FSU-Firenze 1966-67

Memories
FSU-Firenze 1966-67 Memories

Compiled by
Doreen van Assenderp Cohen
2016

Revised and Updated
2017
Foreword

Attending the FSU/Florence International Program’s 50th Year Reunion in February 2016 was an incredible opportunity to reconnect with 1966 – 1967 fellow classmates Mark Brandt, Doreen van Assenderp Cohen, Ken Kobre, and Harriet Roberts Coverston. Reminiscing about our life altering study abroad experience inspired us. It was agreed that we must find as many other class members as possible, with the goal of having a reunion in Firenze to coincide with the upcoming 50th anniversary of the devastating Arno flood on November 4th, 1966. I volunteered to spearhead the search and discovered that Bob Schaefer, along with Judy and Rick Fritz, had the same idea, so we joined forces. Subsequently, Nancy Goldsmith became a part of our team. Shortly thereafter, while visiting our accomplished class Librarian, Doreen, in California, I asked if she would collect each of our stories, and she graciously agreed. The wheels were set in motion, resulting in this masterful creation. Thanks for the memories, Doreen!!

Margie Thompson

“Mud Angels” at the February 2016 reunion in Florence: Margie Crowell Thompson, Harriet Roberts Coverston, Doreen van Assenderp Cohen, Mark Brandt, Ken Kobre at the Biblioteca Nazionale during a private tour.
Acknowledgements

This compilation of “FSU-Firenze 1966-67 Memories” would not have happened without the vision of Margie Crowell Thompson. After the reunion held in Florence in February, 2016, Margie turned her attention to contacting ALL the members of our group who were at the FSU Study Center in Florence in 1966. She worked together with Rick and Judy Fritz, Bob Schaefer and Nancy Goldsmith to plan a group reunion in Florence to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the historic flood of November 4, 1966. In anticipation of this special gathering, Margie had the idea to put together all our memories to share with each other and to have as our legacy.

Special thanks also go to Rick, Judy, Bob and Nancy for their support throughout the project, often serving an advisory board for decisions that needed to be made along the way.

Special thanks are also due to Cathy Williams and Janet Baldwin Anderson, who served as our “expert eyes” on the draft as we prepared to finalize the document. In addition, the help of Marc Cohen and Bryson Thompson must be acknowledged as they offered technical support and advice.

We must acknowledge the help and support of FSU Archivist Sandra Varry, who gave our group a home by creating a special archival collection and helping us share our memories and our mementos there. In addition, we thank Mafé Brooks (FSU College of Communications and Information) for her encouragement and for helping us contact the right people for our purposes. We also acknowledge the help and support of Acting FSU Study Center Director Frank Nero and his staff and students.

There is no story to tell, however, without all the write-ups and photos and mementos that the FSU-Firenze 1966-67 group contributed to share with each other and to share with anyone interested in our story in the future.
As the first librarian for the FSU Study Center in Florence (1966-67) and having received my BA in History and my Master’s in Library Science from FSU, I was honored and delighted when asked by Margie Crowell Thompson to collect and compile the stories of the 1966-67 group.

Working from a group contacts list created by Margie, I invited everyone to send me their recollections of the 1966-67 year in Florence, an update of what they have been doing since then, and photos of their year in Florence, and recent photos. The stated intention was to collect these write-ups and photos and to share the resulting compilation with the members of our group as well as to make this compilation available as our legacy via the FSU Archives. For this purpose, FSU Archivist Sandra Varry created an archival collection where other related materials will also be preserved and made available.

The story of our group is important for three reasons. First, 1966-67 was the first year FSU offered a study-abroad program like ours. Second, we happened to be in Florence during the historic flood (November 4, 1966), which gave us the opportunity to have a special bond with the people of Florence by helping them recover their art, books and other valuable artifacts after the flood. Third, we were part of a historic shift in which study-abroad programs were being offered by state universities rather than only private institutions.

Since I first learned about oral history in graduate school, I have maintained an interest in various oral history projects over the years. It is not only important to capture the stories of particular individuals, but also important to capture the collective stories of particular groups such as ours.

The stories and photos collected here are wonderful, touching, humorous, sentimental, and historic. Even after spending seven months together, we did not know then about each other’s experiences. By coming together in this manner fifty years later, we achieve our purpose of sharing our whole story.
FSU-Firenze 1966-67
In Memoriam

Students

Rebecca Ann (King) Brock (married to Ernie Brock)
  Patricia Ann (Gehri) Dean
  James (Jim) Paul Gilreath
  Cleone Patricia Hawkins
  Christine Mary (Crane) Junger (UF)
  Mary (LaRue) Long (married to Richard M. Long)
  Edward F. Marsicano
  James Joseph McClay
  Jonathan E. Mooy (married to Jo Mooy))
  Samuel Rodney Politano (UF)
  Cathy (Campbell) Reese
  Roger Paul Vallee

Faculty

Dr. Azzurra Givens
  Dr. Jack Ice
  Dr. Adolf Karl
  Dr. Eugene Tanzy
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Names of those who contributed their memories and updates for this compilation.

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ADAMS
Nancy Sue Ashley (1967)
Since 1970 -Nancy Ashley Adams (Mrs. William A.)
nancy@waainsurance.com

Memories:

I did not arrive in Florence until January, as I was finishing my term as Tri Delta Chapter President. Therefore, I missed the mud.

Hitchhiking was memorable to me. On our three day weekends, we would decide which cities we would visit. The girls I was traveling with would find male students going the same place and pair up boy/girl. This way the girls felt safe, and the boys had a better chance of being picked up. When we got to the designated city, we usually went our separate ways. Apparently, I was a good choice to hitchhike with as Italians liked blonds. On these excursions, the Italian people were so friendly and kind to us. Most notable was how generous they were as most of them seemed to have so much less than we did. There was only one trip that the “driver” seemed inappropriate. This man asked us to go home with him. Fortunately, I was with Bob Schaefer, whose Italian was much better than mine and firm enough that we were simply dropped off in a safe location.

On another note, I had never seen a bidet before arriving in Florence. Fortunately, my roommates prevented me from using it as a toilet.

Update:

In 1967/68 I traveled for Tri Delta as a Field Consultant. The next year, I moved to Dallas, Texas, to work for Sanger Harris (a Federated department store) in the Human Resource Department. I ended my career there as Human Resource Manager of the Preston Center Store.

I married Bill Adams, a Texas Tech graduate, in 1970. We have lived in Atlanta, GA (Dunwoody for those of you familiar with the city) since 1978. We have a son, Josh, who is married with 2 girls, ages 3 and 1. Our daughter, Ashley, has three children, ages 8, 5, and 2. They both live within 2 miles of us – a grandparents dream – most days!

I did not work after my children were born until the principal at Dunwoody High School convinced me to help in the Special Education Department. I loved it and stayed there for 12 years.

The majority of my life has been devoted to my family and volunteer work. I have been highly involved in my church, community, and Tri Delta. When my children were growing up, I was active in all of their activities including serving two terms as PTA President for the three schools they attended. At that time, I was also in leadership for Bible Study Fellowship for 13 years including serving as an Area Class Administrator for the states of GA and SC. I am not sure there is a job in my church I have not done. Through all the years, I have served Tri Delta both locally and nationally. This summer I was honored to receive the Ernestine Block Grigsby Award which is given bi-annually to the most outstanding alumna member in the country. I am proud to say, over the past 33 years, I have been an integral part of helping the Atlanta Alumna Chapter raise more than 2.2 million dollars for CURE, Children Cancer Charities here in the Atlanta area. When you come to our home for a meal or meeting, everyone knows
the first thing you will smell is the aroma of hot bread. I make 3 to 9 loaves a week – no machine involved!

Bill and I love to travel. He sold his insurance agency 3 years ago allowing us to be on the go even more. However, I am still highly involved with my church, family, friends, Tri Delta, two book clubs – and on and on the list goes. Can you tell I am happy, busy and in good health?!

Photos:

First let me say, I will not be able to come to the Convention. My husband has a football player’s reunion that weekend we will be attending. I will truly miss not seeing everyone. Fortunately, we have made trips to Florence over the years. For my 70th Birthday, in April of 2015, we spent 9 days there. On previous visits, I thought I would take the time to find the Hotel Capri, but never did. This trip I took the 1967 brochure featuring the hotel. The hotel Assistant Manager, Adriano Andaloro got so excited. She said she knew it had been a school at one time but that was all. She made a copy of the brochure. My husband took our picture with her holding the brochure. As you can see the lobby has certainly changed.
Nancy in 1966 and 2016

My Christmas card this past 2015. My daughter (Ashley Adams Koetje) with her three children is on my right. My son, Josh Adams and his wife and two girls are on my husband’s left.
L to R – Judy Fritz, Nancy Adams

L to R – Judy Fritz, Nancy Adams Jennifer Howse.
ADES
Martha Ades (Martha Lamkin in 1966)

marthalades@aol.com

Memories:

I was on the waiting list and didn’t learn I could go to Firenze until after school was out. I knew no one on the trip and was scared. Luckily I overcame that fear. There were so many new things that I thought were very “European” (building cranes, doormen, houses over shops, etc.) but later learned were just “big city”. The experience of living right in the city was unequaled for a girl from small town Florida. Another wonderful opportunity was being able to travel around Europe on the weekends and holidays. The chance to really live the culture and interact with the locals was one of the best take-aways. Nancy Goldsmith and I were traveling the weekend of the flood. We had to go to a couple of cities before we could get a train back to Firenze. We were thankful to see that the waterline on the buildings was getting lower as we approached our hotel. I walked through some of the worst areas the next day but couldn’t make myself take pictures of the Italians’ hardships. I finally just bought some slides of the flooded areas. Being part of that natural disaster and seeing how the people, most without insurance, just picked up, pushed mud out of their homes with wooden rakes and cleaned up was a great life experience. I gained an international outlook that I would have never gotten without the year in Firenze.

Additional Flood Information:
During the flood I remembered we had no heat and water in the hotel and that’s why we went to Rome. But I wrote to my parents on Nov. 14 “Marco says we probably won’t have water in Florence for another 20 days. But don’t worry, Dr. Nati has us taking an oral re-vaccination for typhoid and typhus.” On Nov. 19th I wrote my parents about our group being in Rome: “Thursday night we had a big shindig here. The Italian government presented us with all sorts of plaques, books and two oil paintings. We had the mayor of Rome, the Amer. Ambassador and other officials here to thank us for the work we did in Florence. Each of us received a book about Italy. It was real nice & we had a buffet & dance afterwards with a band. While here each of us has bought a Kg of salt and a box of matches for the Capri. In the middle of the week the hotel had heat & water on the first floor. By now we should have water in all. We have gotten spoiled here.”

There was some conflict as I wrote to my parents on December 12, 1966: “Today was the big day – after 36 days we can finally drink normal water. It tastes fabulous compared to “aqua minerale”. I guess you should be warned that the papers will probably get some bad reports about us over Christmas because there are about 7 kids going home. Some are for health reasons but some are just going because they don’t like the conditions.”

Update:

After returning from Florence I couldn’t go back to my math major and ended up with a Humanities degree with a specialty in Art History. After graduation in 1969 I went back to Florence and traveled around Europe for the summer. Late that summer I married Bill Ades, who I met on a blind date in Tallahassee. When he got out of the Marines we moved to Illinois and I got a job in computers and stayed in that field as a programmer, business analyst and web content manager until I retired from AARP in 2014. We lived in Illinois, Northern Virginia, Madison, Wisconsin, Nashville, TN and now we’re back in Northern Virginia. Our youngest child lives near here with our two grandchildren and our son.
lives with us due to medical problems. I stay over-committed sitting for the grandkids, volunteering at the library and doing Social Justice work for my church and community. We love the vibrancy of the DC area but are getting a little tired of politics. My time in Florence instilled in me a love of travel and seeing new things. I have had the opportunity to travel over the years and I’d go anywhere on a moment’s notice except for the lack of funds and family commitments. But life is pretty good at this point.

Photos:

1967- Martha Lamkin

2016- Martha Lamkin Ades
ANDERSON
Janet (Jan) Baldwin Anderson
janet@jbacoaching.com

Memories:

I have so many vivid memories of my junior year, 1966-67, that it would take a book to report them all. I enclose one here, Arrival in Italy. This and other recollections are based on notes from my journal of the time, along with photos. [See Attachments for other recollections.]

Arrival in Italy, August 1966. One late August evening in 1966, I traveled from Pensacola, Florida, to New York City to participate in the FSU Study Center in Florence, Italy. We convened at the Alitalia terminal of La Guardia airport. As a transient student from the University of Florida, I did not know anyone in the program before that evening, but that changed soon enough. By the time Dr. Givens and Dr. Tanzy, the Study Center faculty, shepherded us aboard an overnight flight bound for Pisa, Italy, we soon realized a common bond—our mutual desire to travel and learn about Italy. After an eight-hour flight we arrived next morning at the small airport in Pisa, where buses were waiting to take us to Florence.

In the ladies’ room at the Pisa airport, I met an American woman who was departing Italy that same day. Excitedly, I asked her about Italy. What was it like? What could we expect? What did she like best? Thus engaged in animated conversation, I failed to notice that my fellow students had all disappeared. I emerged from the bathroom to find I had been left behind at the airport! Abandoned, alone in a foreign country—I was distraught. My classmates were happily traveling to the paradise of Florence while I remained in the purgatory of a strange airport in a strange land. And no one had noticed my absence.

Mustering composure in the face of a growing sense of panic, I tried to explain to airport officials that I had been LEFT BEHIND. No one seemed to speak any English! Using dramatic hand gestures and my non molto bene lingua italiana (having barely learned the alphabet that summer), I asked a uniformed guard for help. He grasped the seriousness of my situation and motioned for me to follow as he walked to the phone and placed a call. He spoke in rapidly enunciated melodic syllables, conveying in urgent tones that a studentessa Americana was standing before him and needed immediate assistance. The guard motioned for me to wait and pointed toward the entrance.

A few minutes later, a handsome man in his mid-thirties roared up in a sports car convertible, coming to an abrupt stop at the airport entrance. He got out of the car—cutting a dashing figure in his dark sunglasses, recent tan, and beautifully tailored Italian suit—then sauntered into the building and looked around—for me! Signore Consalvo Cernitori (he gave me his card), an official with Alitalia Airlines, was escorting our group from Pisa to Florence. He informed me in perfect English that everything would be fine, as the students were all stopping at the Leaning Tower before traveling on to Florence and he would take me there to join them. He loaded my luggage into the boot of his little car and I sank gratefully into the passenger seat beside him. Flying through the streets of Pisa in a sports car convertible was the perfect antidote to abandonment. I felt like a glamorous character straight out of Fellini’s La Dolce Vita and my mood quickly changed from anxiety to joy. The car raced to a stop next to the waiting buses at the Leaning Tower. I stepped out and walked over to the group, feeling a confusing mixture of embarrassment and elation. I don’t recall if I even thanked him for rescuing me. And I remember little about the famous landmark, other than it really did lean very far over to one side.
After a leisurely bus ride through the northern Italian countryside, we arrived in Florence at the 350 year-old Hotel Capri—our temporary home for two trimesters of total immersion in French and Italian literature and languages, art history, and Italian culture. This first day was molto bella and the next day was a festival.

**Update:**

Since graduating from University of Florida, I worked as a United Nations Guide, earned a master’s degree in childhood education and a doctorate in research methods. I designed and led research studies about adults who earn their high school diplomas through the GED Tests and co-authored the first education report released during the Obama Administration about math and reading achievement gaps between Black and White students in the nation’s public schools. I retired from structured employment in 2008 and developed a career as a life and leadership coach and teacher focusing particularly on mindfulness, brain science, and adult learning. I also continue to nurture my lifelong passions for photography, writing, and travel.

I am blessed to have a beautiful daughter and three fabulous grandsons. I am committed to introducing each grandchild to the joys of travel abroad. Meanwhile, I am happily married to my second husband, Dick Anderson, I am step-mom to his three adult children, and we live near the nation’s capital, in Takoma Park, Maryland. We have been to Italy twice since the time of the Great Flood (once on our honeymoon), and the original experiences of my junior year abroad continue to animate my love for Italy in general and for Florence in particular. It will be delightful to see all of our fellow students again this November for the 50th anniversary of that most memorable year!

**Photos:**

![The Scalas hosted a Carnevale Party for us](image1)

![Jan Baldwin trying to study](image2)
Margie Crowell Thompson & Jan Baldwin
Garden Café, National Gallery of Art

Simon, Jan, Dick, and Ron Bowen in Paris
Anderson,
APPLEBY
Judith W. Appleby (Judy)
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applejudy@aol.com
Spouse: Richard Berg

Memories:

This was "hands down" one of the best years of my life! I was a sophomore from Ocala, attending the University of South Florida, majoring in art and science. I had never been to Europe (nor had anyone in my family). Everything was new and amazing.

I heard about the program from my roommate, Becky, at the University of South Florida, who was enrolled in Italian 101. I ended up studying Italian independently all summer and passing the competency exam just in time to pack. The party started on the plane and what a party it was for 8 months. I was lucky to be assigned a great roommate, Sandra Seibert (FSU), also from Ocala. Sandra was a good influence...she had much better study habits and also persuaded me to take some very interesting trips.

The location of our school was so terrific! So close and convenient to everything (let’s not forget the coffee bar across the street and no drinking age). I had never lived in a city where you could walk everywhere. The wonderful Italian culture just begged to be experienced. I loved to drift around the winding, narrow streets and try to "soak it up"... bargaining in the straw market, touching the softest leather goods, eating homemade Italian pasta, hearing the bells ringing, seeing beautiful art and architecture in every direction. I loved to drift around the winding, narrow streets and try to "soak it up"... bargaining in the straw market, touching the softest leather goods, eating homemade Italian pasta, hearing the bells ringing, seeing beautiful art and architecture in every direction. I looked forward to my art history class...memorizing all of the pictures and then going on the European scavenger hunts to see the originals. I can't imagine a better city for a study center.

I am truly grateful to our faculty for the herculean effort that it took to orchestrate the start-up of this terrific program. There were so many issues to deal with besides just their daily task of educating us. I am so appreciative of all of the extra side trips that they planned for us. The fall was beautiful in Florence and the surrounding hills. The trip to a vineyard was another first. I was surprised how different wine grapes tasted and how much fun it was to eat them directly from the vine. I especially enjoyed the trip to Siena and the magnificent cathedral. Rome was amazing and although I am not Catholic, I am happy to have been blessed by the Pope.

The Hotel Capri was a grand experience. I especially enjoyed the dining room with the waiters in their white shirts and black pants, trays above their heads, always trying to do things per restaurant protocol. Somehow, there were daily problems. I remember the big discussion about getting eggs for breakfast with the final resolution being tureens of 3 and 6 minute eggs. As American students, being used to cafeterias and fast food, we just wanted to eat and get out of there so that we could get back to class on time. For me, lunch was just way too much food. I bought an iron and started ironing the oxford cloth shirts the guys wore since they complained of too much starch from the Italian laundry. While everyone was eating their Primo (pasta and endless baskets of rolls), I earned some spending money. I would show up just in time for the Secondo, which drove the wait staff crazy.
There were lots of adventures but I will never forget the train from Munich. Dr. Tanzy told us “not to leave anyone in Munich” when leaving the Oktoberfest and we didn’t! As we watched two of our classmates running beside the train and knowing that they were not going to make it, we took the only action we could...I wonder how much the German’s fined the school because we pulled the emergency brake that night.

The flood was a terrible disaster for the city. I am so glad that we were able to help as much as we did. I remember that fateful night when we got the knock on the door: “The Arno is flooding! Fill up all bottles with water, as well as the tub and the bidet (which we used to wash our stockings)”. I remember being in the human chain at the Uffizi and sadly handing so many original manuscripts down the line to the drying racks; also, shoveling backed-up sewage all day at an architect’s house. I remember standing in line to get an egg, water and a roll from the National Guard and meeting a bunch of Canadians who were traveling on motorcycles and also came to lend a hand. I remember lying down on top of my bedspread at the end of each day, wiping off the mud and oil and wondering how and when would things get better. I remember walking through the streets with Ken Kobre and Don (?). Ken was taking lots of pictures and said that he was going to sell them to a publisher...and he did (L’Arno Straripa a Firenze, p. 31 & 53). I remember my white rubber boots—definitely the wrong color but the only size 9’s I could find (Italians have small feet). One night Brenda Rivers, Carol (?) and I decided we couldn’t take it any longer. We sneaked out and walked to a fountain a few blocks away. It was dirty with pigeon feathers and poop, but we jumped in, anyhow, fully clothed. It was freezing cold but FINALLY, a bath. As we were rinsing our hair, the police came, blowing their whistles and yelling and they chased us back to the front door of the hotel. A few days later, two big, plush buses arrived to take us to Rome for a much needed bath and some R&R. It was a fancy “first class” hotel. We drew numbers to see who got the tub first! And when my laundry came back, even my cotton undergarments were mended and ironed.

Firenze was different after the flood. Mud and oil was everywhere. Businesses, museums and churches were closed. We were encouraged to travel on weekends and holidays to other areas in Italy and Europe. And so we did...almost every weekend! By Easter, things were starting to get better. The city was getting cleaned up, businesses and attractions were opening and tourists were arriving in droves. People were out on the streets again and Firenze was back! I was sad to say goodbye...to Firenze and lots of new friends and dedicated teachers but I knew that I would return, some day, to see the city that had influenced me so much.

**Update:**

I returned to the University of South Florida and graduated two years later (1969). I worked at the University for a year and then took a job teaching high school science for three years north of Tampa. Then, in search of a new adventure, I headed to Boston ...a walking city with a river running through it; lots of history, art, music...just like Firenze. I went to graduate school for two more degrees, had interesting jobs, bought a house and made lots of friends. I was very happy. I met my husband, Rich Berg, in the fall on an airplane. After a long “long-distance relationship” I joined him in Washington, DC. We are finally retired and living in Annapolis, MD (but pondering a move to Florida). Last year we took a wonderful trip to Europe for four months...trains, planes, buses, boats and automobiles. We both found places that we had visited/lived as well as many new places (Prague, Budapest, etc.). We spent a month in Italy with a week in Firenze. It was fabulous to be back and I took one day by myself to just “be adrift” once again, savoring all of those long ago memories. Although our Hotel Capri has had a modern update,
many of the inspiring places we all remember remain unchanged. I hope that each of you gets to visit this magnificent city again someday!

Photos:

Sandra Seibert & Judy Appleby leaving for Firenze 1966

Sandra Seibert, Sally Fick, Judy Appleby (squatting) and unidentified friend
Ken Kobre traveling to Yugoslavia

Judy Appleby, Brenda Rivers and unidentified friend
Group leaving Pisa for home 1967

Judy Appleby and husband Richard Berg 2016
BENNETT
Richard Bennett
richardbennett27@gmail.com

Memories:

Sound of Music

I remember sitting in the Five Points movie theatre in Jacksonville with my high school girlfriend when the opening scene of “Sound of Music” An aerial shot of Julie Andrews, high in the Austrian Alps above Salzburg, flickered across the screen. It was like nothing I had ever seen, beautiful and magical. I had to go there!

A year or so later I remember looking out of the window of our jet as we flew toward Pisa and seeing the snow covered Swiss Alps. I couldn’t believe my good fortune of having made it to Europe. We landed in Pisa and right off went to the famous tower. We got out of the bus and climbed to the top. I recall there were no guard rails and it was leaning so much you could actually fall off if not careful.

Shortly after we arrived in Florence there was a reception at a villa somewhere that had beautiful gardens. We drank prosecco, glass after glass. I remember returning to the Hotel Capri in a Fiat 600 jammed with other students, one who got sick out of the window. I made it back to the room before I threw up in our sink.

Our room on the second floor above the hotel entrance had four single beds and a sink. We could look out the windows and the street below. Almost immediately word had spread that American girls lived there. I remember we used to watch the young Italian guys in their capes, standing in the chilly night rain at night, waiting for our female students to come out so they could try to meet them.

Update:

Went to FSU law school, met my wife, interned in Key West, got a job after graduation with Florida Attorney General, then moved on to law firm in Miami, quit, lived in Spain a year, got a job with American lawyer in Rome for a couple years, moved to NYC where my wife worked for UN, then to Coral Gables in 1980 where we opened our own firm, and now specialize in consumer class actions. One son recently joined our firm; other son is trying to be entrepreneur with a startup.
Photos:

Richard Bennett 2016

Rick and Lisa Bennett
Memories:

I remember when I saw the article in the FSU Flambeau announcing the opening of the FSU Florence Study Center I knew that this was an opportunity I didn’t want to miss and I jumped at the chance to be a part of it. That was a decision I have never regretted.

