and backward country where corruption was rife. It had lost nearly all of its overseas possessions (e.g.

The big 75th anniversary of The Gardner Newsletter (Summer 2016) had articles about the first Gardner Cousins reunion as well as your editor's story about his once-in-a-lifetime vacation in Spain. That particular article mentioned the Spanish Civil War that took place from 1936-1939 and how Miguel Gonzalo's (Cousin Jean's husband) parents were caught up in the turmoil caused by that little known conflict.

This page is a condensed history of that conflict pulled from the worldwide web

At the Reina Sofia Art Gallery, Pablo Picasso's Guernica (see top of front page) is always surrounded by visitors, of all ages, both Spanish and foreign. But it was not always in the gallery.

Picasso would not allow it to return to Spain while the country was a dictatorship. For that reason, says the head of collections at the Reina Sofia, Javier de Blas, many Spaniards associate the work with their country's desire to be free of Gen. Franco.

"It was a symbol of this construction of democracy," says Mr De Blas. "The whole world accepted that the country had recovered its political and social liberties in part because Picasso permitted the return of the painting to Spain."

For many, it is also a constant reminder of the truth that the Franco regime preferred to cover up.

"We're in a moment of reflection concerning everything that happened in our recent past," says Mr de Blas. "This painting continues to do transcendental things in order to bring us towards understanding the truth."

After the death of Franco in 1975, there was an agreement between the left and right of politics, not to critically examine the past.

But as the country marks 70 plus years since the bombing of Guernica, things seem to be changing. Many Spaniards feel that their transition to democracy will not be complete until they take a closer look at their recent history.

Cuba, the Philippines) and great extremes of wealth and poverty caused severe social tensions. Industry was confined mainly to Barcelona and the Basque country. Span-

iards were divided on the type of government that they wanted. Monarchists were conservative and Catholics and did not want to reform Spain. Those who wanted a republic were anti-clerical and hoped to reform Spanish society. There were a number of areas where it was felt reform were needed:

1. Agriculture

Spain was essentially an agricultural country. In the south were the vast private estates or latifundia worked by landless laborers. 7000 owners owned 15 million acres of land. In the north small farmers worked farms that were in many cases not economically viable. It is estimated that half of the agricultural workers lived on the edge of starvation. The former granary of the Roman Empire had the lowest agricultural productivity in Europe.

2. The Church

The power and wealth of the Catholic Church was greatly resented by many. It was closely identified with the wealthy classes and was seen as an enemy of change. Although the majority of Spaniards did not go to mass it had a strong following in the countryside where religious devotion was strong. It had a virtual monopoly of education. Curbing the power of the church was seen as essential if a fairer Spain was to be created.

3. The Army

The army was grossly over-officered with about one general to every hundred poorly equipped soldier. It had grown progressively conservative and was prone to interfere in politics.

4. Regionalism

Spain is a country divided by rivers and mountain ranges with distinct languages and traditions in many areas. Both the Basques and the Catalans wanted to control their own affairs. Republicans sympathised with their demands especially that of the Catalans while conservatives opposed them on the grounds that it would weaken Spain.

The Countdown to War

In 1936 an election was called. A Popular Front of Communists, Socialists, Republicans and Separatists was formed to oppose the government. The right wing formed the National Front. For the Popular Front the right's victory would lead straight to fascism; for the National Front, a popular Front victory would lead to "Bolshevik Revolution".

The Popular Front narrowly won the election. Manuel Azana was appointed president and Casares Quiroga became Prime Minister. The new government proceeded to reintroduce the reforms of the 1931-3 government.

Disorder and political violence spread throughout the country. Peasants seized land and there were many strikes. The Falange started to grow dramatically as disillusioned supporters of the more moderate CEDA joined its ranks. Its members used political violence and attack and counterattack became common.

More seriously, the army was plotting to overthrow the new government. The generals were at heart monarchist and were very alarmed at the growing influence of the socialists and anarchists. The leader of the plot was General Mola.

On the 13th of July the monarchist politician, Calvo Sotelo was assassinated by Republican police in re-

venge for the murder of one of their men by a Falangist. The military now had the perfect pretext to make their move. The revolt began on the 17th of July in Spanish Morocco.

The Civil War



The Reina Sofia Museum where Picasso's "Guernica" hangs

republicans.

1936

The military hoped to capture Spain in a week but they failed. About half of the army remained loyal to the government and the revolt failed in Madrid, Valencia, Barcelona and the Basque country. Workers and peasants militias were formed to defend the government.

Crucially the elite army of Morocco supported the revolt. It was led by General Franco. By August the rebels held most of the North and North West while the government controlled the South and the North Coast. Both sides appealed for foreign aid but fatally for the Republic, the French and the British decided



on a policy of non-intervention.

The Germans and the Italians helped the Nationalists while the USSR sent aid to the republicans. German transport planes helped ferry Franco's army from Morocco to Spain, the first example of direct foreign involvement.

The main Nationalist setback was their failure to capture Madrid. Bloody battles were to follow over the next months as the Republicans beat off attempts to encircle Madrid until the Nationalists called off their offensive in November.

Communist influence inside the city increased greatly and arrests and summary executions were carried out against suspected Nationalists.

In September, Nationalists forces captured Toledo and relieved a Nationalist garrison that had held out since the end of July. Largo Cabralero became Prime Minister. The Republican government was moved to Valencia in November. In October, General Franco was appointed head of the Nationalist government of Spain.