Being in Florence was my first time abroad, so I’m sure I experienced some culture shock at the outset, but overall, my memory of living there is that it was a year of exploration. One avenue we explored was learning to communicate in Italian. I remember the first time I used Italian in the Hotel Capri dining room. I confidently and proudly asked one of our favorite waiters, Santino, for cane (dog) instead of pane (bread) for our table. Santino’s face wrinkled up as he tried to hold back the laughter, but then it burst out, and he roared, and then we all did when he explained what I’d asked for. It was a true language learning moment for me. Gradually gaining the ability and confidence to speak Italian out and about in Florence was an important influence in later language study.

Being able to study Italian, Art History, Renaissance History, and Robert Browning’s works at ground zero was at the heart of the concept of the study center and it afforded a unique academic experience. Having ready access to historic sites and original works of art added meaning and immediacy to the learning process for me. I developed a lifelong interest in art from all ages and cultures which stems directly from my Florence experience.

My memory of the adventure which was the flood always starts with the evening before (Friday). I had been with a small group of friends in a cave-like, basement bar near the Arno, called the Rendez-Vous, I believe. We were drinking whiskey sours, dancing, and having our usual good time. We left the bar to go back to the Hotel Capri in time for curfew, 11:00 or 12:00 PM. When we woke up the next morning, the first thing we heard was that the Arno had flooded its banks in the very early morning and water was pouring into the city. I watched as water made its way from the Duomo down Via Cavour and eventually down the gutters of Via Ventisette Aprile when just about sundown it flowed in front of the hotel. The hotel’s basement was flooded, but the water didn’t come over the curb of the street. The next day I worked in the basement of the hotel with a couple of other students helping Franco and other hotel employees begin the process of cleaning it up. The following day either Dr. Nati, the study center physician, or Dr. Tanzy, the study center director, pulled us off that assignment as it was deemed too dangerous. So then I went to the Biblioteca Nazionale and volunteered there for the next few days hauling books, manuscripts and other water-logged, mud and oil covered documents up from the basement. I don’t remember a lot about the living conditions at the hotel during the days following the flood. I do recall the lack of electricity and the use of candles and everyone sitting in candlelight and singing. I also vividly recall our stay at the Cesare Augustus Hotel in Rome in what felt like the lap of luxury after the previous week in Florence. I remember the flood experience as a challenge and an inconvenience for us, but as an enormous tragedy for the Florentines who lost lives, homes, businesses, and historical treasures.

Another strong memory of my stay in Florence was the travel explorations which being there offered. Besides the tours around Tuscany and Italy which were part of the Study Center program, I visited other Italian cities like Venice and Naples and sites like Pompeii and Capri with friends from the program. My
First trip out of Italy was a long weekend with a couple of friends to the southern part of Switzerland. It was also my first stay at a Youth Hostel, which in this case included sleeping on a pile of hay in a barn. During the Thanksgiving break I traveled back to Switzerland and to Zermatt, where I had my first not very successful try at ice skating. I did a Eurail Pass circuit of Europe during the winter break, sometimes alone, sometimes with study center friends. During the spring break I traveled with a friend to Tunisia for a memorable time visiting Tunis, Carthage, the desert, and Tunisia’s pristine beaches. Also in the spring of 1967 a friend and I took a train to Trieste and crossed into Yugoslavia. We had planned to hitchhike in Yugoslavia until we found out that there were practically no cars on the roads, mostly tractors, donkeys, and mules. Where was Trip Adviser when you needed it? The travel during my time in Florence whetted my appetite to see other places and explore other cultures and I have been fortunate enough to be able to do that.

Last, but certainly not least, of my memories of the 1966-67 Florence Study Center is the cast of characters who populated it. I recall a unique, eclectic collection of individuals who from the hotel staff to the faculty members and their families to all of us students could have come from central casting. I made many great friends who enhanced my life during our months together there and for years afterwards. Looking back, I’d say it was the ideal bunch to share the experience with.

Update:

I graduated from FSU in December, 1967. In the fall of 1968 I went back to Florence to hang out. During that time I was introduced to and had my first taste of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). It appealed to me and I eventually pursued it as a career. From Florence I went to Tripoli, Libya, where I taught ESL for almost a year before Ghaddafi led a coup and kicked Americans out. After that I came back to the States and taught high school English for three years before I got the travel bug again and went to teach ESL in London at International House, a private language school. After six months there, the director asked me to go to Japan for a three month stint at their school in Tokyo, which I did, and I wound up staying in Japan for nine years. I liked it. In 1983 I moved to Los Angeles and continued teaching English as a Second Language in the Los Angeles Unified School District’s Division of Adult and Career Education. From 1998 until my retirement in 2013, I worked as a teacher advisor in the central office and then as an adult school assistant principal and finally principal. In my retirement I’m enjoying Los Angeles’s diversity and its cultural and entertainment offerings more than ever. Travel is still one of my favorite pastimes.
Photos:

Chan Bostwick on the ferry to the Isle of Capri.

From Piazzale Michelangelo.
Lunch in Tallahassee in June 2016 with Ernie Brock, Charlene Howard Cappellini, and Cathy Williams.

With my partner, Isamu Takahashi, December 2015.
Memories:

The experience was a gigantic turning point in my life, much more important for me than all the previous years on campus combined. I was headed for a career in advertising design but not satisfied with the choice. All my life I had wanted to be a painter. In Florence I was so overwhelmed by all the great art around me that I knew I had to find an alternative so that I could live my dream. I also realized that to be in an environment that suited me for this goal I had to return to Europe. My memories of the flood are centered on being part of the multitude of young people from all over showing up in Florence to form multilingual chains in order to transit artworks at the Uffizi and documents at the National archives, both along the river, out of the mud to areas for restoration. I believe most of our group participated as classes were suspended. We had no running water or electricity in that area of Florence, so at the end of each day, covered in mud, we'd head for a pond in a nearby park to wash off in freezing water, much to the surprise of the resident swans. Back at the hotel we'd have dinner by candlelight and sometimes dancing after, I assume by battery powered music. A week after the flood we were taken by bus to Rome for a week, due to the risk of disease. In Rome we had a group audience at the Vatican, along with about 5 other groups, with Pope Paul VI, who impressed me by addressing each group in their respective language. He thanked our group for our help in Florence following the flood.

Update:

After Florence, I turned down a job offer in advertising design in New York and accepted a job teaching high school art in my home town, Lake Placid, Florida. 1967 was the first year of full integration in the South and my former school had to comply by creating new programs to handle the influx of students. I created their first art program for grades 6-12. I discovered that teaching came naturally and suited me. In July 1968, having repaid a loan for my Florence year and knowing how badly I wanted to return to Europe, I bought a one-way plane ticket, destination Paris, without a clue of what I was going to do to survive. I did have a minor in French. At the end of the summer I landed a one year contract to teach art as well as music appreciation in a private international boarding school in England in the countryside near Cambridge. The following summer I attended municipal art classes in Nice, France, then enrolled in the national art school there in the fall for a year, working in a hotel evenings to survive. The fall of 1970 I received a grant as artist in residence in Paris at the Fondation des EtatUnis, part of the Cité Universitaire Internationale. I resided there three years, working in a hotel again the second year, then receiving the grant again the third. In 1973, I began teaching studio art part-time in the high school section of the American School of Paris, a post I kept until retirement in 2008, always part-time so as to have time to paint and exhibit, which I continue to do. In 1978, I met my life partner, Daniel Zarifian, a multi-culture (3 passports and 4 languages) flight attendant with a local French airline, now a retired Purser from Air France.
Photos:

Ron Bowen 1966-67

Ron Bowen 2016
BRANDT

Mark Brandt

mwbrandt@mail.usf.edu

**Memories:**

See attachment “Reflections of Florence and Life's Subsequent Journey” by Mark Brandt

**Update:**

In the fall of 1972, my wife Barbara and I were married. Because of that marriage and passing the bar, '72 was also a very good year. We have 2 sons and 2 grandsons. Both sons had the perspicacity not to become lawyers, and they are both self supporting. What more can a father ask?

Some of the highlights of my life journey include riding my bike across the State of Iowa 3 times along with 10,000 other masochists, helping to start a community bank on whose board I sat until we sold out to one of the bigger fish, racing Porsche autos for a couple of years throughout the southeast, and doing some minor league cartoon gag writing for Dan Piraro in his Bizarro cartoon. As a family we've been able to travel to 30-40 countries including India, China, New Zealand and South America. Hopefully there's more travel in the future before senescence comes to stay permanently.

Life has always had a search for Truth and Reality in the background these last 30 years or so. The best version I have found is atheism/humanism. I keep the door open to further insight and enlightenment but it would take proof commensurate with the supernatural claims made for me to change my mind. I'm really looking forward to the November Reunion and re-establishing connections and hearing stories of what life has given, or thrown, at us.
Photos:

Left: Mark Brandt, Harriet Roberts and Jim Gilreath in Switzerland
Right: Mark Brandt and Kay Price (red coat) boarding Alitalia flight

Barbara and Mark Brandt 2014
Memories:

Having grown up in the very small Florida panhandle town of Vernon (made famous for a time in Errol Morris' documentary, "Vernon, Florida"), the opportunity to spend two semesters in Florence was the most exciting event of my life. When we first arrived to Florence, Becky King and I threw our things in our rooms and walked all over the city center. As a humanities major specializing in Renaissance art, music and literature, I was in heaven. The terrible event of the flood, while tragic for all the damage done, actually brought us closer to the Florentines. Moving waterlogged furniture and working in the library, I had a sense of belonging. I have said that if the flood had to happen, I am glad we students were there to help.

I still have so many memories of the way Florence looked immediately after the flood. One image is the clearest of all. As soon as we were able to move through the streets, I slogged to the Baptistry to see if Donatello's wooden statue of Maddalena Penitente had survived. I was stunned at the sickening sight of the Doors of Paradise all buckled with Ghiberti's panels lying in the mud behind the metal fence. I was relieved to see through the gap between the warped doors the statue still standing upright on its pedestal in the gloom.

Update:

I mentioned Becky King. Before going to Florence we had been friends for two years. I met her when she was dating my roommate, and was smitten. We were "just friends", but I always harbored other feelings. After Florence I took a job teaching English in Greenville, east of Tallahassee. After a few months, I realized I had to find Becky to reveal my feelings even if the result should only be rejection. I went to the English Department and was given her address (!). I showed up unannounced at her door, and she was so happy to see me! A month later we were engaged.

After we married, I joined the Army with an assignment to the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California, to learn Russian. Becky was permitted to take the Russian classes in the morning, and worked afternoons at a savings and loan in Carmel. Then I was assigned to Ft. Richardson where I was lent out to the Coast Guard to interpret during boardings of Russian vessels. Becky was the Assistant Registrar at Alaska Methodist University. After the Army we attended Indiana University. Then because of family concerns we moved back to Panama City where we managed a music store. We then started our own music studios. Becky taught piano and harp, and I taught piano and flute. We also published music for flute and harp, and performed widely. This more than thirty year career ended with Becky's death from breast cancer on March 1, 2011.
PHOTOS:

Elba 1966 – Becky King (red top) and Ernie Brock next to her
Becky King

Ernie Brock 2016
Memories:

Forgive me for taking a little liberty here with the dates in order to honor the person who made the FSU Florence program a reality.

In 1964, as a senior, I traveled with the FSU’s Circus [See photos of Flying High in Attachments] to Europe on a tour co-sponsored by the university and CBS. CBS filmed the tour for *Sports Spectacular*. Florence was the 3rd city in which we performed (the performance was actually in the old Roman amphitheatre in Fiesole). Dr. Ross Oglesby, the Dean of Students, traveled with us as a chaperon and representative of the FSU administration.

While several of us were in sightseeing in Florence with Dean Oglesby, we ran into a young friend of his from Tallahassee, Julian Proctor [See “Memories of Florence” by Julian Proctor in Attachments]. He told us that he was staying with a countess whom his father had befriended during WWII. The countess had expressed an interest in selling her villa to an American university, as had other Florentines. Julian asked us to come and meet her the next day.

That was the germ for the idea of an FSU Program in Florence for undergraduate students. Although FSU never purchased that particular villa, Dean Oglesby continued to talk about the idea of a term or year abroad for undergraduate students. He was inspired, he said, by the enthusiasm of those of us on the trip who probably would never have had the wherewithal for study abroad without a program that eased the way.

In the next couple of years, the idea caught fire with a number of faculty. Originally, Dr. Oglesby, who stepped down as dean in 1965, was to be the director of the new Florentine Study Program. The new administration changed that and, at first, it was thought that he would be a faculty member on the program. Ultimately the administration said no. I know personally that Dr. Tanzy and Dr. Givens were very saddened to hear that he would not be coming.

He is the reason that I was able to be part of the first effort. While he was still in charge, he urged me to move forward with my plans to begin work on a master’s degree, so that I could apply for the program. I did as he suggested and also applied to be an assistant in the program. When it was clear that he would not be coming, he spoke to Dr. Tanzy and urged him to hire me.

Please understand that, without his efforts, none of us would have come to Florence that year or any other. It was his vision and his desire to inspire students to stretch their minds and broaden their experience of the world.

When the flood came and throughout our time there, Dr. Tanzy stayed in regular contact with Dr. Oglesby and never let an opportunity pass to honor his contribution to the program.

I have many, many fond memories of my time in Florence, 1966-67:
Carolyn and Chuck’s weddings,
Seeing the real *Il Davido* with Winn and Gaye (Carlyn) for the first time
Our trips to Ravenna, Siena and San Gimignano, Assisi, Rome, and Milan
Trips to the hill towns with the Morrises, Mike Pulman, my roommate Bonnie Egan
Gossiping with Shirley, Gloria, and Nancy in their room with the best view of the Albergo Capri’s infamous shaft—What was that for?
The candlelight vigil and sing fest during the flood
Working at the Biblioteca, the Accademia, and the Natis’ apartment after the flood. I, too, cemented antique manuscripts with powder.
Watching amazed as a bunch of American, grumpy complainers (about the food and accommodations) transformed into Mud Angels who rolled up their sleeves, handled their deprivations with humor and inventiveness, and went to work to help wherever they could
Sitting next to Richard Long during the audience with Il Papa and, afterwards, having him show me what he was sure was the only switchblade in the world blessed by the pope. (He never would have made it past the machine-gun guards today)
The constant kindnesses and patience of Melitza, Alba, Giuseppe, and Santino
Espresso and pastries almost every morning at Piero’s bar across the street
Cappuccino and music in the afternoon at Fiorella’s down the street (she had a juke box)
Calzones and gelato near the San Lorenzo market
Shopping with Carlyn for purses and finding the best deal on a leather purse was a bullet bag for Italian hunters
Reading Dante in Italian with Dr. Givens, learning Tudor history with Mike Pulman, and Renaissance lit with Harry Morris
Having my first martini at Harry’s bar
Celebrating my 23rd birthday at the Morrises with martinis
A weekend in the mountains at the Nati estate with Anna Maria, Bonnie Egan, and Jennifer Howse
Christmas holidays in London going to the theatre every night, waiting outside the stage door for Bonnie’s brother to go in and meet Lawrence Olivier, while we waited we met Joyce Redmon who played Iago’s wife in Othello
Spending Christmas Day in the English countryside with Frederick Forsythe (and family), a playwright who had been a visiting artist at FSU in 1964. The theatre department premiered his plan Trog.
Seeing Rigoletto at Firenze’s Municipal Opera House, Carmen at Venice’s La Feneci, and Faust at La Scala
Bringing in the New Year in an Heidelberg Rathskellar
Traveling to Venice with Bonnie, Ernie, and Jennifer sometime in January(?)
Spring break in Barcelona and Majorca
Perhaps the most life changing-event was traveling to Livorno in March to visit my friends Tommy and Barbara Garwood who introduced me to a young Navy Ensign named Terry Cappellini

There are so many more memories that I could go on and on but I will stop here. I’m sorry I won’t be there physically to celebrate our 50th anniversary with you all, but I will be there in spirit. And I would like to request that you all drink a toast to Dean Oglesby for what he did for all of us

Update:

After Florence, I finished my Master of Arts in English in the summer of 1968. In January of that year I flew out to San Diego and married Ensign Cappellini the night before he left for Viet Nam.

In the fall of 1968, I took a job at Georgia Southern College and was pleased to find that Winn and Gaye Crannell (now Carlyn Romeyn) were also in Statesboro.
At the end of that term, Terry and I moved to Columbus so that he could finish his MA in English at Ohio State. I taught as an adjunct there.

In 1971, we moved back to Tallahassee. I went back to school to work on another masters in Library Science and worked at the public library. In 1973, my only child Rebecca was born and we have been here ever since. Tallahassee is a great place to raise children. I taught Adult Ed at the Lively Vo-Tech for a number of years, ultimately becoming a Media Specialist there

In my forties, I decided to stop being a closet thespian and became very involved in local theatre. I also began a masters in Theatre and almost finished it, but didn’t. In 1987, I had one of my favorite jobs ever---directing the drama program at North Florida Junior College. But the commute and night rehearsals did not work well with a 14-year-old at home. So the next year I began working at FSU as a writer, editor, and project manager for the Center for Instructional Development. I spent the rest of my career in similar positions at FSU, and for a brief spell as production manager for a similar group at TCC. When I retired from FSU in 2004, I was project managing for the FSU Distance Learning Program.

Since 2000, my true vocation has revealed itself and I have become a yoga teacher. I began doing yoga in 1985. I’ve spent the last 16 years teaching and studying with some amazing teachers. My last workshop was this spring in Assisi with a wonderful teacher and a native of Assisi.

I’m also the proud grandmother of 3 beautiful children: Juliette, 16; Rickson, 8; and an 11-year-old who has been my family’s greatest teacher—my autistic grandson, Quincy.
Photos from 1964, 1966-67: The first is in Piccadilly Square in London during the Christmas holidays, from left to right: Chuck and Carolyn Johnson, an Italian student staying at our B&B whose name I can’t remember, Bonnie Egan, and me. The second one is of myself, Signor Nati (Anna Maria’s dad), and Jennifer at the Natis’ home in the mountains—sometime in late November or early December. In the third, Jennifer is reluctantly posing while I ham it up in front of the Medici Chapel. Taken by Bonnie, I believe. The final photo is from the 1964 Circus tour and is of Dean Oglesby and the Countess in front of her villa across the Arno on the outskirts of Florence.
My daughter and son-in-law’s wedding, 1999; Second wedding for Terry and me 2002.

Taken this past December—that is Lake Jackson in the background.

My daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren, December 2015
Memories:

The seven months at the Florence study center were pivotal in my life. Starting with my first day walk along Via Cavour where I saw and touched history--the Medici Palace, the Piazza della Signoria, the Duomo and Baptistry and so much more--I developed a love of Florence and Italy, a much greater appreciation and sensitivity to art and aesthetics and an enjoyment of history and it's never ending story. The icing on the cake was the constant travel throughout Italy and other parts of Europe.

The flood was a central life experience, especially as I reflect back on standing on the Duomo steps watching the flood surge toward me and swirl around the steps and then the next day a walk through Florence seeing the Ghiberti panels laying in the mud, the shattered Ponte Vecchio and the devastation and mud all over town. I recall vividly the concerted effort joined by all our students to rescue the library and its books as well as the rest of the year when we tried to purchase as much damaged goods as we could to help the merchants of the shattered shops.

Update:

I have spent most of my life since then living in Colorado practicing trial law, raising a family (twin daughters), pursuing amateur photography, bicycling, hiking, motorcycling, travel and avidly reading history. I still practice law with a firm in Denver and now live in Durango, Colorado (SW corner of the state), where I am trying to retire while traveling the southwest and pursuing all of my hobbies and interests.
Memories:

The opportunity to participate in the FSU Study Center in Florence seemed like my birthright in the sense of learning another language and culture, and I am grateful to my family for making it happen for me. My family started over after WWII. My father, a Dutch diplomat who spoke numerous languages and adapted to many cultures, found himself in the US with a young family in 1947 making a new life as a university professor. My mother, a diplomat’s wife who had become fluent in Dutch and adapted to Dutch, Indonesian and Surinam cultures, found herself back in the US teaching school, including a class she created in geography at the local high school. I knew that I had circumnavigated the globe by age three, but had no memory of it. My first language was Malay with Dutch second and English third.

My mother found out about the new FSU program in Florence and helped me finance this new adventure, which was filled with “firsts” for me, including jet planes [note: Eastern Airlines was on strike, so I got a ride with a sorority sister to Jacksonville and flew another airline to New York], foreign country, culture, language (that I could remember), big museums, gigantic mountains, snow, bombolini, gelato, cappuccino, hitch-hiking, train travel, spumante, wienerschnitzel, fondue, bistecca fiorentina e – certo - anche un po d’amore.

I am grateful to have had a position being responsible for the small library at the Study Center. I not only gained experience taking care of a small library, but I had the benefit of small earnings to be used for my travel and other expenses. Mrs. Tanzy helped me set things up and was there for me throughout the year.

I am also grateful for the best roommate possible – Kay Price (Harris) – fun, adventurous and energetic - a home town girl and sorority sister. Thank you Kay for a wonderful adventure!!!

At Christmas, Kay and I made the “grand tour” with our Eurail passes and made a big loop starting with Vienna and going north to Denmark and Holland and then London and Paris and Monaco with many stops along the way. In February, I visited my father’s family in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, enjoying their home-cooked meals as well as rijsttafel and poffertjes.

Kay and I connected with Dee La Ruffa and Jane Coleman in London and wandered into the Hyde Park Hotel in search of something warm to drink. The Head Caterer brought out his tall, handsome son (a student at the London School of Economics), who was waiting in the back office for him, and we were all treated to hot toddies and flaming Christmas pudding on a silver tray.

Coming home - I remember when we arrived looking out the window of the bus that took us from Pisa to Florence and thinking how ancient and “earth colored” everything was. I remember taking that same trip back from Florence to Pisa and thinking how much I had experienced and how much I had learned. It was life changing.
**Update:**

After Florence, I returned to FSU and completed my Master’s in Library Science, a degree that served me well in various ways over the years, although not necessarily as a librarian.

I spent a year in Cocoa Beach, Florida, and had the opportunity to witness two Apollo launches, including historic Apollo 11, which landed on the moon.

After that, a good friend and I headed the call to “go West young woman” and we had a wonderful adventure based in Palo Alto, California (1969). She went back to Florida, but I stayed on and met my husband Marc and we made Silicon Valley our home. He had a career in satellite communications. As for me, I had a variety of experiences, including the last 22 working years at NASA Ames Research Center as a Program/Project Manager (library, photo, video, public affairs, education, publications, etc.). We have two sons, one in the video game design industry and the other at Amazon – typical Silicon Valley family. We also have two grandchildren.

Now “retired,” I volunteer at the Los Altos History Museum and for the Stanford Historical Society, mostly working with their oral history programs. I also spend significant time creating artwork using fabric, ribbon and embroidery. In addition, I knit fun items for my grandchildren (dragon, bug blanket, princess star pillow). My weekly routine includes Jazzercise, Yoga and walking. A highlight of the week is my Circolo del Libro – a small group of enthusiasts led by a native Italian teacher – we read Italian books and other materials and discuss them in Italian each week. My husband and I continue to enjoy traveling.

Over the years I have maintained an interest in oral history. Working on this project to compile and share our collective memories and story has been a joy and a privilege!
Photos:

Christmas in London: Dee La Ruffa, Doreen van Assenderp, Kay Price, Jane Coleman

Reception in Rome after the flood in 1966
RECEPTION IN FLORENCE—Florida State University co-eds, foreground, had a chance to “try-out” their newly learned Italian at a reception given by Italians for students attending FSU’s University Study Center, which got under way this month. From left are Doreen Van Assoenderp of Tallahassee; Sue Copp of Coral Gables; and Jane Coleman of Tallahassee.
Harriet Roberts Coverston, Margie Crowell Thompson, Doreen van Assenderp Cohen 2016 in Los Altos, California

Doreen and Marc Cohen in their garden in Los Altos CA
Memories:

My year in Florence I will always remember. I had never been out of the South, never on an airplane. I remember that flight on Alitalia, landing in Pisa. We were on the bus and I looked out on sights I had never seen. It was surreal. In Florence, I remember that first month, wanting desperately to go home. I would have left if I had had the nerve to ask my parents for the money. I am so glad I didn’t go home. It was really the flood that changed everything – a feeling of belonging. When we were working in the library, we were one – not American or Italian, but everyone working side by side together.

In the fall, Layne [Ferguson] and I hitchhiked. The first trip was down to Naples. Our first ride was in a Porsche with a rich old man from Rome. We did not think about the danger, just the thrill of it all. Layne and I hitchhiked to Paris at Christmas. We stayed on the left bank, Rive Gauche. I have been back many times, but it will never be like it was then. (I am on the Pont Neuf bridge in the 1966 picture.)

In the spring, I started hitchhiking with Margie. The most memorable trip was to Greece and then on to Istanbul. I remember never staying in Florence – always hitchhiking to the next adventure. That last weekend I stayed in the city. When I return to Europe, I always go back to Firenze. I hang out with the expats and just love being in the city of my dreams.

Update:

Before my year in Florence, I worked in the computer center operating the IBM vacuum tube machine and coding for the professors in Fortran. When I got back to FSU that summer of 1967, I graduated in math. I applied to 8 different places, got 8 offers, and went to work in California at Lawrence Livermore National Lab. I got into a 5 person group that wrote the Livermore Timesharing OS for the Control Data 7600 (serial 1). I worked 7 years at LLNL. It was a great time to be in computers.

I met my husband in California. In 1974, we moved to Minnesota and I went to work for Control Data Corporation. CDC was a great company – very far ahead of its time. My son was born in 1976 and CDC let me work at home. My daughter was born in 1979. My husband and I divorced after 12 years of marriage. My son and daughter both live in Minneapolis and that is what keeps me in Minnesota. In 1986, I cofounded an archiving software company, LSC. In 2001, LSC was acquired by Sun Microsystems and I worked for Sun until they were acquired by Oracle in 2010. In 2011, I cofounded another archiving software company, Versity, and I work for them now. Archiving data is all about preservation. It is interesting, my first experience with data preservation was working in the library after the flood.

I have gone back to Florence many times. I was there for the FSU reunion last February. My year abroad has influenced me, but also my son and daughter. They both graduated from the Univ. of Minnesota and both of them studied at the FSU study center in Florence. When I ask WHY?, they tell me, “Mom, you talked about Florence all the time we were growing up.
Photos:

Harriet Roberts Coverston, Pont Neuf, Paris December, 1966

Harriet Roberts Coverston, Trevi Fountain, Rome, 1967
Harriet Roberts Coverston with Il Porcellino, Firenze, 2016

Harriet Roberts Coverston, Chaires Farm, east of Tallahassee, where I grew up, 2015
Harriet Roberts Coverston with son and daughter, Jason, and Andrea Coverston, 2016
Win Crannell finished high school during the fifties in Delmar, New York and then started on a voyage through life that has taken him to many places and has allowed him to experience many of life’s finer pleasures. During the journey he has been a policeman in Florida, three years in the Army (very pleasurable), sold law books in New York City, earned his BA and MFA from Florida State University; while at FSU he studied in Florence, Italy, getting in tune with Italian culture, art, food, and wine. Win taught and coached at Statesboro High School before joining the art department at North Georgia College and State University where he taught from 1971 to 2000. He is a retired professor emeritus. Throughout Win's teaching career he devoted time to his own artistic interests which he has continued into his retirement. His work has followed many directions with a strong early influence from Jackson Pollock and the Abstract Expressionist. His early works were large non-objective paintings, but as years have passed and his influences have varied, he has become interested in the landscapes of rural Georgia. The beauty and intrigue of trees have lately been a major focus of his work, some drawings take up to five hundred hours to complete. Other subjects that Win has drawn over the years include carousels, barns, old stores, rivers, and mountain scenes. Over the past years, Win's work has won hundreds of awards at various art festivals though the United States. His work can be purchased as original pencil and pen/ink drawings as well as in prints from his home studio in Dahlonega, Gold City Antique Gallery in Dahlonega and the Chappelle Gallery in Watkinsville, Georgia. When Win is not in his studio working, he can be found playing golf at Achasta, skiing in Park City, Utah, or maybe trout fishing. Win enjoys doing volunteer work as well as donating his art work to local charities for their fund raising events.

Win has a daughter Cory, and her husband Brett and son Easton and twin girls Preslie and Rylie, and a son Casey and his wife Nikki, along with grandsons Dylan and Isaiah and daughters, Maddie and Lily. Win can be reached at 706 344 7854 or at 734 Calhoun Road, Dahlonega, Ga. 30533.
August 1966 arrived in Florence for the second time in my life. The first time I was sixteen and there is a great gulf between sixteen and twenty!

I was a Senior which was allowed because it was the first year of the Junior Abroad program in Firenze. I was so homesick. I remember struggling with changes in my all American diet of cereal and juice to hard rolls and butter! And fruit!

There were four of us and our closet had seven hooks for hanging up our clothes. We had a bidet which none of us knew what to do with! We washed our delicates in it! The bathroom was down the hall and I loved the enormous tub; but there are many shower lovers out there!

"David" called me to come see him. Leonardo, thank you. His huge hands did not bother me at all! I once attended a magical concert at night. The room was darkened and the only thing well lit was the statue... AMAZING!

Of course the most memorable even was the nineteen days of solid rain ending in broken earthen dams and massive flooding in our beloved city. I remember the terrifying time several of us thought we would go out and look. We got to an intersection and all we could see was water racing towards us in three directions. We raced back to safety. Many a cow was not so lucky being trapped underground at the railway station and then floating up to the streets. Cars tumbled in the rivers made by the rushing water. People tried to break into our hotel. There was no heat or electricity or running water. The boys had to clean the toilets and dump the excrement into the nearest lake several blocks away. It was freezing cold. All four of us piled our bedding on one bed and all four of us slept together. The wind blew the curtains straight out. After nine days (that is a guess) we were bused to Roma. It took four washings for the water to come out clean. That is not an exaggeration! We survived and our parents finally heard that we were all right. Roma was Roma...Disco was King. We had a ball.

In November several of us hitch hiked to Zermatt. We split up in order to thumb our way there. We did finally get there...my friend and I had the pleasure of being picked up by a Communist from Bologna. My companion said he was British so was treated reasonably well but the driver did not like the fact that he picked up an American...me. Oh, my. Twisting around those mountains with this maniac was something I want never to occur again! Thank you very much.

WE had a view of the Matterhorn from our window. Amazing! Fondue was a treat. Being out of ravaged Florence was delicious. No skiing but we did ice skate on a frozen pond.

My best friend was getting married in December so I returned and went straight from New York to Dublin, Georgia. Culture shock again! My "date" had a bit too much to drink at the reception
and the local police escorted us home. I was staying with the groom’s mother and she was waiting at the door...great impression.

I am not really sure if I was EVER that young. Fond memories of the good, the bad and the ugly. Sadly I have never returned to that grand city although I have been back to Milano and northern Italia.

Fond days including fond people.
Pamela DuBois Davis
sunhatpam@hotmail.com

Memories:

My most treasured memory of Firenze is working in the bucket brigade at the Biblioteca Nazionale moving priceless documents from the basement to the roof for their restoration. Holding those muddy books in my hands was a great privilege to me.

Gosh, beyond that: Faust at La Scala, San Dominiano in Assisi where one of our professors prayed everyone out of Purgatory, hearing the organ in Santa Croce, skiing in the Appenines, our crazy trip to Rome, walking from Saint Peter’s to the American Restaurant telling my roommate priest jokes (when we turned into the restaurant we were followed by a bevy of priests who invited us to breakfast. They were from the US. They not only treated us to breakfast, they also regaled us with their own, much more extensive collection, of priest and pope jokes. They then accompanied us to the bus stop after warning us kindly that hitchhiking in Rome was not safe), going site seeing with Nancy Goldsmith, who was a very knowledgeable, enthusiastic guide (Going to Florence was a lark for me. For Nancy it was a mission.) I especially loved dancing the Maya dance, Nancy taught me, near the ruins of a Roman amphitheatre. It was not until much later that I realized that Maya meaning water and is the Hebrew equivalent of Mary - someone we all saw a great deal of during our exploration), reading Dante's Inferno in Italian with our Italian teacher-a rare treat (I hope that I can finally get to Purgatorio and Paradiso before I die - in English), Our Renaissance Art teacher- She made the art come alive with her narratives, The Wednesday we went to, I think it was Siena or Verona, Jeff Chase went into an ecstasy over such a wonderful break in the routine. Then there were all those saints days to celebrate with bottles of Spumante, field trips to the mountain with an architecture student at the University of Florence, all UNFORGETTABLE!

Update:

I graduated with a degree in literature from UF. From there I went to United States International University in San Diego and began a MFA in dance. I taught dance for 6 years, married and moved to Santa Barbara County. There I worked as the Executive Director of the Girls Club of Lompoc Valley. Later it merged with the Boys Club. I worked there for 6 years. We then moved to Brevard County in Florida. I began teaching in the public schools, got a Masters in Education and retired from teaching in 2014. Since then I have been pleasantly occupied with hobbies, travel, and family.

My husband Bob was in the Air Force. We have 5 girls and 6 grandchildren.
Pamela in 1967

Pamela and husband Bob
Memories:

As soon as I heard about the new FSU study abroad program, I knew I had to go. I thought I wanted to experience another culture, what happened was that Florence taught me to SEE. I arrived arrogant, naïve, ignorant, myopic, and ethnocentric. I left humbled; somewhat more sophisticated; more knowledgeable of myself, history, and artistic expression in myriad forms; and appreciative of other people and cultures. The experience altered my life. I remember very little about the classes, but have clear memories of the weekend trips: Switzerland by car, Oktoberfest by train, Rome, Fiesole, Paris and London (over Christmas), Austria, Pisa, Naples, Sienna, Venice...an overflowing cornucopia of history, art, culture and fun!

Florence herself held a new delight for the senses around every corner. There was amazing food; beautiful parks and gardens; expensive shops; the flea market; gorgeous fountains; magnificent statues right out on the street; beautiful, ancient buildings; laughing, gesticulating locals and gawking tourists; inspirational museums; and, did I mention fabulous food? It's not a new analogy, but she was a classic lady who knew she was gorgeous and was glad to share her beauty.

It was empowering for me to realize that being in a different culture didn’t mean one culture was “right” and the other “wrong.” Along with that was recognition that different languages allowed one different expression and different ways of thinking. I could see the beauty and power of the ancient art, buildings, gardens, people in a way that I had never appreciated them before. Part of the impact of Florence on me was to begin to appreciate the power of living connected to thousands of years of history, art, architecture, and literature.

I also developed an appreciation for surrounding oneself with beauty that has lasted my lifetime. I prefer the Southwest to the Renaissance, but surrounding my home and myself with beauty is a Florentine legacy. Of course, I also learned to taste, feel, smell and love in Florence, but that’s another reflection.

The flood was my first personal experience of a natural disaster. That experience gave me a life-long respect for Nature, her beauty and destructive potential as well as a recognition of the power of working together and the resilience of the human spirit.

My personal memories of the flood are more like snapshots that then continue on for a bit.

A) I have on my Army-Navy surplus rain slicker (want to say blue, but not sure) and white Go Go boots - plastic, a little over the ankle, with tassels. It seemed like a grand adventure to go watch the Arno flood, water.

B) Clint rescuing me when I misjudged the depth off the curb.

C) Patsy Gheri and I and maybe others whom I’m not remembering, put on our long evening gowns over our mud-splattered bodies and swept down the stairs faking British accents as we spoke about dining by candlelight.
D) The whole group lined up by candlelight waiting to get shots. It was a little spooky and like being in a Caravaggio painting with the darkness all around and just a few faces at a time illuminated by the candles.

E) Looking at myself in the mirror, seeing that I looked like I was foaming at the mouth as I tried to brush my teeth with carbonated water.

F) A whole line of us from FSU in our waders and gloves up to our knees in mud at the National Library sifting through that mud trying to find even the smallest scraps of paper, which we put in a muddy pile behind us.

G) Patsy and I running along beside trucks of NATO soldiers.

H) I don’t have a clear picture, just a vague recollection of the discomfort of non-working plumbing, no electricity, and no heat. And, joy at getting to go on vacation early.

Update:

My declared major was English Education. I used up all of my electives in Florence. What that meant for my senior year was that I had to take 21 hours a trimester to complete my major on time. My senior year was a challenge to say the least; I was often reading 3 - 4 novels a week and writing papers on them. That said, I wouldn’t change a thing. The experience was worth every hour of midnight oil that I burned the year following.

I taught high school English in Prince George’s County, MD for 22 years, then became a mentor of new teachers. Eventually I was the administrator for a program that trained over 600 experienced teachers to work with the new teachers in their buildings. In total I worked 34 years in that system. Now I am retired, living on the water, and loving every moment! I use my communication skills these days as a volunteer mediator for the courts and community of Calvert County, Maryland.

I am currently single after trying marriage (more than once). My daughter and her family, including two grandsons, live in Atlanta, GA.
Photos:

Ponte Vecchio after the flood

Dee La Ruffa, Harriet Roberts, Clint Fountain, Layne Ferguson, Patsi Gheri, Lynn Hewitt, Stephen Hess in Rome 1966
FLAGG
Christina (Chris) Dietrich Flagg
chris_flagg@yahoo.com

Memories:

“A life-changing experience”: we all said it. Letters from Dr. Tanzy to each student before departure were prophetic, asking us to “…bring credit to the Center, your University, Florida, and our country. If this trial year of study abroad proves successful, the achievement and the responsibility will be largely yours.”

Our class of ‘66-’67 proved the FSU Study Center Firenze was destined to be a success, “Come Hell or High-water”! Within four months of arrival in Florence, High Water came as The Great Flood of 1966. With Dr. Pulman many of us joined Florentines in the Flood cleanup at The National Library. I worked there rescuing silt-covered books.

I crossed the Arno the day before the flood (photo). Days of rain had swollen the Arno. With no “Flood warning”, next day I went to Fiesole with Valdemaro. We viewed the swollen Arno Valley. “I must get back to Florence”. We got a few blocks from Hotel Capri by car then I waded knee deep the rest of the way home. I was the last of our group missing.

I later watched the Arno waters come rolling down Via Cavour carrying cars, and furniture. No communication was available to families for a few days including postal service. When the post office opened later, I carried everyone’s letters to post, along with mine which I forgot to stamp. The Italian and US postal services delivered that letter unstamped to USA!

FSU and Italian friends were incredible. Classes and travel (my allowance was $13 per week with $250 for travel I won in a contest) broadened my horizons, changed my life.

Update:

I graduated from FSU in 1968, BA English, and then worked as a technical librarian at Bendix Avionics, Ft. Lauderdale. David Flagg and I married in 1969. We have lived in Tallahassee, Tampa, Ormond Beach, and now reside in Gainesville.

During the 1970s, I taught school and was an investigator for the National Opinion Research Center. In 1975, we moved to Gainesville to raise our two sons. I served as a school volunteer and substitute teacher.

I have joined with my husband in his political career. He was elected City Commissioner and Mayor of Gainesville, and State Representative. I helped start Partners in Politics Florida Chapter, which provided support for families of elected officials. I have managed and served in local, state and Congressional political campaigns.
In the past decade, David and I participated in starting Banyan Biomarkers, Inc. and we continue in our government consulting business.

As a member of various community boards in Alachua County, I help protect the environment, promote voter education and provide positive learning experiences for children. I enjoy continuing studies in Tudor English history, art history, and politics, family history, and “gardening” our two acres.

Son Byron, a US Coast Guard Veteran, is Assistant Legal Counsel for the St. Johns River Water Management District and married to attorney Whitney Untiedt. Son Eric, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, is Coordinator for Digital Media Technology at Santa Fe College and married to Crystal, Associate Director of the UF GeoPlan Center. Their daughter Kyra, the light of our lives, is 5.

Photos:

Arno in Florence one day before the flood
Chris in Firenze February 1967

Chris and Nancy skiing Abatone 1967

Chris Dietrich Flagg 2016
Memories:

See attachment “Mud Angel Article” interview

Update:

I'm retired from the Museum of Florida History, I still do occasional furniture conservation, but only for friends, or if the job interests me. I don't still have to make a living at it. Mostly, I'm trying to clear out all of my own projects I have put off for 30 years.

Photos:

Clint as “Mud Angel” in Florence November 1966  Layne Ferguson and Clint Fountain at airport in Pisa
FRITZ
Judy (McFarlin) Fritz
rgjm@bellsouth.net

Memories:

It was a serendipitous meeting with Dean Oglesby at Calloway Gardens the summer of 1963 that brought me to FSU and Florence. He had just returned from that famous tour of Europe with the Circus where he discovered the villa that initiated our program. Charlene Howard was a member of that Circus group that so inspired me that week. Dean Oglesby secured a scholarship for me to transfer to FSU, and opened the doors for me to join the Circus and study in Florence. He remained my mentor, professor, friend, and Sunday School teacher while at FSU. Thank you Dean Oglesby!

Florence, you took my breath that first night in the Piazza Duomo. I learned later there is a word for it – the Stendhal syndrome – and there’s a casa di cura there for those overcome by beauty. It was a year of surprises, from 4 roommates and our large room overlooking San Lorenzo, art history assignments in the Uffizi where I still walk room to room in my mind, the David anytime, dancing with Rick Fritz at the Rendezvous, picnics in Fiesole, my first view of the Alps, hitch hiking and getting kidnapped in Milan but making it back safely, Rome, introduction to the humanities by our demonstrative professors, classmates and experiences that expanded my horizons and life of which I must mention Ken Hey who has remained a life-long friend, and of course, my husband Rick Fritz. Ed Marsicano will be so missed at this reunion. Let’s hope he is laughing and celebrating with us.

Update:

Part of Rick’s bio is my own but when we were living on a farm in Vermont I went to Middlebury Language Schools for my DML. I became a language teacher – French, German, occasionally Italian to students I would lead back to Italy every year. Rick and I lived in Italy, France, and Germany for every sabbatical, and put our two daughters in school there. They later had their own college Italian experience, one in Fiesole and the other in Rome. After I retired from teaching I returned to art history as a Docent at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. Florence was the beginning of it all.
Photos:

Judy McFarlin with Duomo in background

Judy McFarlin with rose

Judy McFarlin Fritz 2016
Memories:

I applied late to the Florence Program and received my acceptance letter from Dr. Tanzy at the end of May. I was an economics major with a minor in English and two years into the study of French to meet my foreign language requirement. Why Dr. Tanzy let me go to Florence remains a mystery. We all remember our first stop at the famous leaning tower. There it was and, amazingly, we were actually standing there in front of it. It was impressive. But nothing prepared me for my first evening stroll after dinner. I followed a small group down Via XXVII Aprile to the Piazza San Marco. It looked impressive and lively. Then we wandered down Via Cavour. In a few blocks the street bends to the left and changes names to Via Martelli. At the end of the block there were bright lights, but it was impossible to see what was there until you actually emerge at the Piazza Duomo. I have tried over the years to explain my feelings upon first seeing this sight and have not been able to adequately express that experience. It was powerful and emotional and it has remained with me for fifty years. I believe that first night influenced the rest of my life. Of course there were many more wonderful experiences, not to mention meeting Judy McFarlin, which has also remained with me for fifty years and certainly influenced the rest of my life, too.

Update:

Judy and I married in 1968. I went on the study economics, receiving my Ph.D. from Georgetown University in 1975. I have taught economics at the University of Vermont, the University of Central Florida, Wake Forest University, and Georgia Tech. Wedged between the academic experiences was a twenty-year stent as the Chief Economist at the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta. I am currently serving as a part-time Associate Professor in the School of Economics at Georgia Tech. We also had the good fortune to live and work in Italy, Germany, France, and India.

We have two daughters and five grandchildren. Hopefully, by the time we meet in Florence that will be six grandchildren. Our daughters are both physicians and we are mighty proud of them.
Photos:

Rick’s Snow Adventure

Boys with Beards 1966

Richard (Rick) Fritz 2016
FULLER
Allen Fuller
afullermiami@gmail.com

Memories:

I was a last minute attendee to the FSU Florence program. I had been attending Northwestern University and Jeff Chase told me about the Florence program that he was going on. When he told me, I applied. I was qualified but too late. We had a dinner for Jeff the night before his departure. He left Miami early the next morning and called me about 10:30 am from NY and advised that because of some cancellations, they could take me if I could get there for the 7pm flight. I jumped on a plane and when I arrived in NY the flight to Florence was on the runway. They drove me out and opened the door.

When I got to Florence I thought it would be interesting to date Florentine girls, only to learn you had to be chaperoned for 2 or 3 dates and then needed to get engaged. I also learned that our group had about 3 girls for each guy and they were good looking and could hitch hike all over Europe. I would have a date stand by the road with her thumb out and the cars would race over. At times the guys were on their way home from work and after we told them we wanted to go to Switzerland, they would run to a phone booth and come back and say they could only take us to Bologna.

When the flood hit, I was with a date in Zermatt during the first great snow of the season. Rick Bennett recently reminded me that he was also there with his date at the same time. I wanted to stay but was outvoted so I got us on the Red Cross train back to Florence.

Update:

I have practiced law in Miami since 1971. Together with my wife Susan (of 44 yrs) we are blessed with two sons, a daughter-in-law, two granddaughters, and a grandson.
GOLDSMITH
Nancy E. Goldsmith (same name now and back then)
ngolds1@gmail.com

Memories:

In 1966-67 I shared Room 52 with Shirley Stott and Gloria Lucas. They were absolutely wonderful roommates, and we had great talks and adventures together. I’ve returned to Italy many times since. But I still recall that first meal in the Capri dining room when we were served a big dish of hot pasta—then the rest of the meal arrived!

When the Arno began flooding the night of November 3 I was in Bern, Switzerland, with Martha Lamkin. Since the railroad lines were washed out, we couldn’t get back and toured Milan for a couple of days. When we returned I remember vividly seeing five panels (out of ten) of Ghiberti’s “Gates of Paradise” on the Baptistery washed away: gaping, missing, wounds. Patriotic Florentines found and returned all of them. I also remember the high water levels and destruction in Santa Croce, especially that huge Cimabue crucifix that was almost totally destroyed. I worked in the National Library, hauling up huge old mud-soaked volumes from the basement, carefully turning the pages, and applying powder between them to dry them out. Unfortunately, we learned later on that the powder used in those early days had instead glued the precious volumes into a rigid, sticky block.

That year I traveled by train either with the program or small groups of friends to other parts of Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, England, France, and Spain, fueling a life-long love of travel, begun earlier by driving across the USA with my family. I saw my first staged operas at La Scala in Milan and the Staatsoper in Vienna—a great start!

The FSU Florence program changed the direction of my life; I found my passion. I majored in Italian, and have earned my living my entire adult life teaching the language, history, art, and culture of Italy. When I re-read my diary I find youthfully exuberant descriptions of the people, food, art, music, light, and language, and a vivid appreciation of what I was living as I was living it: a rare thing at any age.

Update:

I was born in Providence, Rhode Island. When I was seven, my parents and one younger sister moved to Miami Beach, Florida. My father had spent some time in Miami in the Navy during WW II and liked the area. I graduated from Miami Beach Senior High (Go High Tides!) in 1965.

In my freshman year at FSU Shirley Stott said to me one day in Meteorology class, “FSU is starting a study center in Florence, Italy. Do you want to go?” I had always loved studying other languages and cultures and my first second language was Spanish. When I got to Florence, I thought the sound of the Italian language was the most beautiful thing I had ever heard, and still do.

After our program I transferred colleges so I could be an Italian major. I earned a BA in Romance Languages at Boston University, an MA in Italian Literature at Brown University, and a Ph.D. in Italian Literature and Renaissance Studies at UNC Chapel Hill.
Since 1975 I have been teaching Italian and Humanities at the UNC School of the Arts, a conservatory training program in Winston-Salem, NC. I’ve mostly taught young aspiring opera singers, plus some actors, dancers, instrumental musicians, and film students.

In 1999 I began writing supertitle translations for lyric opera. To date I’ve created the titles for over 30 operas and 40 different productions, mostly from Italian but a few from other languages; mostly for my two hometown companies (Piedmont Opera and the Fletcher Opera Institute) plus several for other companies and schools. I volunteer a lot for these companies and am also a volunteer tutor teaching English as a Second Language to adults, through my local YMCA.

I’m divorced and have one son. I currently live with two adorable rescue mutts, Fanny and Diva. Diva likes opera.

Photos:

Nancy on top of Hotel Capri
Nancy Goldsmith and Shirley Stott in front of Il Duomo
Cathy Williams and Nancy Goldsmith in Winston-Salem 2016 (left)
Nancy and a friend in front of the "Turtle Fountain", Piazza Mattei, Rome, Feb. 2015 (right)
GOODE
Dianne Goode
diannegoode@mac.com

Memories:

I remember that year in Florence as a series of wonderful adventures — even the flood was an adventure! I remember we had student passes for the museums and often stopped in to say hello to David. I remember bomboloni caldi and the first time I tasted yogurt. I still remember my Tudors and Stuarts, but the hundreds of slides I memorized for Art History are long gone. I remember the trips we took as a group— to Sienna, Ravenna, Rome, Pompeii, Capri— as well as weekend and holiday excursions farther afield. Friends and memories from that year have lasted a lifetime.

Update:

After Florence, I went back to USF and graduated. I then joined the Peace Corps and went to Libya for a year, until Ghadaffi took power and kicked us out. So then I joined Jan Dunn in Thailand, and we were roommates again for two years, teaching English at a teacher-training college about 500 miles south of Bangkok. After that, in more or less this order, I got married, taught middle school English, had a son, got a Master’s in English, moved to the Carolinas, got a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction, got divorced, and left education for a career in real estate.