Most of the Spanish gold reserves (the fourth largest in

the world) were sent to the USSR in exchange for military equipment that began arriving in October. The transfer of the gold led to a dramatic rise in inflation on the republican zone. Foreign volunteers, organized into the International Brigades, started to arrive.

1937 AND BEYOND....

After two and a half years of resistance, the Republic collapsed rapidly during the first three months of 1939. In January, the Nationalists occupied Barcelona and in March they captured Madrid which effectively marked the end of the war. On April 1st, Franco declared the war at an end.

About a half a million people were killed in the war with hundreds of thousands dying in atrocities committed by both sides. Most were killed by the Nationalists who were ruthless in establishing control in the areas they captured. For example when they captured Badajoz in August 1936 over 1500 of the town's defenders were shot in batches in the town's bull ring. In all about 200,000 people were executed by the Nationalists.



Hosts Rev. Greg Rosser and
Cousin Geri Metcalf Rosser
for Kelsie Griffes' Summer of
Music and Art

“Much of what makes an artist is a mystery; but the freedom to be creative is definitely a hallmark, and one of its most life-giving attributes.” Kelsie Griffes



love for ice cream is in all of our genes. There's no better way to bond than to nurture our mutual admiration for sugar. Grandma capped off the weekend by trying out Geri's beautiful grand piano.



The musical side of my adventure began with a trip to Stanton's Sheet Music in downtown Columbus. I found sheet music for every type of instrument or ensemble I could imagine, right at my fingertips, the old fashioned way. Columbus, though not the most high-profile city, is not without its treasures. As a college student of Boston, I was pleasantly surprised to find a city, complete with, miracle of miracles, pristine streets organized on right angles. Geography aside, arts in the Columbus area are the true gold mine (Hot Krispy Kreme donuts are near the top of the list.) It was well worth braving the summer heat for the free Jazz festival with Geri and Greg, complete with jazz legends like Tower of Power. The Columbus arts festival was brimming with local color, showcasing paintings, photography, fiddlers, and even mirror art. Artsy fartsy theatre excursions /ice cream/antique store exploration dates with cousin Ruth Anne made great memories.



The Ohio theatre was another dazzling highlight. Black and white and Alfred Hitchcock were never better. Sharing the experience with new friends didn't hurt either. The best movie graphics in



the world can't compete with the classic red seats and gilded halls of an old-time theatre-perhaps it would be better titled a palace. At least that's how I felt when I sat in those seats.

At Pataskala Nazarene Church, under the direction of Geri and Greg, I experienced the worship team from all angles, gaining experience playing the violin and keys and pretending to be an alto. As a lifelong soprano-it was fun to see how the other half lives. :)

My artistic exposure didn't stop there. Delaware, Ohio is the home of the Creative Strings workshop. The workshop was hosted by none-other than the incredible jazz violinist, Christian Howe. (Shameless plug - the guy is an extremely personable musician and entrepreneur.) There, I was forced outside of my musical comfort zone. Spoiler alert - I like it out there. There I was minding my own business, happy to be a part of the string chorus, when my ensemble leader, Greg, asked me to solo. It was not, "Would you like to solo" or..."how about you, Kelsie?" "I'm going to keep playing (the bass) until you solo," he said with a triumphant grin. He didn't give me the choice to stay in my comfort zone, and I will always be grateful. As a musician, a whole new level of freedom is reached when you can toss the sheet music and simply connect with your instrument.

I've always loved music, but haven't always personally embraced it. In other words, it wasn't simply the music, but the city's inspiration that left me with a lingering sense of wonder and thirst for creativity. I don't know if that makes me an artist, but it's a start. At this point, some of you are tempted, or perhaps have already rolled your eyes and dismissed my experience as simply "artsy-fartsy mumbo-jumbo." I can assure you that this impression couldn't be farther from the truth.

Much of what makes an artist is a mystery; but the freedom to be creative is definitely a hallmark, and one of its most life-giving attributes. I would encourage you to make

peace with your creative potential - an impulse that you may find hiding inside of you if you stop trying to suppress it. I encourage you to write the poem, share your story, dust off the instrument in your attic, paint, or take up the scrapbooking or woodworking hobby that is close to your heart. Create authentic, life-giving art: for me that means art that reflects my Creator. That's a lot of pressure, right? How can I attempt to create something worthwhile when I'm up against sunsets, puppies, and the staggering beauty and variety in the human condition? Then I bring it down a notch, and realize that I'm not the Creator and never will be. The pressure is off. I have permission to fail - and

the permission to grow from those failures. Easier said than done of course, but life is much richer for it.

This summer was a once in a lifetime opportunity, for which I'll be forever grateful. So many new connections were forged, both musical and otherwise. Family - if you have an opportunity to take a chance like this-please do it. It need not include a cross-country trip, or a walk across the pond - just a step outside your comfort zone.

The cliches are true. Get out there and experience the world afresh. You just may find that you are an artist.

Did you know that Kelsie Griffes was in our very first issue? Here she is!



Kelsie Griffes - Winter, 1998

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER FOR KELSIE GRIFFES

In the Spring 2016 issue of the newsletter, we reported that Kelsie was graduating from ENC that May. However, Kelsie took some time off, and it is this May, 2017 when Kelsie will matriculate from Eastern Nazarene College.

Kelsie's piano recital for her music major will be held on April 22nd. Contact Kelsie on Facebook for details on how to attend.

REMINDER!

Gardner Cousins reunion

474 Gore Rd N
Morgan, VT, United States

All-day

Starts Jul 2, 2017 1:00 PM

Ends 5:00 PM

Send in your articles for the Spring, 2017 issue!