Today I live in Raleigh, NC. My son works in NYC as a lighting designer for CNN and I have family in Florida, so I fly up and down (or down and up) the East Coast several times a year. I’ve been back to Florence twice; more recently I spent a month in Australia and New Zealand, and last November went back to SE Asia and visited Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. I am still working and still traveling, and still enjoying both.
Photos:

Dianne Goode and Pat Cunningham 1966

Dianne Goode 1966

Dianne Goode 2016
HAMLIN
Richard Nelson Hamlin,
435-640-8983, 639 Ponce De Leon Blvd, Belleair, Fl 33756
richardnhamlin@gmail.com

Memories:

I was a first semester sophomore and turned 19 while in Italy. When I was accepted into the program I didn't speak a word of Italian (took Berlitz all summer to try to get ready). I had never been out of the USA and experienced true culture shock. I didn't know anyone who had participated in the program but quickly made wonderful friends who helped change my life in many ways including culturally, politically, socially and academically. I will never forget the exceptional experience in Florence. I have been back to Florence many times over the years. Each time I am in Florence, wonderful memories flood my mind and I feel lucky, special, younger and invigorated.

Update:

I graduated in 1969 from FSU with an Accounting degree and went to work in Washington DC for an international accounting and consulting firm, now known as KPMG (formerly Peat, Marwick, Mitchell &Co). Over the years I lived and worked in Baltimore, Roanoke, Norfolk, Tampa, Park City Utah, and Miami. Currently my wife, Anne and I reside in Belleair Florida, a town bordering Clearwater Beach, and spend our summer months in our small chalet in Breckenridge Colorado.

I was elected Partner at KPMG in 1979 and was appointed to the Board of Directors of KPMG in 1993. After I retired from KPMG, I was elected to be an independent director for a number of public company boards and continue to serve in this capacity.

I am married to Anne (Pillow) formerly from Virginia Beach, VA and we have three children and five grandchildren. Over the years we have been avid hikers, snow skiers, bikers and generally enthusiastic with outdoor activities in the Rocky Mountains. We also are lifelong golfers.

Photos:

This is me near our house in Park City Utah.
Memories:

It was so long ago that I do not have clear memories of the entire thing but these are the details that I recall! I remember flying from New York and being so excited and thrilled that we could look out the bathroom window when we arrived and see the Duomo! I remember going to visit the David many times and I remember having JoAnn and Jon Mooy and Barbara Hollowell as my personal tour guides. I was a math major and so I was not well-versed in European and art history and those three were my inspiration and teachers! (I remember one particular night on my birthday, drinking way too many whiskey sours with the famous tour guides, who luckily were able to get me home!) I remember helping out at various churches in Florence (I think!) after the flood and before they moved us to Rome because of the water situation. I think we helped out there as well but that is all fuzzy. I remember brushing my teeth in wine. My father did not want me to travel to the Holy Land for Christmas break so I went with several others to Russia (Kiev, Leningrad and Moscow). Also visited Germany and Austria and Switzerland and Paris and London while there. I remember hitchhiking with Diana and Susan (see attached photo) and going with a wonderful Italian family to their home for a meal. I remember (and have regretted my entire life!) staying back to study for exams rather than going with others to the Oktoberfest in Germany! I remember going for Bomboloni at 4 p.m. every day at some delicious bakery. I remember buying hand-made leather boots and a lime green coat that I loved! I remember the wonderful Italian professor and I loved all of my classes, even though they were all very difficult for me given my left-brain tendencies!

Update:

I married Lloyd Hankinson with one semester to go at FSU in August of 1968. After graduation, we moved to DC where I became a computer programmer/system’s analyst for the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. When I got pregnant with my first son, we moved to Sarasota, FL to raise our family and I have been here ever since. I was a stay-at-home Mom for 10 years. My eldest son is now 43 (and has a son and a daughter), my daughter is 41 (and has 2 daughters) and my youngest son is 37. I was divorced in 2008. I have been in a wonderful relationship with Gary for 5 years (see photo below of us). He is still working and unable to accompany me on this trip. I taught calculus and statistics for 31 years and am retired now, tutoring on the side. I love to read, to play the piano, doing yoga, going kayaking and traveling, both to visit places I haven’t been and also to visit my family in California and Jacksonville. I have been back to Italy five times, including taking a biking trip with Barbara Hollowell from Venice to Pisa, which was fabulous! I have also biked in southern France and traveled to Australia, New Zealand, China, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cuba, Ecuador and three yoga retreats in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, Tulum, Mexico and Negril, Jamaica. I just returned with Gary from a three week Spanish immersion experience in Samara, Costa Rica which was wonderful. We lived with a family who spoke no English! One of my teachers there asked me if I was from Italy and I said, no, why? He said he thought I might be because I speak Spanish with an Italian accent :) I loved that!!
Photos:

My daughter Heidi and I with my 2 granddaughters Mia and Alex – 2015

Gary and I in France - 2015
Ann in Paris – 1968

Ann and Diana and Susan hitchhiking in Italy - 1967

My son Kai and I with his son Kaiden and daughter Piper 2014 - Ann Hankinson 2016
Memories:

1) As I ponder the memories of that incredible year on the 1966-67 Firenze Study Abroad program, several things stand out:

a) My two roommates, Doreen van Assenderp and Sue Copp, were the greatest! What an adventure it was to explore Firenze together and then stretch our borders via Eurail. Chan Bostwick and I and other friends decided to take a long weekend and scamper up one of the Swiss Alps for a picnic on a glorious September day. I can almost savor again the crisp air and fresh baked bread, Swiss cheese and wine as we lounged in the meadow on top of the mountain. What a view! Our joy and laughter echoed and ricocheted off the surrounding mountains. It doesn't get any better than that!

b) The garbage cans were right under my window in the Capri Hotel. Waking up to the garbage collectors singing opera was always the highlight of my day! It was in those moments that my deep love and appreciation for the spirit of the Italians began to take root.

c) November 4, 1966 will always be etched in my memory as one of the most defining moments in history not only for Firenze, but also for me. As devastating as the flood was, it could not quench the Italian spirit. Even though thousands were left homeless and many lost everything, those who were able to assist in the clean-up could stop, smile and applaud the "mud angels" passing by with "Bella! Bella!" I can still feel the sting of my tears fifty years ago as I remember that in the midst of the rubble of their lives, they were very much like Michelangelo. He could look at a piece of marble and see the statue of David captured within it. What beautiful, creative people the Italians are and what a privilege we were given to have been dubbed "mud angels" sent to help restore what had been lost.

Update:

I returned home from Florence, became engaged to my college sweetheart Ben Harris, and we married on Oct. 28, 1967 in Tallahassee, FL. Doreen van Assenderp Cohen was in our wedding party. Next year will be our 50th wedding anniversary. God blessed us with two wonderful sons and five incredible grandchildren. We are both retired and have lived and raised our family on a tree farm in Madison, Florida for the past 31 years. Just this summer, we participated in a cultural exchange in the Dominican Republic that reminded me so much of our adventure in Florence. What a joy it was!
Photos:

Kay Price (Harris) in front of Biblioteca Nazionale after November 1966 flood

Birthday celebration with Jane Coleman, Anne Howie, Martha Lamkin, Dino (waiter), Kay Price, Doreen van Assenderp and Barbara Hollowell. Dee La Ruffa took the photo.
Kay Price and Margie Crowell 1966

Ben and Kay (Price) Harris – 2016
Memories:

I really can't begin to tell you how important those 7 months in Florence were for me. It came at a decisive time in my life: I had just earned my Bachelor in applied piano at FSU. My pianistic training began rather late in my life, I was accepted in the program pretty much on faith, and it was a very rough and strenuous four years. On hearing that I wanted to continue with a Master's study, my teacher said "I don't know if you can manage it." At this point came the opportunity to take a break from piano playing in the form of secondary studies of Italian and art history in the pilot program. My parents were kind enough to support me in this crazy idea, which paid off royally. After Florence the pressure was off and I could continue my piano studies with no problems.

And what a time it was! I'm still thankful for all the personal contacts and experiences, even though there's not a soul in the universe who is worse at staying in contact- special regards to Lynn Hewitt and Ron Bowen, and not only them! I still remember hitchhiking to Paris and a trip to Sicily in the winter- I wanted to go somewhere warmer, but it was just as cold, and no heating! And then there was the flood, and those three glorious weeks in Rome...

Update:

After finishing my Master's I received a Fulbright to study in Vienna, where I stayed for six years. Since then I've been working as a vocal coach in German opera houses and concertizing in Europe, resident since 1978 in Stuttgart. Although retired since 2012, I'm still active professionally, married and the proud father of two cats!

Photos:

Stephen Hess 1966 (left) and 2016 (right)
Hey
Ken Hey
hey.ken@mindspring.com

Memories:

Memories flood my mind when thinking of that year. Early in the year, a trip to the Munchen Oktoberfest, a trip that drew roughly 60 of the FSU group. We stayed in a hostel. Someone pulled the railroad emergency switch on the way back (because someone else had not arrived on the train yet), and as a result, my name and old passport number are somewhere on file with Munchen authorities. Trips to Switzerland, Paris and London and so on. Trips in Italy, first to Venice, where Rick Fritz and I ventured to the Lido to look into the Venice Film Festival, where everything was invitation only. So we vaulted a sizable wall and insinuated ourselves into a party (and photo) for Federico Fellini. Then other wonderful trips in Italy: to Sicily, sitting in the Greek theater at Taormina and seeing how theater became a social vehicle; Paestum, where the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian temples lined up, Milano for the cathedral and the weathered Last Supper; and so many more amazing journeys of discovery. And of course the flood and the ensuring trip to Rome (for gamma globulin shots), where we met with the Pope.

But then there were the amazing experiences with the art of Florence and all of Italy. Standing and staring at La Primavera forever; walking around Donatello’s David; striding through the Academia to see Michelangelo’s struggling slaves emerge from the stone; inside the Chiesa at Piazza San Marco to study Fra Angelico’s Annunciation. Being amazed by Giotto’s Bell Tower and trying to understand Brunelleschi’s dome on Il Duomo. All remarkable moments that stick in my memory to this day.

We had recreational moments, including riding buses to a field nearly out of town (but within view of Il Duomo) to play football – that’s American-style football, which seemed to intrigue locals. And playing basketball against the Stanford students. My biggest purchase of the year was a Mangia Dischi, a handheld device that played, while walking, 45 rpm records (an ancient ancestor of the Sony Walkman). It was a great assistance when hitchhiking around.

And then there’s the food. The first calzone con prosciutto in a bar behind Il Duomo; bomboloni caldi on Via Cavour at 4 PM; and Peroni, fuss ball and listening to “Paperback Writer” at the neighborhood bar. An amazing year of learning about the world and about the self.

Update:

I returned to the Tallahassee campus to complete a Masters in the Humanities, with a major focus on the Renaissance (of course); from there, I taught Humanities for a year at the University of South Florida before entering and completing a Ph.D. program in interdisciplinary studies at Emory University, focusing on the late 19th and early 20th century American arts. My first post-doc job was at Brooklyn College (CUNY), teaching in an interdisciplinary program that enabled me to take some student groups to Italy to study. I received a Fulbright Fellowship to be a visiting professor of American History at the University of Rome ten years after my FSU experience in Firenze. Back at Brooklyn College, I became head of the Film Department, wrote film criticism for USA Today magazine, and produced and directed a couple documentaries, one of which, “Southern Voices, American Dreams,” had a nice film festival run. After leaving the academic environment, I joined an intelligence firm, Inferential Focus, which studies social, political, economic and technological change and its implications for clients. I co-wrote a book,
The Caterpillar Doesn’t Know about social changes in the 1990s. I am on the Board of Councilors at the Carter Center, the Board of Advisors for the Atlanta Ballet, the panel of judges of the Suzi Bass theater awards and the Leadership Council for the FSU College of Arts & Sciences. I am fortunate enough to be married to Colleen Hey, who flies for Delta Airlines, and we live in Atlanta.

Photos:

Friends in Rome 1966: Bob Schaefer, Rick Fritz, Carole Lyco, Ken Hey, Judy McFarlin

Ken Hey and wife Colleen Hey – Ken in 2016
Memories:

A few of my most vivid memories of our adventurous year abroad include: *our learning that warm bomboloni came regularly out of a nearby forno at a precise early morning hour and unintentionally scarfing them all up before the locals; *being in awe of the desk in Casa Guida from which Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote her activist poems; *spending Christmas break with a group of US college students "behind the iron curtain"; *while having every intention of staying a casa and studying during spring break, roomie Diana and I spontaneously deciding to hitch-hike to France to visit the Louvre; *and, earning an Art History minor immersed in a Renaissance city vs. seated in a lecture hall memorizing images projected on a screen!

My flood-specific experience, in addition to our collective one of the horrors of the domestic, economic and artistic devastation, was of the communal spirit by which most of us took in stride the daily inconveniences, and our overwhelming desire to be of service to the city we were coming to love. My first "assignment" was to a well-off household who had me on their balcony rinsing off the good China in freezing cold buckets of water. Within a day or so, I was re-assigned outside the Biblioteca as part of the human chain conveying precious materials to the waiting vehicles for transport around the country and world!

That year of being a charter member of the FSU Study Abroad Program has influenced all the rest of my life, from a 2-week group bike gita from Venice to Pisa with roomie Ann Howie, to creating a one-month Renaissance Art History study abroad program for my college, to my post-retirement pattern of living 3 months of each year in the Oltrarno neighborhood of Florence!

Update:

My life from Florence then (1966) through Florence now (2016) has been most dominantly characterized by being a mom, being on one side of the podium or the other, and living an Italian-immersion life! Upon returning from our FSU Study Center and graduating the first time, I married and the next weekend enrolled in grad school to get the Library Science degree I had come to FSU for in the first place, but had exchanged for a major that qualified for our great adventure! By the time I graduated from FSU this second time, I was with child (the year that "Rosemary's Baby" came out!) and took a few months off before having two short stints as a librarian in Tallahassee. Then while teaching English in Wakulla County, I pursued a doctorate in Language Ed. After a few years teaching at then Oregon College of Education, I heard the grad school "Sirens" calling again, jumped ship, and attended Willamette University College of Law. After graduation, with my parents in ill health in Southern California, I moved to the area and entered the California Community College administrative ranks for the remainder of my career in education.

I now live 9 months of the year in San Diego, a short drive from the home of my daughter, her husband, and my two grandkids. My days there pass way too quickly with family and friends, hiking, independent and foreign film, museum activities, Italian classes in our Little Italy, book clubs and Happy Hours!! I live the other 3 months in Florence, participating in remarkably similar activities!
Photos:

Barbara at the Study Center recovering from pneumonia

Barbara at Christmas on the trip to Russia
Barbara in Pisa

Barbara and chef in Abruzzo
Memories:

The moment I recall most distinctly and with the greatest pleasure was a visit that several of us made to Assisi. We walked up through the town buying foods along the way and then ending up at the top of the hill on which the town is built. We settled down in the grasses and had a serene picnic as we gazed over the gentle Umbrian landscape to the southwest.

Update:

After college I pursued a graduate degree in physics, studied and worked in biomedical engineering, and settled into a career developing software for medical imaging systems.

I am now a retired physicist and systems software engineer. I have been married thirty years, have two children both married or partnered, and one grandchild.

My interests include: quantum gravity, encryption methodologies, electronic design, mathematics, the impact of digital systems on society, modern history, classical history and literature, the writers of the European Enlightenment, science fiction. financial market dynamics.

Photo:

Willard Hunt 2012
Memories:

I was 18 year old in August, 1966 and a sophomore when we all got on the plane to fly to Italy. (Do you remember the incredible food, Alitalia served us?) I only knew one other student, Christine Dietrich. The rest of you were strangers and we were going to share seven months, Florence, the flood, lots of “firsts”, new and important friendships, those breakfasts of eggs too soft or too hard, saltless bread and thick coffee.

Since I have started with food let me add some of my firsts and favorites...cappuccino, Asti Spumante, calzone, real lasagna, tortellini in brodo, blood oranges, dolci at Chiapella’s, latte caldo con cognac, cioccolata con panna, fresh figs, panettone and Motta, gelati (OMG), crostini with that delicious liver spread. Basta!

As I write this, I remember Dante, our concierge, with his black hair, mustache and suit. Always kind, patient and helpful. I remember him the morning after the flood being there behind the desk. I had just gotten back from walking to the Duomo and seeing the Ghiberti panels lying on the ground. I went to him and said “How can we help? What can we do?”

I remember the sweet girls in the beauty shop a few doors from the Capri and how they would tease my hair and then weave strands into a crown. It cost 150 lire! and I got my ears pierced on the Ponte Vecchio.

I remember the waiters’ faces that served us so many meals.

I remember the Boboli Gardens, the hills of Fiesole and Settignano, the flower stalls in the markets. I remember the silk lingerie and all the leather goods. Nature and craft, both amazing me with their Tuscan beauty.

Florence penetrated me to my bones and filled my heart. I fell in love with everything. I was breathing the air of the Renaissance with the greatness of its art, politics and philosophy. I remember our first trip to San Miniato del Monte and the view of the city and a few weeks later going up to Fiesole and seeing the city at night. 1966 in time, 1466 in spirit.

After Florence, I changed my major to Art History. Looking at slides doesn’t compare to the real thing, but as a discipline and a study, I think the history of art offers an extraordinary scope and perspective on understanding the evolution of consciousness, seeing the soul of being human at any time, in any place, shaped by any beliefs. My work now as a writer, mentor, teacher finds its roots and its reach in art history and my months in Florence.

The impact of the flood. On 9/11, I was living in Jersey City less than a mile from the Hudson River. My brownstone had a deck with a view of the Trade Towers. I watched the Towers fall with my own eyes. Because I had experienced the devastation of the flood, 9/11 did not overwhelm me. I was calm. I was observant. I wrote about different types of trauma, including trauma of the destruction of iconic
buildings that gave meaning and presence to place. I had seen the Ponte Vecchio destroyed and now the WTC. And I got active right away...joining committees, etc.

I am so glad I was a student in Florence before cell phones and Skype. I was truly worlds away from home and my dysfunctional family. I haven’t been back to Florence since 1974. I may never go there again, but I am never not there and that is not about sentiment, it is about il fango nel mio sangue. So many thoughts and feelings are welling up in my soul right now, so I better stop or this will become a book.

Update:

In 1972, I was planning to return to FSU for a Master’s in Art History and another year in Florence, when I met my husband and married him two weeks after our first date. We honeymooned in Europe and spent a week in Florence. We went again two years later. The visits were wonderful, but not the same as the magic of 1966-67.

The most significant accomplishments of my early adult life were establishing a birth center and being a founding parent of the Waldorf School of Princeton, NJ. Both were inspired by my two children, Thea and Luc.

I lived in Princeton for 26 years, Jersey City for 10, and I’ve been in Chapel Hill for 5 years. I have 5 grandchildren. I am blissfully single. After divorcing my husband, it was time for a new name: Jericho. I chose it because it is really all about me and what I do. Send me an email and I will tell you all about it.

Beginning in my 40s, I began mentoring others, writing and teaching new ways of self-development. I work every day. My blog is followed by people around the world. I have developed a number of online courses and will soon begin writing a book or two. If you want to know more about my work and my life you can visit my website: www.imagineself.com. You might also visit www.innerchristmas.com and learn how thousands of individuals spend their Christmas every year contemplating my Inner Christmas messages.
Photos:

Chiapella (left) Professor Karl (right)

Room at Hotel Capri

Lynn Hewitt Jericho 2016
Memories:

Carolyn’s Version in Prose:
1966 - I thought I was going to Florence to observe in person the great treasures of the Italian Renaissance, the masterpieces I had studied in art history class at FSU. Never did I imagine it would become such a life-changing experience, a time filled with the joys of a wedding, the crisis of a flood, the introduction to a place and people who would become part of my continuing life story, and, of course, the rich exposure to a mind-boggling collection of art, architecture, literature, and history. The FSU Florence Program of 1966-67 became a standard by which I have measured all experiences since then. I was going to go—with or without Chuck, but here he sat on the plane beside me, for me. From the beginning, travel anxiety was swept away in the all-night party aboard the Alitalia charter as it flew smoothly through the night. Fabulous food and smiling stewardesses; laughter and camaraderie: was this a foreshadowing of what Italy would be like? Maybe, yes definitely, this was going to be the adventure of a lifetime.

My first memory of Florence was born in a time-warp sensation of being transported into Italy of several centuries ago thanks to the Festa della Rificolona (Festival of the Lanterns), which occurred on one of the first nights following our arrival. We had unpacked, snoozed, met roommates, scouted the hotel, scoped the landlords, and now were out to see the città. Streets were clogged with people, hundreds of whom carried candle-filled lanterns. Men marched in groups dressed in colorful striped Renaissance garb, bearing crested flags. Lights glowed from lighted candles floating down the Arno, from parapets and crenellations of the Palazzo Vecchio, from lanterns everywhere. It was a magical evening of flickering lights, color, and joy in the streets. With no prior information about the event, we students could almost feel that it had been planned specifically for our arrival. Thank goodness for this beautiful introduction to the city because later we would face images of the city ravaged by the worst flood since the 14th century.

But first, there was our wedding—or to be technically correct, our two weddings. On October 1, 2016—one month from now as I write—my husband Chuck and I will celebrate our Golden Wedding Anniversary. Fifty years ago we were married in Florence, Italy, possibly one of the most romantic settings in the world. The occasion and its surrounding events involved classmates, teachers, Italian friends and even strangers in amazing acts of generosity and contributions to romance. To say that this incredible beginning has informed our entire life together is an understatement. Our children have clamored for the stories of their parents’ fairy tale wedding day, even once (at the tender ages of 10 and 5) arranging a surprise 20th anniversary dinner for us with Italian music, sparklers, gelato, and wedding photos arranged for decorations. I have been asked to write about The Wedding as a separate addition to the Memories collection, so I will summarize here. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined a wedding in one of the most famous rooms in Italy, the red and gilt Sala Rossa in the
Palazzo Vecchio, surrounded by historic tapestries, chandeliers and mirrors, accompanied by American classmates and teachers and Italian friends and patrons, in a ceremony conducted wholly in Italian. Then as people lined the streets shouting La Sposa! (the bride), I was driven like a princess across Florence to St. James Episcopal Church for the second wedding. Here, Dr. Tanzy walked me down the aisle in a ceremony in which I recognized rituals, words, and music familiar to me. Although I was technically a legally married woman as I walked down the aisle, this is the ceremony that was for me the true wedding. We had been invited to have our wedding reception at Casa Guidi, the home of poets Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. In addition, the Scalas magnanimously arranged a dinner party and reception at the Hotel Capri, where I walked unsuspectingly into the dining room to stand in awe before a wedding cake that went from floor level to above the head of my 6’5” husband. After this joyful and raucous celebration, we took a calming, dreamy train ride to Venice for a honeymoon. The day was a blur, yet there remain the most vibrant memories of solicitous roommates and beaming friends, the delivery of orange blossoms and breakfast trays to my bedroom door as I dressed, a nearly MIA groom with last minute butterflies in the stomach, two beautiful ceremonies in stunningly exquisite locations, and a mad mash of medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque Italy that joined me in two languages to my life’s dearest partner.

One month and three days later, the worst flood since the time of Dante washed over Florence; the river Arno overflowed its banks in the middle of the night spilling muddy, smelly, naphtha-covered waters into the city. The images starkest in my mind are, first, of an all-night gathering of students in the dining room of the Hotel Capri, our home, throughout the night of the flood, November 3rd/4th, a strange counterpoint to that Alitalia flight. Now we were keeping our spirits up.
up by singing and close companionship, while bits of information seeped in from the outside about the devastation creeping ever closer to our location. My new husband played his guitar and led us in songs, some quiet, some rousing, keeping us calm and distracted from what we couldn’t yet imagine. The waters came to our doorstep, filling the basement of the hotel, and rushed past, leveling off in the blocks beyond us. Going out the next day to explore, we were shocked by the devastation: cars piled four and five on top of each other, muddy water standing over one story deep between buildings near the Arno, bodies being removed on stretchers from apartments near the Uffizi (the first time I became an eye witness to death from a catastrophe), priceless panels from the doors of the Baptistery lying on the ground inches from my feet (I gawked, thinking that anyone could pick one up and walk away; yet, of course, no one did), the Mercato open all night as vendors stood in the rain hawking smelly, stiffened, flood-soaked leather products at rock bottom prices. Chuck and I stood in a long line inside the darkened cavern of the central post office where a lone clerk, lit by a candle, helped us send a cablegram to parents at home to reassure them of our survival.

Later, we became acutely aware of the lack of drinking water and electricity in the city. My husband’s Special Forces survival skills came in handy as we collected rainwater on our window sill to brush our teeth, and while the hotel staff did its best to feed us from their dwindling supplies, we scouted for food before drinking water and loaves of bread arrived from cities in less desperate straits than ours. In a student brigade organized by Dr. Pulman, we carried water in buckets from a public pond several blocks away back to the hotel to flush the toilets. There we also rinsed our mud encrusted work clothes and hair after a day of volunteering in rescue locations. After a week the police put a stop to this activity. The stench of the muddy waters worsened each day as more rotting things added to the brew. Carcasses of drowned horses, dogs, rats, and the butchered meat from the Mercato Centrale and other markets were contaminating the waters still swirling through the streets. In response to the health danger presented by these conditions, FSU sent a nurse to inoculate us against infection. One-by-one we went into a tiny room to be stabbed in the buttocks with the most excruciating injection I have ever felt. I could literally feel the serum invade my flesh. It must have been something powerful enough to stop the Black Plague.

It was devastating to see this beautiful city and its artistic riches laid low. Experts, who were really not prepared for such an environmental disaster, scrambled to figure out how to rescue treasures in preparation for years of restoration. At first we thought that rescuing everything out of the brown, oil-streaked water was the challenge. Once the water began to recede, however, the aftermath seemed even worse. Now, thick, evil smelling layers of mud, covered by the slimy coating of naphtha, remained. The task was too much for the city itself. So, along with an astonishing stream of students arriving from all over Italy, the UK, and Europe, we volunteered to help. The students were a mix of nationalities and languages, all motivated by the same idea: save Florence. I volunteered at the Biblioteca Nazionale, joining a crew to rescue mud-soaked books out of the inundated lower floors. The library, which sits right next to the bank of the Arno, like the Uffizi, took a direct hit from the flood; thousands of books (many of them ancient, rare, or one of a kind) were damaged or destroyed. Teddy Kennedy arrived and climbed down into the dark bowels of the library to watch the lines of volunteers, some waist
deep in the muddy water, passing up the books one-by-one in the ascending human chain to be piled in giant heaps outside to begin the restoration process. I can still feel the messy slap of each heavy volume landing in my arms and smell the dreadful, now familiar stench. I and several other students were asked to describe our experiences and impressions with a film crew for English language news distribution. My strapping husband led a rescue team to help dig out homes buried in mud. Later, he received a touching letter from one such resident.

Eventually he joined me at the BN where Ken Kobre took our picture. This photo was circulated around the world by the Associated Press. It shows Chuck mud-soaked to the waist because he had slogged hip-deep through muddy water with me on his shoulders to get us to the library. I was wearing a pair of his pants, not having a single pair of jeans or pants in my wardrobe thanks to 1966 FSU dress restrictions. I had to pin them up at the crotch and hips with safety pins to make them fit, since I am a foot shorter than he. My grubby hair was pinned to the top of my head (no rubber bands for pony tails!) to keep it further out of the mud. Chuck looks heroic; I was scowling, mud-spattered, and a mess. To my dismay, this is the photo that the world has seen of me. It not only circled the globe via AP in 1966, it was the cover photo on the FSU newsletter mailed after the flood, and again it was re-issued world-wide on the tenth anniversary of the flood. Now it appears again. There’s no escaping it.

An incident that I rarely tell because it is almost too far-fetched to be believed is what happened to us on our way to the library on the day this photo was taken. We had to circle around the direct route from the hotel to the library to avoid the worst remaining flooded streets. Nonetheless, in some places Chuck lifted me onto his shoulders in order to slog through water that went higher than his waist. The direction took us past St. James church, the site of our wedding #2. In front of the church we saw debris spread in a swathe from the church doors to the street gate, everything from overturned chairs, hymnals, papers galore, vestments,
leather bound tomes, lying in mud. I saw a book lying face up, open to a page of handwriting. I picked it up. To my amazement, I looked at the open page and saw my name. It was Father Victor Stanley’s appointment diary. The page was dated October 1. In his handwriting I read our names, “Carolyn Langford and Charles Walter Johnson.” The mud-spattered details of our marriage ceremony followed. The coincidence of that discovery was unnerving at the time. While other students were scooping up books with names from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, I looked down and saw my own name.

When the supplies at the hotel were depleted, and toilets could no longer be flushed with water from the pond, our group was moved en masse to Rome to allow the staff to reorganize and us to recuperate. In Rome, our group was feted by the Italian government. Chuck, as president of the student body, accepted thanks and gifts from a grateful Italian government on behalf of the army of students who volunteered in the rescue effort for Florence. He had to give a speech in Italian, for which Dr. Givens valiantly coached him beforehand. We were invited to meet the Pope. Historic flood, semi-fame, Pope: what a beginning to a married life. What we all appreciated more than anything was simple. The joys of showers, baths, clean clothes, and real food were incalculable to the point that we accepted with grace that normal life goes on with such things as exams and comic relief. I remember taking an exam in the Caesar Augustus dining room for Dr. Tanzy’s class on Browning and writing an essay on “A Death in the Desert.” Sitting in an empty dining room in Rome, after witnessing destruction of historical proportions, contemplating a visit with the Pope, while attempting to write something meaningful about one of Browning’s most philosophical compositions about miracles and faith, was a surreal moment. Then, as has been famously explained elsewhere, there is the unique experience of Italian dry cleaning methods that prevented Chuck from arriving in time to receive his personal audience (all two seconds worth) with the Pope. Roman stain removal=scissors.

Do we ever fully appreciate the magnitude of experience as it is happening? I think for all of us who were there in the middle of it, we understood the significance of what was before our eyes, and we were eager, no, compelled to help. Did we think that our actions would be
remembered beyond a ceremony in Rome in the immediate aftermath of the event? I for one did not. We responded as events and our hearts required in that moment. And then, life went on. Recently, I discovered that we students are “historic.” Angels of the Mud. We can be googled. Students write research papers on it. I still occasionally get interviewed about it. Fifty years have brought adventures and accomplishments to us all; yet I feel especially proud of our contribution in 1966, small as it may have been in the larger scope of all that Florence endured.

So, my memories of the Florence Program include vibrant images of picnicking in Fiesole, honeymooning in Venice, visiting backstage at La Scala in Milan, gazing into history in San Gimignano, Siena, Ravenna, Assisi, and Rome; watching Rudolph Nureyev and Margot Fontaine transform Romeo and Juliet in London, seeing a one-time only exhibition of Picasso’s life work in the Grande and Petit Palaces in Paris, train-hopping through Europe, swinging over an abyss in a cable car rising to the highest Alp in Zurich—just for starters. And let us not forget the golden light on the stones of Florence near the end of day, bomboloni, frequent visits with David, and countless other breathtaking examples of human creative genius surrounding us in every direction . . . but it was the unexpected, unpredicted events that marked me forever, such as the generosity of friends and strangers whose efforts gave us a wedding day unexpected beyond my wildest fantasies, and the incredible spirit of cooperation and altruistic energy into which we were swept up in the aftermath of an unpredicted natural disaster. I can remember these places and events so vividly perhaps because I have lived every day for fifty years with someone who shared the experiences with me. For us, the time in Florence turned out not only to be an adventure of a lifetime; it became the beginning and the backdrop for our life together ever after.

Chuck’s Version in Browning-esque Free Verse:

1966 - Nervous, laughing students on the plane to from New York to Pisa. I have to be here, because Carolyn’s going. And I want to marry her.

Moving around—seat selection pairings and triplings, etc. going on—
I’m where I want to be The Rest of My Life—next to her. Wedding in Italy is going to be a challenge

Alitalia charter flight makes a lie of “airline food” as an oxymoron. The flight is an all night party.
Pisa airport—Where is the leaning tower?—bus ride to Florence—Carolyn sleeps. I watch the scenery, And her.

Beautiful trees are spaced far apart on the grassy, terraced hillsides—
Nothing like Florida, for sure, at least in Tuscany, or like any other place I’ve been in Europe or the US

Bustling old city, Florence, with lots of miniature cars and insane drivers—some streets very wide—
Some big enough only for the smallest of cars with a good and careful driver

Boys are in a separate pensione with the Malagrinos—the Albergo still has seasonal guests—more pairings, etc.—away from Carolyn
Roommates Bob and Roger call me “The Old Grad,” because I’m a 27-year-old 2nd year MA candidate. What?
Carolyn and I on the roof of the pensione, stars above, relaxing after walking, walking, walking
To David at the end of 27th of April Street proving God and Michelangelo live and lived, respectively.
Then more walking to the Duomo and Gates of Paradise and more deific and artistic testimony
And then more walking to the Piazza Signoria and more David and Michelangelo and friends,
Lights in the windows of the Palazzo Vecchio and Ponte Vecchio and all things Vecchio
And people in costume—must be some kind of festival—wonder what
Now to the hotel, where our classes, meals, parties, everything will be happening.
Mrs. Givens, soon to be Dr. Givens—really wants the wedding to happen—tells me to pay this guy
And more to that guy and then more lira for francobolli stamps
E francobolli di piu per questo e quello documento ufficiale
All important (the documents) I’m sure, certainly necessary (the “gratuities”) if this is going to happen.
American Consul of Florence, feisty lady, wants it to happen—gets really pissed at one of the Franco-bolli, whatever, ufficiale guys—
It happens and she shows at the wedding, along with the
Mayor of Florence, who officiates at the civil ceremony, and a dowager countess from somewhere and Some wealthy American ex-pats who have developed a fondness for us—or pity—not sure which since
we are far from family for this all-important event
Lungarno: dress, Ponte Vecchio: rings, Mrs. Scala: veil, Dr. Givens and numerous anonymous contributors: flowers, “Get-me-to-the-church”: upset stomach
Lots of words I’m to answer “Si” to in a very red room in Palazzo Vecchio and Carolyn all beautiful
Dr. Givens and Sr. and Sra. Scala and everyone for that matter—smiling and happy.
Then to Church and American Episcopal priest and God and I-do’s and a ceremony and music that I can Understand.
Win, my best man, Roger and Bob, my groomsmen, giving me moral support
Ladies in waiting, Carolyn’s roommates, who are also my “bachelor party” revelers—Charlene, Jennifer,
and Bonnie—doing the same for Carolyn—
Dr. Givens is a mother hen and Dr. Tanzy is a tender father of the bride, in locus parentis truly, both of them.
Ken’s taking pictures.
Rum cake and reception in the Hotel Capri that blows us away—thanks to all!
And off on the train to Venice for a few days of honeymoon—first night in single beds in narrow room—
Not even side by side—Hotel Florida—where else?
“We’re married and want a double,” I say.
“Most Americans want single beds,” they say and send up Asti and a “Scusi” note.
Next night new room, double bed—refutes for a lifetime the argument that the phrase “happily married” is an oxymoron—gondolas, bridges, palazzo, San Marco, Murano glass, Lido—then back to Florence—our Own Room—with Double—and classes in the hotel with wonderful professors we get to know well
Our side-by-side pairing is officially recognized.
Then one morning Dr. Nati, our official local physician, knocks at our door to say, “There’s been a
flood!”
I open the door, laugh nervously, and say, “You’re Kidding, Right?” realizing immediately that
he isn’t. “No laughing matter. This is serious. People have Died and been injured. Priceless
artifacts and works of art have been destroyed.” He is distraught.
We worry and wait all night for news from our professors and some students living near the
Arno
Very bad experiences—cars swept up and stacked against their building—but all OK, thank God
Those of us in the hotel are fortunate—water at the front door and in the basement is all—but
None in the toilets—must find containers for transporting water from the pond to flush.
Now walking to the other end of Via XXVII Aprile—to swans, not to David—and carrying back
heavy
pails of water
Not as difficult a burden for us as for the guys we see carrying a corpse in a sheet on a board.
Biblioteca Nazionale Lungarno duty—mud, wooden paddle brooms for pushing it out to the
street—
Mud-bucket and water-soaked book-passing lines, and dirty faces, clothes, everything wet and
soiled
All unimportant juxtaposed with unbearable destruction of Florence's and the world's art and
archives
Ken taking pictures again—
Some get on the newswires—including one of us—with Carolyn beside me
Wearing a pair of my mud-splattered pants all pinned up to fit.
“That’s my brother,” says Bob, my Brother, pointing out the picture from a newspaper to one of
his
Army mates stateside. And his
Buddy says, “And who’s the tall guy beside him?” Carolyn doesn’t like that story. And I’m
convinced Bob’s making it up, because she always looks beautiful to me, even wearing my
pants.
The concern reaches the university back home—medicine folks show up with vaccinations—
And then we’re swept off to Rome—even more little cars—even more insane drivers—but
beautiful
Clean city—bad dry cleaners—great builders—fantastic fountains—nice respite from mud
And another reception—this time for all of us as we’re officially appreciated as gli angeli del
fango—
Grateful but somewhat embarrassed—not feeling altogether worthy of such praise.
Photos by Ken.
Tour the Vatican and Sistine Chapel, but miss seeing the Pope. Rome drycleaner cuts a stain out of the Jacket I brought for the occasion, ruining it and causing us to miss our audience.

Back to Florence and trips to San Gimignano, Siena, Ravenna, Assisi, Fiesole, Milan—all wonderful and a Bit of a jumble of architectural masterpieces, diptychs, triptychs, frescoes, mosaics, sculpture, tapestries, Paintings, and whatever you call Della Robbias—most art being very beautiful, some more beautiful than others, and some almost-beautiful Christmas in London with friends, Fasching in Munich. Too little time in Salzburg, Zurich, Paris As wonderful as all these places and their charms are, we now appreciate that there is . . . Nothing more scenic than views of Florence from Piazzale Michelangelo or Fiesole Nothing more splendorous than Santa Maria del Fiore inside or outside at any time of day or night Nothing more magical than being married and living in Florence in the company of many friends Nothing more uplifting than seeing works of Botticelli, Raphael, Donatello, Michelangelo, Piero della Francesca, Fra Angelico . . . so many greats—all within minutes and a few steps of one another Nothing more sobering than the knowledge that one is sharing in some small way in the history of this Bella Città Hard to believe that we are doing all this, while learning so much, passing our exams, and making friends We’ll remember all our lives Dr. Nati is also very serious about our having children—better get on with that, I guess. Our wedding cake has two little babies in a hidden compartment under the bride and groom Topping the cake, but we aren’t to discover them until some months later or have the first of our Children Until ten years later, but there will indeed be two, girl and boy—life is good.

**Update:**

**Carolyn and Chuck:**

1967-1980: After returning to Tallahassee, we finished our Master’s degrees in English, then started on the PhD. While taking a full-time load, Chuck also continued in the Army Reserves in a Special Forces unit. We expected any day he would be deployed to Viet Nam, but it didn’t happen. Meanwhile, Carolyn took a partial load while also teaching English lit full time at Florida A&M University, sharing an office with Sadie Gaither, wife of the legendary coach of the Rattler football team, Jake Gaither. She was one of maybe four non-African American faculty members on campus. It was at the height of the Civil Rights era. “I felt like I had left one historical situation (the flood in Florence) and popped up in another (riots and marches on our university campuses). Chuck was now ABD (All But Dissertation) and Carolyn was PHT (Put Husband Through), so we went to Chattanooga, TN, for our first full time positions (at different universities due to nepotism policies). Chuck, whose degrees were in English and Administration was an English professor as well as assistant to the president of the University of Chattanooga, a private college that merged with the state system to become University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). Carolyn was assoc. prof., a department chair, and head of
research and development for 11 years at Chattanooga State and helped usher it into the state university system as well. At this small university she learned to build departments and create new curricula, which became a forte later.

We lived an idyllic life at our house on the Tennessee River, enjoying our sailboat made in Poole, England, sturdy enough to sail the rough English Channel. For a decade we were submerged in an academic life of university teaching and writing and a wonderful community of friends. We were richly blessed. We had our Tennessee Walker, Glory, in our stable, Charlie Girl at our dock, a houseful of dogs and cats, friends and houseguests staying at our home on a regular basis, students out on the weekends for picnics under the spreading oak, badminton on the back lawn, and summers of travel, especially back to England for intense research at the British Museum. In England Carolyn helped Chuck do research for a book on Victorian verse parody. We unofficially adopted Carolyn’s 13-year-old little sister and raised her as our “first child” until she graduated from Vanderbilt and married. Ten years married, 1976, a daughter was born. Chuck left the university and returned to his first career before Carolyn met him, finance.

1980–the Present: Four years later Chuck’s father was diagnosed with cancer. We left our house intact and decamped to Chuck’s hometown, Lake Worth, FL, where our daughter and son (born the day we moved in) had the pleasure of several years living close to their grandparents just as Chuck had had with his grandparents as a boy. Carolyn “retired” and became a full time mother for the next 18 years. In 1982 we took our children to Europe for an extended stay. Chuck’s brother was an aide to Gen Haig at SHAPE in Belgium, so Belgium became the center from which we branched out to Italy and elsewhere while Chuck did a music tour with the choir of our church, Bethesda-By-The-Sea Episcopal Church in Palm Beach. He had the opportunity to sing in the cathedral at Fiesole and at St. Mark’s Cathedral in Venice, among other familiar places. As if two previous wedding ceremonies were not enough, Chuck arranged a surprise third wedding at St. James church for a renewal of vows. We also received a private tour of the Palazzo Vecchio and the Sala di Matrimoni when officials there learned we were the couple who had been married there in 1966. It was wonderful being back in Florence. We stayed at the Hotel Capri (in our old room!). Sra. Scala still reigned supreme even though little Pina Scala was now a sophisticated young woman and the manager of the hotel.

Migrating to nearby Boca Raton, we discovered old friends living in our residential neighborhood: Firenze classmates Robert and Sara Jane Swarthout. Along with the enchanting job of being a mother, Carolyn stayed active in education as a consultant. Chuck developed and managed offices for three major NYSE firms throughout south Florida, which kept him on the go. In 2001, he left to become an Executive VP, and one of the principals and owners of JVB Financial Group in Boca, a small independent broker/dealer specializing in fixed income. The firm sold about a decade later, but retained its name and some of its employees. Chuck is still there as an Executive Director of fixed Income Institutional sales.

When Emily left for college at Manhattan School of Music in NY (where she continued to live for eighteen years including 9/11) and Matthew also began high school out of town, we made two
big changes. We downsized to a house not far from the first one (about one mile away), where we have now lived for twenty years. And Carolyn went back to work at a local private school. Not long ago she shifted to part-time, so now all she does is this: Academic Dean, English Dept. Chair, teaches two classes, and publishes a national award-winning literary magazine. What she dropped is producing (for 13 years) an annual Shakespeare Festival involving around 200 people.

We have been blessed with two wonderful children, born ten and fifteen years after that magical wedding in Florence, Italy. Both share their father’s love of music and their mother’s love of literature and reading. Emily is enjoying a career as an operatic dramatic soprano and Matthew has toured as a drummer in heavy metal bands. Best of all, they both play piano, and each of them enjoys and respects the other’s chosen musical genre. In fact Emily has made a video with a rock band, and Matthew is an aficionado of Richard Wagner, who represents a significant part of Emily’s chosen repertoire. Our travel adventures dropped away to going wherever Emily was performing, which took us often to New York (Carnegie Hall, New York City Opera at Lincoln Center, etc.), Santa Barbara Opera (for the first of her many Carmen’s, and many places in between, including her recent performance of Salome in Conn. Son Matthew began building drum sets out of pots and pans at age four and went on to start his first band in high school, then go on the road touring all over the country and opening concerts for major rock bands whose names we can never remember correctly. We followed him with live streaming inside the tour van, and enjoyed watching one of his adventures turned into a funny commercial on ESPN. Interspersed into their performance and touring schedules, Emily Langford Johnson is also the project manager for an interior designer in Palm Beach, and Matthew McCormick Johnson learned the securities business at his father’s shoulder. Both children, no longer children, have always maintained a deep affection for “home” and have provided a rich, vibrant center to our lives.

Carolyn: “Presently, after several years of saying I will retire, I think I may actually do it. Plans for the future are under continual revision.”

Chuck: “My only regret is that it was I rather than Carolyn who got the doctorate at FSU. For sure it should have been the other way around, given our eventual respective career paths--not to mention that she’s a lot smarter than I am, of course. From Day One, we’ve had a great life together. Fifty years later, she’s still the one, and, yeah, we’re still crazy after all these years.
Memories:

I will never forget the night the Arno flooded, of course. The next morning I grabbed my Pentax 35mm camera and Mamiya twin-lens reflex and headed out the door with Don Cumming, a fellow Florida State University student. Shortly I came to a flooded street where a person hung to an overhead rope desperately trying to cross the passage without drowning. I took some images and shortly after photographed two nuns, each holding a handle of a huge wicker-covered wine cask. Then I saw soldiers removing survivors on a stretcher from a boat.

I knew that my pictures were of no value unless I could get them to a newspaper. I met a film crew who had just flown in from England and gave them my undeveloped film with my return address after soliciting a promise from them to return the film. Unbelievably, the plan worked. The pictures appeared first in England and then all over the world. I got my film back—and I was paid for the pictures—my first international photo sale.

Eventually, I became a photojournalist and then a photojournalism professor. I often credit that experience with the career path I followed. [See Attachments: Kobre Photos of Flood]

My first memory of our FSU program in Florence was the party the school hosted for us soon after everyone had arrived from the States. I had already been in Europe for three months trying to learn French in Paris, and I thought of myself as travel hardened because I had hitchhiked a bit around the continent before arriving in Italy.

At the opening party I remember that seemingly out of nowhere, a swarm of young Italian men arrived on motor scooters at the hotel where the party was held. Before I even got to meet anyone, the Italian studs seemed to have swept away all our fellow female students. As the year progressed I remember that the girls went on dates with these young suitors and left us guys sad and solo. Italian women (of the era), I was told, only went on dates that were chaperoned—plus my Italian wasn’t good enough to even start a conversation with one to try. The girls in our program with Italian boyfriends, all learned Italian, but we guys were stuck going to the library just to gaze at an Italian ragazza across the table… even if we dared not speak to her. Speaking of but not in Italian… I remember our tiny Italian teacher perched on her chair, feet dangling above the floor, trying to teach me Italian. A lost cause.

I also remember going to a pizzeria every night after dinner and ordering a calzone because the food was so unappetizing at the hotel. I remember long weekends when students would travel and return by Monday morning with tales of exotic places they had visited. I remember hitchhiking to Greece alone—with a tourist map that did not indicate that the road was closed through Yugoslavia during the winter! I finally had to take a train that seemed right out of a scene from Dr. Zhivago.

And of course, I will never forget visiting all the museums in Florence either in groups or individually. We could drop in at Uffizi any time… no appointment needed like today… to visit our favorite Renaissance artist. While I love modern art, I think I honed my museum addiction from visiting the Uffizi so frequently during that year.
Update:

I was an undergraduate major in experimental psychology at FSU, and then went to grad school at Brown in experimental child psychology. I worked with children for a few years but continued to take pictures.

Then I got a break taking pictures. I was a staff photographer for the St. Petersburg Times and later sold a picture to Time magazine. First I freelanced for Time and Newsweek (remember it?) then a staff job on the Boston Phoenix, then a teaching gig in photojournalism at Boston University.

I wrote a textbook, based on extensive interviews with working photojournalists called Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach, Focal Press. The book is in its 7th edition and has been used by students for the last 36 years at universities here and abroad. It has been now been translated into at least 5 languages.

After beginning my teaching career at Boston University in photojournalism, I directed the programs at University of Houston, University of Missouri, and, landed happily at San Francisco State University, where I taught for the last 30 years. I officially retired at the end of May.

I married Betsy Brill, a former photojournalist at the Houston Post. She and I have been on the road of life together since 1982. Starting with the second edition of my textbook in 1990, Betsy has edited and designed each revision of Photojournalism, including latest version. Her editing has turned my routine writing into readable prose, and her design of the 500+ page book has given it the look and feel that have kept it on the market so long.

Betsy and I have worked on other projects together over the years, including our year-long adventure in the slums of Egypt, India, Bangladesh, and Indonesia documenting different approaches to microfinance programs for poor women. Betsy wrote the stories, and I took the pictures. On that trip around the world I started shooting video and have since produced a number of video documentaries. For my 52-minute documentary Deadline Every Second, I followed Associated Press photographers on assignment. The documentary was shown on WNET in New York, KQED in San Francisco, and nationally on WGBH's World Compass and now available on Amazon.com.

My other projects have included a patented invention called the “Lightscoop” that transforms ugly light from the pop-up flash on a DSLR into soft, shadowless light available on line. I also developed an app, VideoPro Camera, for the iPhone, available in Apple's app store, that lets users listen to the audio while recording video. I am using it and the iPhone now to shoot a full-length documentary for TV broadcast called “La Revolution du Rosé.”
Photos:  [Note – see Attachments for more photos of the flood by Ken Kobre]:

Crossing the flood on a line – Photo by Ken Kobre

Several of Ken Kobre’s photos published in this issue

Ken Kobre with iPhone and Mic Copy 2016
LONG
Richard M. and Mary L. Long
casawe@earthlink.net

Memories:

You all may remember us as the newly married couple with the room closest to the stairs on the first floor. The year in Florence was a profoundly transforming experience for both of us. We had married the year before, and in 1966 I was beginning graduate school in History, planning to research a thesis on Napoleon in Florence, and Mary was in the last semester of her B.A. in Classics/History. (When the flood came, many of the documents I hoped to examine were alluvionati, and the Archivio di Stato remained closed until after we all went home.)

Update:

Back in Tallahassee, I finished my thesis (mostly from secondary sources): Franco-Tuscan Relations, 1790-1799 (1969) and later expanded it into a dissertation (1972). Mary became secretary to Dean Steve Winters at the FSU Honors Program and I worked the night computers at a bank, and later worked at the Tallahassee Democrat. I returned to Europe in 1971 to complete my research, working in archives and libraries in London, Paris, Florence, and Arezzo. I visited friends at the new FSU Center in the Villa Fabricotti (Wow! Not the Hotel Capri!), and ran into Ron Bowen by happy coincidence at the Cité Universitaire in Paris.

The job market collapsed in 1970, but in 1971 I was fortunate to get hired by Hillsborough Community College in Tampa. Mary’s mother, who had visited us in Florence after the flood, lived in Bradenton, so we were able to see her often. Virginia Williams also was hired at HCC, where she taught English. Mary became an urban planner with the city of Tampa. She returned to Europe with me in 1975 and in 1980 when I received a Sabbatical and we had a leisurely tour of England, France, and Italy.

In the course of my researches in European libraries I discovered hundreds of pieces of music for the classical guitar published during the years 1800-1850. I collected microfilm or photocopies of many of them, played through them, and resolved to make modern editions a few, and this led to a new academic specialty and a new side career as a music publisher (Tuscany Publications, of course!). Mary, meanwhile, became fascinated by the new Macintosh computer (1984) and in the next decade became an amazing computer expert, and a wonderful graphic artist. She was the perfect publishing partner.

In 1989, a little serendipity: I was doing research in Florence and visiting a professor friend who was teaching at the FSU Center (then located in an old palazzo on the Borgo degli Albizzi). He had to go to Rome for a few days and I took his classes. The subject was the Pazzi Conspiracy, so I took the small class on an impromptu field trip, and we went to the Palazzo Vecchio and Duomo, describing incident-by-incident the murder of Giuliano, the escape of Lorenzo, etc., where it happened. It was the most enjoyable class I ever taught. I was later invited to teach there for a year, and I even arranged for leave from HCC, but I didn’t get the offer in writing, and at some point the offer was withdrawn without explanation. I later heard that an FSU professor decided late that he wanted the job, so naturally he had priority.

In the 1990s the publishing business grew and I was performing regularly with a local chamber group called Camerata (another reference to Florence). I was actively publishing articles on guitar history and
writing liner notes for CDs for Philips, Naxos, Azica, and other labels. In 2001 Mary and I together assumed the editorship of *Soundboard*, the Journal of the Guitar Foundation of America.

In 2005, Mary suffered a fatal heart attack. As fate would have it, I was in Florence when I got the news. I’ve only been able to bring myself to return once since then, a few years ago. I was appalled by the crowds, dazzled by the beauty, and overwhelmed by the memories. I retired from teaching in 2006, and from editing *Soundboard* at the end of 2012. So that’s our story: Two lives completely transformed and enriched by Florence 1966-67.

Love and best wishes to you all,
Richard

*Photos:*

Mary and Richard Long 1965

Mary Long 1966
McLURE
Betsi Britten McLure
Betsib@Bellsouth.net

**Memories:**

My memory of the flood is when, I think it was Suzanne Young and I walked thru the ankle high water surrounding the hotel where we stayed. We had been up in the mountains surrounding Florence to get streets around the hotel were flooded. We walked thru the streets with a swish, swish. People living in the buildings on these street were standing on the steps of their buildings. The men lit matches to light our way. It was surreal. All quiet except for a strike of a match and swish, swish, swish. When we were nearing the hotel we could see Signora Givens????? holding a candle and leaning out of the window looking down the street. The light of the candle illuminated her hair and furrowed brow. It was a Goya painting made human. I felt awful that we may have been the cause of her concern. I decided that she was simply checking the water level in the street. When we walked into the hotel we encountered FSUer's singing lustily arm in arm in the lounge. I could only assume that the water was gone but not the wine.

**Update:**

The only thing I can tell you about my life since then is that I picked up 2 graduate degrees, a Masters and a PhD. Which was not difficult since I worked at Georgia State University during this period and half the trauma of getting through these various programs was finding a parking space. I bribed the "keeper of the parking" underneath my office building with beer and had a prime parking space...At the ripe old age of 39 I married the dearest man that ever walked - Joe McLure. At the time either Time or Newsweek ran an article on marriage trends. According to the polls of this magazine, my chances of getting married since I was "old" and a PhD candidate were about .0009. I giggled all the way to the altar and have been giggling ever since. Sorry I can't be with you all. My husband maintains the year I spent in Florence was the happiest year of my life. I'm not dead yet, so I don't know, but for sure it will be second .

Love to All
Betsi
Memories:

My future husband Jon Mooy and I went to Florence together in 1966 at the strong suggestion of our Humanities professor. As Art History Majors it was the culmination of a dream to go to the cradle of the Renaissance and see the slides we’d been studying with Dr. Adolph Karl come alive in the museums. I became conversational in Italian and retained familiarity with the language so that when I returned in 2015 I was able to converse fairly well as the language came back easily.

Jon and I met classmates who would become close friends during our time there. Later on, two of those friends became godfather and godmother to our daughter Harper. What a shock to learn that Harper’s godmother, whom I thought of often over the years, now lives just 20 minutes from me. This reunion has reignited those friendships from 50 years ago. We found each other on FaceBook, began sharing photos and memories and reconnecting with each other. Our lives all took different turns, but this reunion has erased the time and brought us back into each other’s lives.

Memories of the Flood:

[See interview with Helen Farrell of the Florence Magazine in Attachments]

Update:

In 1967, after our time in Florence, Jon Mooy and I returned to Florida where we got married in Tallahassee. Jon pursued a career teaching Art History in Atlanta and then Pittsburgh. I went to work for IBM with Jon joining IBM in NYC. Our successful careers with IBM took us from Tallahassee to Atlanta to Pittsburgh to the NY/NJ/CT area where we permanently settled till retirement. We have one daughter – Harper Mooy Christopher and two grandsons, Deegan (17) and Collin (14)

After retiring from IBM we returned to Florida. Jon died from brain cancer in January 2007. I currently live in Sarasota, FL with my partner Patricia. We have led the Women’s Meditation Circle of SW Florida for 11 consecutive years, and are recipients of multiple awards for our work in the spiritual community of Sarasota. We also conduct “sold out” Women’s Spiritual Retreats in the winter season, offering additional retreats each year due to their popularity. The website for our current work is: www.starsoundings.com
Photos:

Jo Ann Stitchway 1966

Jon Mooy and Jo Ann Stitchway 1966

Jo Ann’s Birthday in Rome 1966

Jo Mooy 2016
Memories:

After 50 years, my “memories” of that magical seven months in Florence, are more “impressions” or “vague recollections,” but what I remember most was the companionship of Ed Marsicano, Bob Schaefer, Rick Fritz, and Ken Hey. One of the great joys of my life was spending time with and learning from them.

As to the impressions, I remember the chartered flight over and the pilot ordering us out of the rear of the plane, where the free wine was located, back to our seats; the Pensione Splendor where some of us spent our first couple of months; the gruel the Albergo Caffe Capri pasted off as stracciatella, truly one of the world’s greatest dishes in its more usual incarnation; the Flood and hauling a treasure-trove of Cimabues out of the mire of the Uffizzi’s basement; being out of water and electricity for some six days and washing in the fountain and brushing teeth with acqua frizzante (something perhaps I should go back to); the school’s exodus to Rome and the Caesar Augustus with its glorious hot showers and the magnificence of the City; High Mass at St. Peter’s and a private audience with the Il Papa; the beaches of Viareggio, more rocks than sand; the Bay of Naples at night; my 21st birthday at the Vienna Opera House listening to Wagner (Ed and Bob were too intelligent to stay to the interminable end); dancing to Strangers in the Night at the Piper Club in Milan (or was it in Rome?); negotiating Checkpoint Charlie into East Berlin; first visits but not by far the last to Paris, London, (Animals’ concert at Christmas Eve), Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Venice, Sienna, San Gimignano, Perugia, Assisi, Alba, Abetone, and Zermatt.

With that in mind, I remember most the friends I made and the wonderful teachers who taught us, thanks to the vision of FSU.

Update:

After graduation from FSU in 1968, I married my best friend, Betsy. We had two wonderful children, a boy and a girl, and each of them has three children, giving us six grandchildren, who are the joys of our life. Unfortunately we live in West Palm Beach, and they live in the San Francisco and Boston areas, so we are more than frequent flyers. In fact, we own a second home in the Boston area.

After graduation from FSU, I served three years as an infantry officer in the Marine Corps. Then Betsy and I went to Columbia University where I got a law degree and an MBA and she got a Masters. I then served another three years in the Corps as a JAG officer stationed at Parris Island. When I got out in 1977, I worked in the DC area for the government, and in 1978 we moved to West Palm Beach, where ever since I have practiced law and earned a living as a commercial trial lawyer.

Sounds humdrum after Florence and the flood, but there it is.
Photos:

Lou Mrachek and Ed Marsicano 1966

Betsy and Lou Mrachek 2016
Memories:

Going to Firenze as a student was a dream come true for me. I started studying Italian at USF in my freshman year. By the time I landed in Italy, I had declared Italian and French as a combined major. I hit the ground running with the Italian I had already acquired, but many of you bypassed me during the course of our time there.

The flood was certainly a key event in our study abroad year. I remember waking up to the news that the Arno was flooding, so of course the thing to do was hurry directly toward the flood to see for ourselves. By the time we headed back by the Duomo, the water was knee-deep. The uncertainty of the rest of that day and the days to follow are what I think of most. Do you all recall how we stood in line for water with our empty Coke and Chianti bottles? Those first few days were very unsettling. I think we were all pretty smelly, too!

I went home in May ’67 a very different person than the one who left Tampa in May ’66. I realized that the world was a very big and exciting place, and I wanted to see it firsthand whenever I could. Thus began a lifetime love of travel and getting to know people from other countries. Once your eyes are opened to new cultures and people, it is hard to be content staying in one place!

Update:

Firenze was by far the highlight of my college career at USF. It also launched me into a lifetime of travel and adventure. After graduating from USF with a degree in French and Italian, I set off to learn another language in the Peace Corps. I was assigned to Thailand and began my training in February 1969. I spent three years in the jungles of southern Thailand, teaching at a rural Teachers’ College. Interestingly, Dianne Goode, one of my roommates in Firenze was also my roommate in Thailand.

I met my husband, Clark, in the Peace Corps. We settled in Boulder, Colorado in 1974. We have never left - not a bad place to spend a lifetime. We raised three children, who are all married. Two of them are Colorado residents and the third is in California. We have been blessed with five grandchildren so far, and we delight in their company.

When my youngest child started kindergarten, I went back to teaching and graduated with a master’s degree in ESL education. My career as an ESL teacher was filled with classrooms of students from all over the world. Saying that I learned more from them than they did from me is probably an understatement. I finished my career at CU Boulder as an academic advisor for undergraduates. My favorite topic of conversation with students was Peace Corps and second favorite was study abroad, especially programs in Florence.

We are now retired and not ready to leave Boulder yet. I spend my time volunteering, playing with my grandchildren, walking, gardening, and reading. And of course traveling whenever I can.
Photos:

Janice Dunn 1966

Janice Dunn Oldroyd 2016
O’TOOLE
Dolores (Dee) LaRuffa O’Toole
deeotoole@aol.com

Memories:

One of my fondest memories was Christmas in London, was traveling over break and made plans to meet with other students for Christmas Eve under Big Ben and for midnight mass at Westminster Cathedral. A bit of homesickness might have been setting in about then. Christmas day we were strolling through Hyde Park and met a nice young man who invited us to the Hyde Park Hotel for some Christmas cheer and plum pudding, his dad was the Catering Manager there. Homesickness was soon gone and replaced by a wonderful memory.

Flood memories ...
The camaraderie of all of us singing by candlelight making the best of our situation.
Working in a chain removing books from the mud at the National Library side by side with FSU and other college students, Italians, American soldiers, all for a common cause.
The smell of the mud after a few days

Random memories ...
The daily ritual of cappuccino at Chiapella’s, sweet introduction and addiction to Baci candy
The excitement of so many of us traveling by train to Munich for Oktoberfest, the uniqueness of the German dress, the pageantry, the beer halls ... in all my pictures we have slits instead of eyes ...
The birthday dinners we celebrated with each other, making us feel special ...
Hitchhiking through Italy to Nice for Carnival, to Monte Carlo casino, and Switzerland staying in hostels and meeting wonderful people along the way, thinking how lucky we were to be young and students
Stopping in to see The David anytime, no crowds
The “field trips” throughout Italy, awakening that interest in art by seeing the real thing not a picture in a book
That very special week in Rome, including the audience with the Pope, and the coin throw over the shoulder at Trevi fountain really does work! returned 5 years ago ...

Update:
The Florence experience definitely influenced my passions that continue today, travel and art. I’m married to another FSU graduate, Richard O’Toole and we love to travel anywhere and anytime we have the chance. We have 2 sons and 6 grand-children.

After graduation, I worked for IBM, married, and lived in Virginia. The opportunity came to live abroad through Richard’s job, 4 years each in St. Thomas and St. Croix, USVI, then 3 in Hong Kong. We settled in NJ for 17 years, where I re-started my career in IT. 16 years ago we moved back to FL and now live in New Smyrna Beach, considered one of the 100 small art communities in the US. I’m not an artist but an admirer and active volunteer with several art organizations.

While in the islands I started scuba diving and tennis and continue these sports today. Living in Hong Kong we had the opportunity to travel in Asia, and have been back many times, both land trips and for diving, it’s one of my favorite parts of the world.
I visited Florence 5 years ago, read the High Water mark plaque at the National Library and was amazed that it was even higher than I remembered. Also found the old Hotel Capri, and of course did not recognize any part of it after all the years of renovations. It was wonderful to revisit and introduce to Richard the city that so influenced my life.

**Photos:**

At Chiapella’s: Harriet Roberts, Rosetta, Will Hunt

Christmas in London: Jane Coleman, Dee La Ruffa, Kay Price
Left: Ann Boger, Jane Coleman, Dee La Ruffa, Doreen van Assenderp at the Forum in Rome in front of the Vestal Virgins. Right: Dee La Ruffa O'Toole at the Forum in Rome in front of the Vestal Virgins

Richard and Dee O'Toole
Memories:

What ...memories some days I'm not even sure of what happened last week!

This is supposed to be a short account of the last 50yrs since we all arrived in Florence at the end of the summer of 1966. In many ways our year here seems only just yesterday.

Update:

What have I been up to in these years? Not much.

After going back to FSU and finishing; in agreement with my future husband I decided to return to Italy for a while and guess what? I stayed. Horses have always been a part of my life and even the first year I was in Italy I found them. I was asked to accompany the daughter of our Italian teacher for riding lessons as I remember. Does anyone remember our full emersion Italian course? I will be forever grateful to her as I knew less than nothing of the language when I got here; not that I really know much more now. Anyway that seems to be in my destiny, horses and teaching. Through these two activities I have travelled much of Europe and even managed to win some horse shows. Nowadays it's mostly my pupils that do the showing. Along the way I met what was to be my partner, Carmelo. Together we have built up an Italian riding association where we board, train horses and teach children and adults how to ride. Oh yes I first married Aldo Parronchi whom I happen to have met on almost the first day. We were together for about 14 yrs but then went our separate ways. Unfortunately he is no longer with us but I owe to him the use of this house near Florence where we run our riding academy. We have no children but 4 dogs who are our daily assistants. One can find out more about us visiting our web site www.inoccioli.it.
Photos:

Marcia 1966

Marcia and partner Carmelo Strazzulla (right)

Marcia today with young members of extended family
Memories:

Youthful, exhilarating, sweet, challenging, grownup, enriching, promising are just a few of the adjectives that come to mind when I consider my life in Florence, Italy during 1966-1967.

Given the structure of my home, including tight finances, I felt like a “bird out of a cage” as I packed and took off for Italy. After a very grown up feeling party on the plane, we landed and toured Pisa instead of resting and driving directly to Firenze and the Hotel Capri. Ahh, Tuscany! The Leaning Tower “in person.” The Sky! The colors!

Meals at the hotel were delicious and so Continental for my Southern tastes. Of course, there were tons of carbs but we did tons of walking. Classes in the hotel were unusual after experiencing the auditorium classes of freshman year. Course material was focused on history, art, and Italian language.

Travels throughout the Continent provided the highlights of my dreams, spending, and adventures. Mostly, I traveled with Judy Appleby, who was also from Ocala but was a student from USF. We walked throughout Firenze to the piazzas, shops, markets, museums, libraries and pizzerias, but always returning to the Hotel Capri. During any days off school, Judy and I made travel plans sometimes via train, bus, hitchhiking, or a long hike! We wanted to do and see everything, practice our Italian, and meet the locals, especially families. At Christmas holiday we bought a Eurail Pass, trying to see as many countries as possible. We slept many a night on the trains and walked many a mile through museums, cathedrals, and city sidewalks wherever we got off the trains.

The Flood of our beloved Arno River: I remember lots of rainy days stuck inside the Hotel Capri. Days and days and days! Then flooding began and the news became more and more dire. Three memories stand out:
1. Singing on the hotel stairs with candles and worried expressions
2. Ancient Books in the mud and cleanup at the library on the Arno
3. Guilt, as we deserted Florence spent a week together touring Rome

My dear grandparents from Jacksonville, kept all the letters and postcards and newspaper articles they had about my time in Florence. Those artifacts were the source, igniting my memories of 1966-1967.

Update:

Post FSU graduation: I needed a job with no overhead costs so I went to work for Army Special Services in the DMZ of Korea, then back to FSU for graduate school, marriage, four children, couple of businesses, cultured marble and bottled water, and nearly twenty years working in public schools in Florida. A good Life! And it is not over yet!!
Photos:

Sandra Seibert and Ann Howie 1966 Leaning Tower of Pisa (left) and Sandra Seibert in gondola in Venice 1966 (right)

Sandra Seibert, Sharon Morrow, Sally Fick, Judy Appleby on Easter Day 1967 in front of the Medici Palace
Memories:

How 1966/67 influenced my future: It didn't really--much anyway. It reinforced a love for Italy which began with my first visit in 1960 and begat a conviction that I could never, ever live there! I guess mainly because I was involved with the FSU Study Center, I made an exploratory visit to Florence--it must have been sometime in seventies/early eighties; that was when I saw Anna Maria Nati again-- prior to the setting up of a similar University of Denver program. That trip I remember most vividly because on it I met Rebecca West's delightful niece, with whom I spent a memorable afternoon sitting in the sun on the edge of Piazza dei Miracoli in Pisa, hearing stories about her famous aunt, whom she did not like much. It was when Kosovo was the big news of the day and of Rebecca West's reputation as an expert on the Balkan affairs, particularly those of the former Yugoslavia, she said, acidly, "Aunt Cicely (Rebecca West's baptismal name was Cicely Fairfield) always said there are no Albanians in Kosovo." We stayed in touch for years.

I have no recollection whatsoever as to why I was selected as a member of that first faculty. I suspect no one else in the history department wanted to go and that Chair Victor Mamatey thought I was an obvious choice, given my background. If so, I remain very grateful to him. It was, for me, a wonderful year.

[For additional recollections, see “Memories of Florence Vignettes” [attachment].

For transcript of oral history interview regarding the 1966 flood in Florence conducted by Doreen van Assenderp in 1968, contact FSU Archivist Sandra Varry.

See also Michael Pulman’s Adventures Through the Looking-Back Glass, a story about the flood at: link: https://micheledelago.wordpress.com/page2/ ]

Update:

I left FSU n 1971 and then taught in the History Department at the University of Denver before taking (early!) retirement in 1991 and moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico. For the past couple of years I have been, and from henceforth will be, dividing my time between Santa Fe and Palm Springs.
Photos:

Party at Albergo Capri 1966 (M. Pulman in coat and tie)

Eric Lindstrom and Michael Pulman in Paris 2015
ROMEYN
Carlyn Gaye (Crannell) Romeyn
cromeyn@aol.com

Memories:

Along with Charlene (Howard) Cappellini, I served as a resident counselor for FSU undergraduate women at the 1966-67 Florence Study Center. Having recently received my M.A. in Art History, I quickly discovered that what I had learned from textbooks and professors was merely an introduction to the living realities of studying abroad. First there was the adjustment to communal life at the lively Albergo Capri and its daily offerings of mystery food. But one soon discovered the nearby joys of calzone, gelato, and oh-so-yummy bomboloni! A student pass enabled our group to visit any gallery or museum at our convenience, and there were many winter days when I would visit “David” or wander through the Uffizi with no one but an occasional guard waving me on, more concerned with staying near his little heater than stalking me. Often, as the only person there, I claimed ownership of the “Portinari Altarpiece”; became mesmerized by the Enthroned Madonnas of Cimabue, Duccio, and Giotto; examined the tooling patterns of gold leaf haloes; and gazed into the eyes of portraits, facilitating rare and memorable “conversazioni.” One day in “il Duomo” I could not resist using my bandana to wipe away grime and dust from Michelangelo’s “Deposition” (aka “Bandini Pieta”) as it languished near a dark chapel. How brazen was that?!

Flood memories include a futile attempt by some of us who were recruited and led through pouring rain over damaged sidewalks by a determined Dr. Givens to deliver water and food to Dr. Tanzy and his stranded family in their apartment olt’Arno. My most vivid post-flood memory is a solitary stroll near the Cathedral where I witnessed a corpse on a stretcher alongside jumbled piles of muddy Fiats and noticed that the majestic golden doors of the Baptistery were buckled open with several of Ghiberti’s panels lying in oily muck. Nearby was a Red Cross truck with Ted Kennedy and others distributing food and water. Such grim, heartbreaking scenes in this normally magical piazza made the magnitude of loss, both human and historical, palpable. Before it was decided to send our group to Rome, we spent days at the devastated National Archives salvaging muddy, waterlogged books and placing absorbent paper between medieval illuminated manuscript pages, a procedure which ultimately, and sadly, proved to be damaging. These and many other “I was there” memories continue to fuel my passion for learning, teaching, and traveling. I am forever grateful to have had this unique opportunity in Florence, my first and forever foreign home!

Update:

From 1967-73, I taught art history and design courses at Georgia Southern (now GSU) in Statesboro, where I developed an academic study abroad program for my students, leading them on four extended European tours. A sabbatical in Greece inspired further studies and led me to an interdisciplinary graduate program at Emory University’s Institute of Liberal Arts where I received my PhD in Art History in 1981. Since then my career path has zigzagged from research and writing to teaching for various art-related groups. For the past eleven years I have been a volunteer art history/humanities instructor for “Seniors Enriched Living” in Roswell, GA, a vibrant program for enthusiastic 50+ folks who love learning. As a bonus, I still take groups of my students on art-themed trips to Europe which satisfies my desire to travel and teach in situ. My husband, Steve, and I also travel frequently to distant places to be with our daughters, Kathryn (travel writer/editor) and Hollyn (humanitarian aid coordinator in South Sudan), whose international careers and wanderlust are partly my fault!
For me, it all began with FSU at the Albergo Capri, experiencing the Great Flood, encountering extraordinary people, and being exposed to learning opportunities beyond belief. To say that my academic year in Florence was life altering and career enhancing would be an understatement! I am indeed fulfilled and very blessed!

Photos:

Carlyn Gaye Crannell 1966
Carlyn Gaye Crannell 1966 atop Il Duomo

Hollyn, Kathryn, Carlyn and Steve Romeyn

Memories:

My memories of Florence include discovering cappuccino; not learning the bus schedule and losing 20 lbs. in 3 weeks walking everywhere (this didn’t work when I moved to Berlin in 1973 where my husband was stationed for 39 months, a great disappointment!), side trips to Fiesole, Siena, and everywhere; getting stuck in a crowd on the wrong side of the street at the Rificolona festival and getting back to the hotel after curfew; the flood of course, and NOT getting to Rome to meet the Pope because I got hit by a car in front of the hotel the week after the flood, the night before everyone else left, and being carried down the stairs from the third floor because the EMTs couldn’t fit in the questionable elevator with me, and then apologized because their proper costumes that would have insured their anonymity were still wet in the flooded cathedral basement.

Then there was Dr. Pulman’s Renaissance history course. About the only thing I specifically remember was his comparison of leaving the Medieval Period and entering the Renaissance by describing entering the Uffizi Museum display of static Madonnas with Child, turning the corner, and coming face to face with a lively battlefield prominently featuring pink horses. When we got back to FSU, I remember an art student complaining about having to learn where all the important paintings, etc., hung. By then I knew how important it was, as well as what it meant to have access to so much of it whenever we wanted in Florence.

As for the flood, I remember waking up that morning and not having running water. Then learning why, and later that night watching out a window as the rising water reached the edge of the sidewalk and suddenly started receding. That next week I learned how to wash off the mud with less than 8 oz. of water, how to rip up an expensive wood floor from a home by the river, and later joining a human chain to rescue as many of the books as possible from the flooded lower floors, noticing that their Encyclopedia Britannica (in English) survived safely, being on the second floor. And several years later being happy that experts had been able to restore some of the Leonardo documents that had imploded in a safe in the basement. I think the group in the Orangery did excellent work, and probably learned a few things while there.

A couple of regrets: every time I have been in Rome through the years, the Dying Gauls are always being restored, and I never made it to see the Austrian crown jewels, though I did make it to Vienna for a quick visit. Also, I took slides rather than prints with Fuji film. Between the greenish tinge to the film and the difference in calibration between my 35 mm and the light meter, my best pictures are in the souvenir books I still have.

The significance of that “year” was far reaching. As a result of my experiences there I connected with my husband, Jim Carroll, who had lived in Germany for 8 years. We were
married in June 1968. I also saw a side of life and culture possible only by being there and gained the confidence to visit other areas where English was not the native language.

**Update:**

In June 1968 I married Jim Carroll, who then spent 11 more years in the Army Infantry. While he was in Vietnam (1969-1970) I returned to FSU for a Masters in Library Science. During our 29 years together we moved almost that many times, mostly in Georgia, Kentucky, Florida and Arizona, with 1973-1976 spent in West Berlin where he helped guard Rudolf Hess and I became a Girl Scout trainer, also serving as chaperone for some American girls to a French creativity camp in the Alps. We also got out of Berlin on leave when we could, driving through France and northern Italy, briefly returning to Rome and Florence (is there ever enough time to everything?). I also managed to slip on the last piece of ice in Berlin in February 1974 and broke my leg just above the ankle. I have never thought of myself as accident prone, but . . . Anyway, they put me in a specialty hospital in Berlin, which was another adventure, but it improved my German.

In the U.S. I worked first in a private school library (they hired me the first day of school, and the “library” didn’t even have shelves yet). In other locales I worked in public and small university libraries, often belonging to the local library association as well as ALA. Jim left the U.S. Army in 1979, then joined the “gray army”: AT&T, which moved him around almost as much as the real Army had.

In 1992 we moved to Flemington, New Jersey where Jim died of an inherited heart problem in 1997. Thirteen weeks later I was hit by a car while walking my dog, so needed surgery and got lots of TLC from my church friends. I was still working in the library field, but spent 5 years working in a library cooperative before returning to direct a small public library in Warren County’s Washington Borough (there are 5 Washington Townships in the state, only one borough) in 2000.

One of my board members encouraged me to join Kiwanis, which I was eager to do so, to get to know the community better. Well, I did. I also met my current husband there. His wife had recently died, and as we consoled each other, love bloomed, to be a bit trite. Anyway, we married in 2004 and I moved into his home in White Township, up on a wooded mountain (not to be compared to the Rockies, though) where we continue to participate in Kiwanis together and I am now the president of the Washington Woman’s Club for the next two years. I got a new knee in January, which has somewhat impaired my enthusiasm for gardening both around the house and in a community garden plot that actually receives some sunshine. I also enjoy a variety of paper crafts.

When Paul and I first married we did some traveling, usually guided tours around Europe and Canada, just on our own in the US. However, he is a heart patient and diabetic, so now we don’t travel much beyond New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania (our county borders on the Delaware, far from the highly populated east coast). I never had children of my own, but Paul
has three that he shares with me. The grandchildren are mostly college age now, and are all working on degrees.

Looking back, I would not trade our time in Florence for anything, because it was the beginning of an adventure which still hasn’t ended. On a cold, rainy fall day I sometimes think back to that fall. The rain seemed normal to us, but even then the Italians remarked on it. And the Arno received a stocking full of coal that Christmas.

Photos:

Barbara Wolking 1966

Barbara Wolking Rose and husband Paul 2016
SCAMBOS
Marilyn Smoot Scambos
Mscambos@telus.net

Memories:

Early in the morning of 4 November 1966, I woke and heard voices outside the room in the hall saying "The Arno is flooding, the Arno is flooding." I got up to go outside to see what all the excitement was about and walked to Via Cavour. I looked down the street at the churning water headed in my direction and realized that a lot of the clothes I had just taken to the dry cleaner were never going to be retrieved. What a shock for someone who had led a relatively sheltered existence on the Space Coast of Florida and in Tallahassee before coming to Florence.

The day passed with great uncertainty, and then at twilight we were all gathered for a meeting in the lobby of the hotel. It was cold, and there were no lights. My good friend Sharon Keglovits and I were on the stairs, and it was then that she and I agreed to light a candle in remembrance of the moment every year at 5:00 p.m. on the 4th of November. I can't always say I followed through every year -- life got more demanding and that commitment a bit dimmer -- but never a November 4th has gone by that I haven't at least thought of that moment. That night the hotel made the most delicious vegetable soup. We marveled at how they did it without electricity because up until then the hotel food was more of a joke than a gourmet treat.

The week after the flood, we were all working on our various assignments to help save the city and its treasures. I'll never forget "our guys" going to the swan pond down the street to bring back water to flush the toilets. (I hope the swans have forgiven us!) After that, we were taken to Rome -- I've always said for a shower. I'll never forget my first hot shower in over a week. What a sensation! What bliss!

So much for these very few memories of the flood that magical year. I have never forgotten the travel, studies, adventures and, of course, those Italian men. All that I experienced in Europe with FSU has served me well as I lived and traveled around the world for both business and pleasure. This background made me stronger as I coped with terrorism in South America, war in Vietnam, and many other challenging circumstances at home and abroad. When I returned to Florida from that year in Europe, I honestly felt there wasn't anything I couldn't handle.
My most important observation, however, was that I never once saw an Italian cry as they all worked to reclaim their city from the mud. I am so very, very proud to have been an Angel of the Mud. I am so very, very proud to have this connection with Florence and to have been given such a unique opportunity by FSU.

**Update:**

So what have I been up to since FSU?

It was time to get a job in 1968. The Florida State placement office was overwhelmed by liberal arts majors who wanted to interview with the Defense Intelligence Agency. When I went to find out the time of my appointment, I was told "Sorry, we're only letting the Agency meet with people with "special skills." Thankfully, my brain kicked into gear and I replied "But I speak Italian!" That did the trick. I met a day or so later with the recruiters, and was hired on the spot for a job with the Defense Attaché Office at the U. S. Embassy in Rome. Government being what it was, however, I ended up instead in Montevideo, Uruguay, the "Switzerland of South America."

I worked in the Intelligence Community, including CIA, for 34 years. I couldn't have chosen a better career field -- one I would recommend in a heartbeat to any International Affairs major. Living and traveling around the world met all of my professional and personal goals, even as that embassy dream job in Rome became a distant memory. My fabulous husband, Ernest, has seen me through so many challenges since 1975. The picture of us is at our home on The Big Island in Hawaii, where we go when we're not living in Vancouver, Canada.
Memories:

This experience was a huge part of my "growing up." Fortunately, I kept a journal of the things that made each day special. I still have this diary. The hitchhiking, train and bus trips, and Eurail Pass over Christmas opened my eyes to the many European cultures and sights. I went out of my way to experience it all.

In 1971, I returned with my wife, Alison. We bought a new Opel automobile for $1,600 in Germany, and then spent four months living on Arthur Frommer’s *Europe on Five Dollars a Day*. Of course, we went back to Florence and, yes, she had the famous Hot Donuts at 4 p.m. Like all in our group, I became a Renaissance "expert." I knew who painted it, when was it painted, and so on. My mind was like a sponge, taking it all in.

I crossed the Arno the evening of the Flood, walking back from the Elizabeth and Robert Browning home. My diary says, "This must be the rainy season." I am so proud of my 120 classmates for their work and behavior over those next 10 days.

Today I am a very practical small business owner, but I will forever be a better, and more interesting, person because of my Florence experience.

Update:

After marrying in 1969, my wife and I taught school in Jacksonville, Florida, and then Poughkeepsie, New York. I honestly never enjoyed teaching; too much discipline. I entered real estate in New York and enjoyed success as a manager and Franchise Master Broker. In 1980, after too many long winters, we moved to Virginia Beach, Virginia. We opened At The Mall Realty, pioneering the concept of real estate brokerage kiosks in major shopping malls. It has been a joy working with my wife in our business these past 33 years. I have absolutely no regrets. In 1985, our daughter, Ashley, was born, and she still lives nearby. We are so proud of her!

My wife and I still work 20 to 30 hours a week. I walk three rounds of golf weekly and lap swim the other four days. Life is very good.
Photos:

The vintage shot appeared in *L’Europeo* magazine’s November 17, 1966, edition. While at the Caesar Augustus in Rome, an Italian man gave me this copy after recognizing me in a restaurant. I still have the magazine.

*Archival Collection*...

On November 10, 1966, FSU President Champion sent a personal letter (using an old non-electric typewriter) to all 120 parents, assuring them that their son or daughter in Florence was still alive and no doubt experiencing moments they will never forget. I sent the original to FSU in June 2016.

My recent picture is of my wife, Alison, and daughter, Ashley, hamming it up with me at a local magazine photo shoot.
SHAMBERG
Janice Rose Carter now Janice Carter Shamberg
jcshamberg@gmail.com

My life changed significantly due to the year I spent in Firenze. My father, feeling that he had spoiled me by sending me abroad, withdrew financing for my senior year of college. I worked in order to save enough to return and graduate, but ended up leaving Florida and, ultimately, my return to FSU—the result of a 21-year-old’s knee-jerk reaction to ill-conceived parental dictates.

I believe my desire to travel and visit different cultures was increased considerably because of my time in Firenze. My husband and I have spent many months of our marriage traveling, having decided early on to trade a plush retirement and material acquisition for freedom to experience other places while still young enough. It also encouraged us to send each of our three children abroad for yearlong programs.

After returning to Orlando from Firenze, I was employed as sole secretary to the Orlando Police Department’s Detective Bureau to finance my return to FSU. Following an argument with my father, and after friends living in Alaska wrote that I could earn my tuition quicker working there, in 1968 a friend and I drove to Alaska to “make our fortune”. I was bookkeeper for the only grocery store in Seldovia, and then moved to Anchorage a year later, where I worked as a legal secretary for private law firms and the City of Anchorage during the booming years of the Alaska Pipeline.

In 1974 I met my husband Brock during a job interview for in his law firm. We married and moved into a wonderful log house that he had built when single.

Brock later started a sole practice, for which I worked as legal secretary and bookkeeper. In 1979 we also opened a retail garden center at which we both worked for the next 15 years. During that time we raised three children and took many long vacations during Alaska’s dark winters.

In 2001 I was elected to the Anchorage Municipal Assembly on which I served six years, while my husband served as a judge. I retired from politics at the end of my second term and Brock from the court system in order to spend half our time in LA with our two daughters and first grandchild. We sold our home in 2014, moved full time to LA, and now have three grandchildren. Oil painting is my most recent vocation.
Photos of the 1966-67 time frame

Janice Rose Carter ready for Reunions for FSU student

Janice Carter and JoAnn Stitchway in Rome, Nov, 1966

and recent photos

Janice with husband Brock Shamberg, January
Memories:

FSU-Florence reflections first bring to life fellow students, professors, the Albergo Capri and staff. In my mind’s eye, there we are, November 4, 1966, seated up and down the staircases of our hotel-home, singing by candlelight as night falls, an historic flood bonding us to each other and the city. As flood waters receded, I volunteered at the National Library, continuing to work there several afternoons weekly till the calendar beckoned us back to Tallahassee.

The following summer, honored by the 3-M Corporation at their Miami convention, we learned our library manuscript restoration work was a disaster. The talc so meticulously applied later hardened, spoiling the medieval tomes. No regrets from us; we had done our best, eager to help. When I’ve returned to Florence in decades since, merely as a visitor with no working contribution to the city, I yearn to feel that intimate active connection again.

Our Tuscan academic adventure left me with a devotion to Italian cuisine, textiles, Renaissance art/history/architecture and the Italians themselves. My history professor Dr. Michael Pulman has consistently remained a beloved friend, along with cherished classmates. What gratitude I feel for that magical college year!

Update:

Several months after graduation, 1968, I returned to Europe with dear friend and classmate Chan Bostwick. Eventually we made our way back to Florence where I moved back into the Albergo Capri and became language instructor to the children of the Scala family, owners of our FSU hotel. Giuseppina and Gianni learned English quickly, albeit with my Alabama accent, while giving me an enhanced command of Italian. Soon I became manager of a Piazza Pitti Palace boutique. I remained there, pretending to be Florentine until the summer tourist season waned in 1969.

Since, my USA career has been in education, nutrition, alternative medicine and self-health care. I continue to study and practice energy healing in a home office. My husband and daughter are avid supporters of that work, as well as my interests in cooking, exercise, fiber arts, and organic gardening on our country property in Northern California.
Photos:


Shirley Stott Sperry 2016
Memories:

One of my many fond memories of being a student at the first year of the FSU-Firenze program in 1966-67 occurred after the Arno river flood. On the days immediately after the flood, I joined in lines of mostly other young people who were passing up dripping wet old manuscripts from the flooded basements of buildings along the Arno river. At the end of one day, I started the short walk back to the FSU-Firenze campus location. In my muddy clothes, I walked along the street level corridor of the Uffizi art museum. It was void of tourists. However, three young Italians were also walking in the same direction, they were talking in Italian. I will always remember that they simply said to me, "Thank you - Thank you".

Update:

When I think about my FSU-Firenze 1966-67 experience, I appreciate the stimulating academic program and the time the FSU professors spent individually with me and the other students. I also appreciate the study habits that I learned from my honors roommate, Richard Ferrell. When I returned to FSU, I switched my major to economics and graduated with a BA and MA. In the early 80s, in our small family room in Miami, my wife, Toni, and I started a software company that focused on developing and selling international trade-related software. When we sold our company in 2004, we had over 40 employees and a customer base across the country.

In 2007, we went to Florence for a holiday. On a guided tour, I mentioned to the guide that I had been a student there during the flood and that my fellow classmates and I had helped to remove manuscripts out of basements. He replied, "You were a mud-angel!" This was the first time I heard that expression. There had been a 40 year anniversary the previous year and the guide insisted on bringing some souvenirs of the commemoration to my hotel.

Since that first eventful and learning year of the FSU-Firenze program, I am pleased that so many students have had the opportunity to attend the FSU-Firenze program, including my daughter, Emily Steeb.
Photos:

Article in Tallahassee Democrat: Chuck Johnson, Vic Steeb and Brenda Rivers

Vic Steeb, Dr. Azzurra B. Givens, Chuck Johnson and Brenda Rivers

Vic Steeb 2016
Memories:

Being steeped in hundreds of years of history, art and architecture was my biggest takeaway...walking the same streets where Michelangelo and Da Vinci walked, worked and just lived their daily lives! Parts of the culture have been internalized in my heart all my life.

I love new experiences and our time there certainly provided many: Cappuccino (yum), 4:00 pm hot donuts, 3 day weekends every week for trips further away, the statue of David just blocks away (I would visit him for inspiration before a test :-), rich, rich culture, making new friends, + many, many more...

As for the flood, I remember my roommate coming home in the evening prior to the news and saying, "It looks like the Arno is going to flood!" since it had been raining quite a bit. We dismissed her statement with a laugh because the Arno usually ran way below street level. Well, the next morning we all found out her prediction came true and we were in shock! All the beautiful art, history and architecture that I had fallen in love with was terribly damaged. Walking the streets and seeing the oil/grease line at eye level on the buildings from the car engines is etched in my mind. So glad our instructors coordinated a way for us to be of some help. It was a tremendous experience.

I bought my wedding dress in Firenze. It is made of woven paper roses all connected together. Ken Kobre and I climbed up on a rooftop (how did we get there??) and he took photos for me. Thanks for the memory!

Attached is the photo...

Update:

1967 - present
I married my high school sweetheart on 6/7/67 and finished my teaching degree in the fall. We returned to our hometown in St. Petersburg, Fl and began working - actually finally making money!! A few months later Ken was drafted and was sent to Vietnam when our firstborn son was 3 days old. Tough, tough experience but he was a lab technologist so at least he wasn't exposed to fighting. When he returned we had our daughter. I stayed home with toddlers so I could be the major influence in their developing years (but it was tough with the women's lib movement promoting women getting out of homemaking and into jobs). When my kids were preschool age I came across a Montessori preschool and fell in love with their philosophy. Sent my kids and eventually got my certification and spent 40+ years in Montessori classrooms and loved all of it!

We did a "Mother Earth" thing in the 80s and moved to the mountains of North Carolina to build a log home and have some land. I was able to start my own Montessori school there and later in Tennessee and even later back home when we ended up home after 3 years in the mountains. Loved living in the mountains but love the water also. My husband and I have enjoyed sailing, taking trips with the kids to the Florida Keys and Dry Tortugas and just the two of us going to the Bahamas 4 times in our Morgan 34. I have my father's genes of soaking in the beauty and tranquility of nature. I do want to include that
when my husband had to leave and I was left alone with our first child, it made me resentful toward God. But God actually used the situation to draw me closer to him. I had "practiced religion" growing up but had not experienced Him in a personal relationship. Now I am secure and at peace knowing Jesus as My Redeemer and the Lover of my soul, interested and involved in every aspect of my life.

The second photo is of me and one of my precious granddaughters in front of the entrance to the Biltmore House in Asheville last spring. My daughter now lives near Asheville so we get to experience the water here in Florida and the mountains of NC several times a year on seasonal visits.

Photos:

Sharon in wedding dress – photo by Ken Kobre

Sharon with granddaughter 2016
Memories:

Borrowing from Billy Joel's "We didn't Start the Fire" stream of conscientiousness, a short list of what I remember from 1966. Dr. Givens banging on the door to tell us not to go out. Dianne Goode and I jumping up and going out. Seeing water in the street and upside down Cinque Centos. Making it to the river and almost not making it back. Realizing that the water wasn't drinkable and brushing teeth with Coke. The intense smell of oil, mud and decay. No way to clean ourselves or our clothes except at the "swan pond". The sound of the army water trucks and tanks on the cobble stones very early one cold morning dressed in all we could wear because there was no heat. The intense smell of the lemon fresh spray for the bathrooms and the guys carrying water up the stairs to manually flush the toilets. Walking to the Biblioteca to help carry books and becoming one of a long line of people trying to save what we could. After 10 days of valiant effort being rewarded with a trip to Rome, to a 1st class hotel with hot water that lasted only 15 minutes after our arrival. Stories of socks and underwear being washed in bidets. A sumptuous ballroom dinner and Dr. Harry Morris being a quite excellent Tango dancer. Rome being its magical self. Home again to Firenze still fighting to recover. Walking on the wall of the river because the mud was still there. Ask Mike Pulman, he took a picture.

With a EuRail pass stamped at midnight of our first day of Christmas vacation, we took off for 30 days of criss-crossing Europe. The next morning, we alighted (Dianne Goode, et al) in Zermatt to see my first snow. Christmas Eve at Westminster, Christmas Day in a very empty London. The best and longest English breakfast to start out and a Christmas dinner at Wimpy's because all of London was closed at 4:00 pm for the holiday. The Mint Tower for New Year's, Salzburg for the "Sound of Music" and Munich for beer. All the while sleeping on the trains most nights and learning to play bridge. Don't travel with 3 Bridge players. We did Paris and then, like later, I was unimpressed. I liked Italy; the food, the people and the history, better. If I could expatriate.... I would live in Rome, the city of endless surprise and delight. Naples was a fun trip. Not one I would repeat. Leaving to go to Capri in the morning with the harbor workers was taking your life in your hands. Coming back we were greeted by the arrival of the US Navy's entire Mediterranean fleet. Never seen or talked to as many sailors or danced as much in my life! Every 3-day weekend was an adventure.

Update:

Luckily, I have been back twice. I married (the Medievalist, Paul Strait, who came to FSU that year we were gone) in Florence 1969 while Paul was teaching at the Study Center housed at the Villa Fabbricotti. It took a month of nasty red tape, I wish we had had Azzurra with us. We lived in the same apt Mike Pulman and I found for his parents while walking the old city wall. Scars from the flood were still very visible then. In 1999 we went back for our 30th and although very crowded with "touristi" they were cleaning for the millennial celebration and it all looked pretty good except for Santa Croce. I am glad to hear of its recovery.

Paul and I are retired, living in Tallahassee with married boys living in Atlanta and Chicago. The grands, Landon and Abigail, are in Chicago and their Dad, Matt, is searching for an even worse airport situation for us after leaving NYC to go to ORD-always by way of ATL! Because of Paul's health we won't be with you but feel free to contact us anytime you are in town.
Photos:

Dianne Goode, Patsy Gehri, Pat Cunningham and Ron Bowen at the Swan Pond after the flood

Pat Cunningham and Paul Strait wedding in Florence 1969
Memories:

The day I was interviewed for the first FSU Study Center abroad changed my life forever.

How could I have known that being accepted to study in Florence, Italy, I would have experiences and make friends that would have the most profound influence not only on my life, but also on the lives of others?

Having long weekends to travel with our fellow students and at times our professors brought enrichment while forming lasting memories. One of the most significant was living through the historic 1966 Flood of Florence. I had never experienced anything more terrifying than watching from our bedroom window the blackened and muddy water pour through and swirl around Via XXVII Aprile, wondering when would it stop rising.

Thankfully, it did before much damage was done to our residence, Hotel Capri. But we were left without power, water and heat. That first evening we formed a human chain sitting in the stairwell, holding candles for illumination we had retrieved from churches, and quietly sang songs for comfort, companionship, and unity.

Living, studying, and immersing myself in Florentine culture and art as a college junior was exciting enough, but having the time during semester breaks to travel afforded the most opportunities for adventure and change. It was during our spring holiday that I met my future Florentine husband in the Bazaar in Istanbul.

Soon after that I remained in Florence working in a leather goods store behind the Duomo until my marriage to Piero Morselli in Orsanmichele Church September 1967. I never imagined I would leave the States as a student and return home as an Italian bride.

Update:

After my return to Florida with Piero, I worked at Cape Kennedy before I finished my Bachelor’s Degree in art from Stetson University and began teaching in 1969, while at the same time working on my MA in education, which I completed in 1973.

By then I was divorced and the following year married again moving to NC. Our daughter, Leslie, was born in 1977 in Greensboro.

With another divorce, I returned to Cocoa, Florida and resumed teaching. Using my musical background, I played guitar in the classroom and was involved in the music ministry at church. Through that, I met my present husband, Jim Studeman, and in 1987 we were married in Boone, NC on Christmas break.

We moved to Orlando in 1990, formed a humanitarian ministry to Russia, and I began my second master’s degree, completing a MS in counseling in 1994. I worked as a school counselor in Winter Park,
and became licensed in FL as a psychotherapist. I was also licensed as a real estate sales associate, which I still maintain.

In 2000 I finally left the Florida school system and we moved to Blowing Rock, NC where we call home.

For five years after our move to NC, I was a tour director – my favorite of all jobs, traveling by motorcoach throughout the United States and Canada, and conducting international tours as well.

Now we are both retired; however I stay active volunteering in local politics, singing in the choir, playing piano for church, and working part-time as an Estée Lauder beauty consultant.

Photos:

Nancy 1966 (left) and Nancy, Mary and Ann Marie 1966 (right)
Barbara Wolking and Nancy Jones (Orlando Airport)

Janice Carter and Nancy Jones (Forum, Rome)

Jean Studeman and husband Jim and dog Lucy (left) and Jean and daughter Leslie (right)
My SECOND BEST dream occurred about 1997, but it is much about two semesters in 1966-67. In my dream Sara Jane and I decided to end my consulting practice, sell our house and move to Florence. In a modest hotel, but better than the Capri, we were going to enjoy academic courses with other students. Dr. Pulman and the like were going to be our professors, except for one. Our Art History professor was going to be much better than the norm. There will be no missing slides. The Art History course will have a lot of fieldwork, like visiting Michelangelo’s David at L’Accademia, seeing Masaccio’s frescos at the Carmine and walking through Michelangelo’s vestibule and the Laurentian Library. Every tenth day or so there will be the Uffizi. The refreshments will still be next to the Laocoön and on the balcony above the Loggia del Lanzi. We could run down to Rome or Paestum on the usual three-day weekend. We could watch the reincarnation of Sviatoslav Richter at the Teatro Comunale. We will also see a reincarnation of Abbado (not Mehta) conduct *Don Giovanni* with Keenlyside as the dissolute Don and Terfel as Leporello. Some of the original students from 1966-67 are part of my dream. I think of Jeff, Win and his tonsure, and Chuck Johnson and Harry Belafonte. Finally and at last, if we want, our professors could advise on any essay we might choose to write. But there would be NO GRADES for the essays. There will be NO tests, *period*.

**Update:**

AFTER FLORENCE, about 1999, I had a little personal TULIP story. I was in a Bible group at the home of an orthodontist. Also there was Jim Tallbacka, my dentist, my friend and my companion in Florence several times. There were two retired medical doctors. All four of them and their wives did useful service for the Christ, mostly medical mission trips. For me, I did “Zip” for Christ. So I spoke up to Jim and the others, “I do not speak up for Jesus Christ too often. I think I ought.” So they prayed for me so that I would have an opportunity. A day or two thereafter, I got a call from the hired attorney for the City of Coconut Creek: “Swarthout, you did a great job on that litigation witnessing last week. I am taking you to lunch.” Thought I, “He is happy with my work. Maybe there will be some more consulting work.” So he suggests a decent, but not great, Italian restaurant. At the restaurant he asks me all kind of odd questions, questions that would not be expected. By his questions he compels me to say, “I believe in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.” Hey, I did not intend to say that, but I was stuck. Beyond that, I had to tell him that I am pretty close to the Calvin interpretation of the Bible and the five-point TULIP understanding.
Photos:

Sara Jane Carter and Robert Swarthout’s wedding
April 18, 1967
Memories:

The morning following the flood, I awoke with an acute asthma attack and had to stay in bed! Therefore, I cannot claim to be a mud angel who lifted one finger to save books, paintings or any mud covered artworks! My lungs responded to the fine silt left by the Arno. I shouldn't even be allowed to join the "angels!"

My living in Firenze among the FSU students influenced my years of teaching Intro to the Humanities in the community college of Detroit's Wayne County and Miami's Dade County.

The liveliness of having nine months in Firenze was the best community living of my life! There was always someone with whom to share the pleasure of living and walking casually throughout the world's finest! Walking was effortless as one piazza led to the next. And there were always bomboloni caldi and cappuccinos on the walk from Massacio's frescos to Benozzo Gozzoli’s, and Michelangelo’s figures of Dawn, Dusk, Day, and Night, to his David with a stop at the Bar San Marco for an apricot brandy. There really is no end.

Update:

We were at a deli discussing politics, and our server declared her passion for the subject, but added, "I don't think religion should be part of politics." (Robert mentioned that view is, in and of itself, "religion.")

The 3rd chapter of the Gospel of John has Nicodemus posing a provocative question to Jesus regarding being born again. Jesus culminates his answer with John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.)

32 years ago, Robert and I were in the chapel of Broward Medical Center. Our 12 yr old daughter was in ICU following a cerebral hemorrhage. Our 3 years old son was at home. And in that chapel we became born again. Nothing in our lives has superseded that event. In fact, that event has fueled all challenges and obstacles.

All the 18 years in Michigan finishing our degrees, teaching, living in beautiful Mies van der Rohe's Lafayette Park, and moving to Florida leads up to that important moment in our lives. Later, because of the strength issued by God, we have lived with the disease of addiction, Robert's heart attack, his stroke, and his 41/2 days in the trauma unit in a coma.

At present, Marta is well, working, married, and has given us our grandson, Gaetano! Harold is also living in NY. And Robert is dashing off clever emails to all and energized by his return to Firenze!! We have so much to be grateful for.

Back to the deli moment: for us, once you have internal faith, that faith shapes our world view, and is inextricable (I have always wanted to use that word!). Thank our creator that we have freedom of
religion, not freedom from it being in the public square. There are forces who wish to shut it down and silence the Good News.

The themes of redemption, healing the broken, finding the lost, and restoration are wonderfully portrayed in film. Some films have been memorable: (10 plus a bonus!)

- Enchanted April
- Pulp Fiction
- No Country for Old Men
- Searching for Sugar Man
- Walk the Line
- The Lives of Others
- Lunchbox
- Tangerines
- Match point
- Fanny and Alexander
- Amacord
- Above and Beyond 2014

Photos:

Sara Jane Carter Swarthout

4-18-67

Sara Jane Carter Swarthout 2016
Memories:

Firenze in the Flood affected us profoundly
We were so naïve. We saw the waters rising and had no idea of the devastation that would follow. When we got down to Santa Croce and the Biblioteca, it really hit us that this was a disaster of historic proportions. I remember pulling all the branches out of the mud—it was disgusting, and really dirty. Seeing the doors of the Baptistry floating and then mired in the mud was mind boggling.

I think it brought our group together in ways we did not even realize at the time. The trip to Rome, rescued by the Vatican was like a dream. Seeing Ann Marie actually meet the Pope was amazing. It has been wonderful to share this memory and all of the Florence experience with her for nearly fifty years. We have had quite a few adventures together since then, but this terrific time started us off to discover the world.

Update:

After Florence, Ann Marie and I got married. In the summers while we were in school, we hitch-hiked around Europe. We went to Indiana for grad school (I got my PhD in Folklore), and we had Nicole, our daughter, who is wonderful—a powerful professional woman in philanthropic fundraising in New York, and a loving mother of our two favorite grandchildren, Stella (9) and Levi (7).

My first higher education appointment, in 1973, was at Penn State, where in 1975 we had our terrific son, Sam, who is now a software engineer and inventor in Silicon Valley. When they were young, we took Sam and Nicole on adventures with us, including a year in Romania (Transylvania). Ann Marie led us on a trek through Arthurian England one summer after that. Sam and Nicole had their own global adventures while they were in college at Penn State—Nicole spent a semester in Salamanca, Spain, and Sam spent the summer in Todi, Italy. After college, Nicole spent a year on a Fulbright in South Korea, and Sam later earned his Master’s in Strasbourg, France.

After being on the faculty at Penn State for 26 years, I “retired” as emeritus professor and went into global education, with adventures in the Caribbean, Middle East, China, India, and Canada—always coming back to Italy when possible. Ann Marie is Director of the Center for Nonprofit Leadership at Adelphi University, having previously worked for community foundations and teaching at Penn State University. She served as a leadership mentor for United Nations Peacekeepers in Brindisi, Italy, and on the Attorney General of NY’s committee to revitalize nonprofit law. She also was a freelance writer for years and her work was featured on CBS Sunday Morning twice.

In returning to Florence, we marvel at the flood water markings around the city. As Bernard Berenson supposedly said (first), “Florence is so crowded now, nobody goes there anymore.” But we do. We love it.
Photos:

Ann Marie Cianci and Ken Thigpen (flood 1966)

Ann Marie Cianci audience with Pope Paul 1966
Ann Marie and Ken Thigpen in Florence

Ann Marie Thigpen in Florence
Memories:

During the seven months I studied abroad, my knowledge was greatly enhanced through exposure to subjects in which I was not well versed, including humanities, art history, Etruscan, Roman, and Greek archeology and architecture, world religions, and Italian history. I developed an appreciation for art, opera, ballet, the Renaissance, and the customs and cultures of people from all over the world. I improved my ability to speak Italian, which ultimately helped me get my dream job. I encountered the aftermath of the catastrophic 1966 Arno flood, while at the same time witnessing the resilience and unwavering determination of the Florentine people to save their iconic city. For a brief moment in time, I was part of a group known as Gli Angeli del Fango, assisting with the recovery. The result of this experience reinforced the importance of helping others in times of need and the value of preserving artwork, books, and antiquities for future generations. Being involved in the tragic event taught me lifelong lessons.

Some of my significant memories are:

Comical Memories: After using the bidet in The Hotel Capri Room #38 as a toilet on our first day in Florence, my two roommates, Janet Baldwin and Christine Crane, and I were enlightened as to what it was actually meant for, whereupon we filled it with a pot full of flowers for our viewing pleasure; The discovery that Italian toilet paper was more like sandpaper - I actually wrote a letter home on it for fun.

Magical Memory: Walking into the Piazza San Marco at dusk on my first trip to Venice while being surrounded by the melodious sounds of a live orchestra playing FASCINATION. This was the actual moment my love affair with Italy began!

Craziest Memory: On the train with a large group of fellow classmates returning to Florence from Munich’s Oktoberfest, Jan Baldwin got off right before departure to grab a snack. All of a sudden the train started moving, and without thinking several hands shot up to pull the emergency brake handle. The train came to a screeching halt. When the police arrived onboard to find the culprit for this major finable offense, no one knew who actually did the deed. So, after 50 years, here’s my true confession: I did it! Meanwhile Jan calmly walked onto the train unnoticed.

Memorable Friendships: Janet Baldwin – my kind, very attractive, and sophisticated roommate from the University of Florida; Christine Crane – my sweet, cute, intelligent roommate and former high school classmate; Patsy Gehri – my fun loving, spirited friend with a larger than life personality; Harriet Roberts – my steadfast, savvy, bright, easy going travel companion and hitchhiking mentor, who shared unparalleled adventures and experiences with me. We had so much fun and still do to this day!!

Epicurean Memories: Lasagne Verde, Gelati from Perche No!, Bomboloni, Bistecca alla Fiorentina, and Cappuccino in Florence; Escargot and Champagne at Les Halles Market in Paris; Mousaka in Athens.

Cherished Memories: Experiencing the wonder of being alone on a bench in the Academia staring at perfection, Michelangelo’s exquisite DAVID; Enjoying total solitude and tranquility while sitting on the rocks overlooking the mesmerizing sea along the dramatic coastline of the Isle d’ Elba.
Poignant Moment: Returning to Florence by train from Switzerland after the flood and observing total devastation. The stench of sewage was pervasive. After finding the Hotel Capri in a landscape of mud covered with slime and oil, a few of us took a circuitous route to the Biblioteca Nazionale where we helped with the removal of badly damaged ancient manuscripts and books. While there I happened to spot a painting half buried in sludge. Upon picking it up I was horrified to see gold leaf flaking off and disappearing into the muck. These observations are forever etched in my mind.

Fondest Memory: Visiting Rome wasn’t just a refuge from the difficult conditions in Florence after the flood, but a totally captivating experience! The exhilaration of discovering and exploring the city from top to bottom was indescribable. Seeing the Coliseum and the Roman Forum for the first time was beyond my expectations. Having a group audience with Pope Paul VI was special. Being honored, wined, and dined by the Italian Government was flattering. Throwing a coin into the Trevi Fountain was particularly prophetic for me.

My Most Meaningful Memory: During winter break I took a 21 day train journey from Vienna through Eastern Europe with stops in Prague, Warsaw, Budapest, Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev with a group of students from several universities. The opportunity to observe the effects of life under Communist rule was compelling. I vividly recall stark surroundings and harsh conditions as being the norm, with a few rare exceptions. Feeling the ominous oppression permeating every aspect of life behind the Iron Curtain was thought provoking. We were continuously bombarded with endless propaganda, and became paranoid after being constantly watched and followed. Experiencing a serious shake down at the border crossing when leaving on the last day was terrifying! Highlights include dashing through the snow with abandon on a troika; being dazzled by large, perfectly shaped snowflakes falling on Christmas Day in Red Square with the legendary St. Basil’s Cathedral as the backdrop; watching a brilliant ballet at the Bolshoi Theatre with champagne, caviar, and ice cream served at intermission; eating borsht and drinking tea out of a samovar on the train doled out by a stern female comrade wearing a babushka, repeatedly yelling “Nyet!”; attending a captivating Red Army Choir performance and hearing the uplifting folk song Kalinka for the first time – it took my breath away!; standing in a long line to view the grotesque and waxy face of Lenin in his coffin; seeing small, colorful, wooden Russian Orthodox churches while racing by train across the expansive, bleak, snow covered countryside of the Soviet Union; dancing in a student club to the smuggled 45 RPM record, Tallahassee Lassie; attending a depressing underground religious service filled with haunting old ladies dressed in dark, drab clothing; having a clandestine meeting with courageous university students who were spearheading plans to change their suppressive government; being told at the Hermitage that their David statue was authentic, the one in Florence an imitation; surreptitiously exchanging money on the black market. Most significant was visiting enchanting Kiev, the ancestral home of my Dad and his family!

A Stellar Performance Memory: In the middle of the week, Harriet and I finished classes one afternoon, walked out of the Hotel Capri, and hitchhiked to Milan. We made it to La Scala right before the opening act of Sleeping Beauty starring Margot Fonteyn, one of the greatest classical prima ballerinas of all time, and Rudolf Nureyev, the most celebrated male dancer of the 20th Century. The artistic skills we witnessed were beyond description. After the performance, while walking through the theatre lobby we ran into the gorgeous Gina Lollobrigida, who graciously took my hand and greeted me with a captivating smile. What a joyous evening! We immediately hitchhiked back to Florence arriving a few minutes before our morning class began, barely having time to change our clothes. We avoided being tardy and our roommates kept our clandestine adventure a secret!
An Enriching Memory: Harriet and I hitchhiked to the panoramic coastline of Yugoslavia, not knowing what to expect. Our encounters with local peasants were enlightening. We learned about Tito’s relaxed form of Communism which allowed citizens to have more control of their lives. Many ran small cottage industries and seemed content. I noted this to be in sharp contrast to the extreme repression I observed behind the Iron Curtain. What an incredible learning experience!

An Adventurous Memory: During spring break, Harriet and I hitchhiked from Florence to Brindisi, where we caught a ferry to Greece. The Athens we saw no longer exists. I will never forget the sights, sounds, and excitement I felt, with all the lively and happy Greek citizens milling about. We were awed by the Acropolis, ate, drank, and danced in the old Plaka district, visited museums, and drove along the breathtaking coastline. Next we flew to Istanbul where we encountered culture shock. Touring Topkapi Palace, the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, and the Grand Bazaar were among the highlights. This excursion sparked my desire to visit more exotic places.

Update:

My Florence Experience actually began the year before I attended the Study Center, when I had the good fortune of taking a government class taught by the renowned FSU Dean Ross Oglesby. Along with his encouragement to take part in the inaugural year of the Florence Program, I was blessed with being the only child of two peripatetic parents who met and fell in love while traveling with the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus. I inherited their wanderlust. And I will be forever grateful to them for allowing me to fly off and spread my wings at a time when most young women were kept close to home. From the moment I deplaned the Alitalia flight after landing in Pisa on August 31, 1966, I felt immediate euphoria at being free to embark on an adventure that changed my life forever!!

After returning from Florence, my path headed in a totally different direction. I earned a degree in Social Studies Education with minors in Geography and Government, rather than my original major in the field of Biological Science. My passion for travel intensified, so upon completing my teaching internship and certification, I immediately joined Pan American World Airways as an Italian qualified Stewardess, and was quickly promoted to Purser. During my first two years of flying I was based in New York primarily going to Rome and Tehran. In addition I worked on Pan American Round-the-World Flights, Hadj Charters, and flew throughout Europe, Africa, and the Orient. Longing to see more, I transferred to Miami and went all over The Caribbean, Central and South America, and occasionally back to Italy, Portugal, and Spain. Then, for two years, I was the Community Action Program Coordinator for the Miami Base, working in Public Relations, organizing and hosting social events in the USA and internationally, creating hundreds of volunteer outreach projects for employees of Pan Am, and providing support and guidance programs for flight attendants. At the same time I acquired my real estate license.

Throughout this time the desire to explore became paramount, and I took advantage of every spare moment to discover new places. It was during one of these sojourns that the stars aligned and something remarkable happened. While on safari in Kenya and Tanzania, I met my future husband Bryson, a former Naval Aviator and Pan Am Pilot, who eventually worked for United Airlines. The rest is history. We married in 1973, settled in Miami, Florida, raised our two amazing sons, Sam and Ben, and recently welcomed our first grandchild, Arabella, into the world. After 18 years with Pan Am I retired to focus on our children. All the while, I was involved in a multitude of my boy’s activities, joined several philanthropic organizations, immersed myself in volunteerism, and pursued many hobbies, while occasionally working in real estate. In addition, we were able to travel the world as a family. Now in
retirement, Byson and I enjoy adventure expeditions, cruising, trekking to see wildlife, hiking, boating, reading and genealogy, as well as attending Broadway musicals, concerts, ballet, and opera. On reflection, I marvel at my good fortune during the past 50 years. My goal of being an inveterate globetrotter has been realized. I’m often asked, of all the places I’ve been, which is my favorite? Without hesitation my answer is FIRENZE, the place where my extraordinary journey began!!

**Photos:**

Tivoli (Rome): Margie Crowell, Jeff Chase, Rick Bennett, Vicky Palmer, Bob Leland, Allen Fuller, Jane Hillman, Rich Fritz [hat], Carol Bitler, Dr. Morris’ son.
Margie Crowell and Harriet Roberts on the way to Brindisi

Margie Crowell at the market 1966
Margie Crowell and Harriet Roberts in the Italian Alps

Venice 1966: Suzanne Young, Chris Crane, Betsi Britten, Margie Crowell

Bryson and Margie (Crowell) Thompson
Memories:

You know, over the years, there were so many stories, books, movies and fashion, from Italy, Tuscany and Firenze. They became widely seen and read, over these past fifty years. Well, until I read the book *Sixteen Pleasures* by Robert Hellenga, a few months ago, I refused to see a movie, or read a story based on life in Italy. I never wanted to color my memory with someone else’s thoughts or views. The book was given to me 15 years ago and sat on a shelf in the closet. I was on my way to visit our kids in Austin, Texas, when I took it to read on the plane. Coincidentally, it was while I was in Austin, that the call about this reunion came in.

Since that call from Margie, we have become best friends and buddies. I also re-connected with so many friends that I had in my year in Florence. Time marches on, people move in and out of your city. Addresses get lost, and the computer hadn’t yet been invented.

I was one of the very lucky students at the FSU Study center, I was able to stay and work at a leather goods store just off the Ponte Vecchio until late August. I returned for my senior year but didn’t enjoy being back in the USA at all.

Update:

My life changed too. I married my husband Chuck, we raised three boys who now have two or three kids each, for a grand total of eight grandchildren. And still I wonder how it is that my children are the age that I still think of as being old? Chuck and I traveled and hiked to National Parks, Europe, South America, China, Australia and New Zealand. On one trip back to Italy, I made Chuck spend a few nights at the Hotel Capri, where, the Scalas were still the owners.

I began teaching in 1968, and retired in 2014. But took breaks here and there to raise kids. Two sons live in Austin and one lives in Philadelphia. Chuck and I love being here in Miami, we are the perfect drop off spot for our kids. They drop their kids with us and take the kinds of vacations and travels that I experienced during my year in Florence and that my husband and I experienced when we left our kids with my parents and took off.

I’m thrilled to be able to re-live these memories with so many of you at this exciting time. Thank you for all your hard work in putting this reunion together and thank you to the beautiful city of Firenze for opening your arms to us.
Photos:

Esta in 1966

[Image of a young woman with long hair smiling]

Esta in 2016

[Image of a woman standing outdoors with red hair and a light blue top]
WELCH
Sam Welch
SCW39561@europe.com

Memories:

During the 1966-67 FSU-Firenze program my prime academic focus was the study of Italian literature, and historical architecture and interiors to enable me to design Italian opera scenery, costumes and theatrical lighting. The flood, and the persons I met as a result, produced significant changes in my life.

When I woke up to find that the Hotel Capri was without electricity, I walked to the Basilica di San Lorenzo and negotiated with the resident Sacristan to give us a cart full of very large beeswax altar candles which I moved to the Hotel Capri for distribution there to light our bedrooms and hallways.

Perhaps because I grew up in a medical family, I waded over to the Ospedale Santa Maria Nuova to carry fresh water and food - being prepared outside in the hospital courtyard by a mobile Italian Army field kitchen - upstairs to medical patients who had been moved to upper hospital floors and then carried containers of human waste downstairs for final removal by Italian Army liquid cargo trucks.

Eventually, I relocated to the Accademia di Belle Arti to carefully cut the leather covers off of a complete set of very large etching volumes by Giovanni Battista Piranesi which had been soaked in clear sewage. I separated and blotted dry each large historical etching page, and then covered each page with talcum powder and dry blotter paper and packed them flat for safe transport to a Rome monastery for restoration.

Update:

After I returned to the US, I was recruited by an Italian classical music artist management company to direct their business operations throughout North and South America and Northern Europe. Subsequently I was engaged as designer, technical director and stage manager for twenty three opera and classical theater companies for whom I designed and produced forty four productions. In that same period, I performed forty one major roles in lyric opera and musical theater in over one thousand performances.

Since I had (and still have) an interest in engineering, I also served eleven aerospace, manufacturing and commercial marine companies as a manager and consulting engineer. During that period I authored thirty one peer review journal articles and national conference presentations on statistical quality methods for corporate, academic, arts, legal and defense department management. Then, I was asked to teach opera performance and design, and quality management strategies, at Xavier University and to serve as a cantor in the Roman Catholic Church.

Now, I study organic cooking and design and manage photovoltaic and geothermal energy systems that produce sustainable ‘net zero’ residences for my family members.

A final flood thought: When I was first contracted to perform the role of il Sacristano in the opera Tosca, I vividly remembered - from my flood negotiations at the Basilica di San Lorenzo - the perfect characterization for my creation and performance of the Sacristan’s role. It got great reviews.
Photos:

Sam Welch 1966

Sam Welch 2016
WILKERSON
Nancy Covington Wilkerson
wilkclan@aol.com

Memories:

I loved living in Florence and learning the Italian language. When I look back at that year I can’t believe how adventurous and fearless we were. A few specific memories I recall are befriending a young woman named Fiorella, whose family owned the “bar” down the street from the Hotel Capri, and several of us driving around with her in their family car. I remember going to a bakery near Piazza San Marco for the freshly baked hot “bomboloni” (donuts) coming down the chute from the upper floor around two in the afternoon. I distinctly remember my roommate, Marla Moore, and I studying at our desks in our tiny, narrow room but it had a great view of the rooftops of Florence. I remember sometimes hitchhiking on weekends to visit other towns, using a Eurail pass at Christmas vacation to tour northern Europe, staying at youth hostels and being excited when we had hot water. During spring break Betsi Brittain, Chris Dietrich, and I took a freighter from Brindisi over to Greece and had our pictures taken on the steps of the Acropolis. We also ended up in Istanbul, broke and planning to get some cash at the American Express office only to discover there wasn’t one, but we survived.

One morning I was awakened to the news that the Arno was flooding. I dressed and started walking in the rain toward the river, only to see a large body of water steadily advancing toward me. That was the beginning of our week of no running water, with male students at school having to haul huge vases of water upstairs to enable the toilets to flush. A bunch of us went to a local park and jumped into the small lake in order to bathe after several days of no water. At some point I donned a mechanic’s jumpsuit and worked with other students to hand up muddy priceless books from the basement of the library in Florence. That flood was quite an event for all of us and that year overall was wonderfully unforgettable... it forever endeared Italy, and in particular Firenze, to my heart.

Update:

I graduated from FSU with an MBA in marketing and subsequently became a flight attendant with Delta Airlines, based in New Orleans where I met my husband, Dick. We moved back to Jacksonville in 1970 when Dick joined my dad and brother in the family business, Ace Electric Supply Co., and I worked in the trust department of a bank. After the birth of our first child I became a stay-at-home mom and Dick and I enjoyed raising our three children, Emily, Wade, and Anna. I went back to work for about nine years in the family business once our youngest was in high school and able to drive. We finally retired and currently we’re on the go visiting our children and grandchildren in Atlanta or Charlotte, or spending holidays with them at our vacation home in Linville, NC. My favorite activities are being with our kids and their families (nine grandchildren ranging in ages from one to fourteen with one granddaughter and eight grandsons!), reading, watercolor painting, sewing, traveling, Bible studies and church, and
spending our summers in the NC mountains where I have taken up golf (Dick has always been an avid golfer), croquet, and Mah Jongg. We feel we are very blessed.

Photos:

Betsi Britten and Nancy Covington in Florence

Nancy Covington and Betsi Britten Room at the Hotel Capri

Nancy Covington and Chris Dietrich The Acropolis Feb. 1967

Nancy Covington in stateroom to Greece February 1967
Memories:

I spent my 20th birthday in Florence, Italy, with flood waters lapping at the curb of the Hotel Capri. It had been rainy for several days. The day before, my roommates and I had been in Fiesole visiting with our roommate’s fiancé’s mother. She made a spaghetti dinner for us and entertained us in her very humble apartment. She put out extra strips of toilet paper so we’d have enough. We went to a small kiosk in the drizzle and bought more for her because we felt bad to have used up hers. In the shadow of an epic event, small details surrounding it become vivid. I wonder if I would have remembered buying toilet paper in the rain on a day that did not presage an historic flood.

We had free student passes to the museums. Very often after class and on days when we didn’t have class, I would go to a museum or church and just visit, sometimes for a few hours, sometimes for a few minutes. It was all available for the going. We were able to develop personal attachments to particular works of art and buildings. In the days after the flood, while the waters were receding and we sat together in the dining area of the hotel, we discussed particular works of art and wondered and worried how they fared. We were all saddened by the destruction of Giovanni Cimabue’s Crucifix at Santa Croce. My particular favorites, Donatello’s David, Michelangelo’s Captives were safe.

Update:

After graduating from FSU, I married and moved to Bradenton and spent the next 42 years working in child welfare, primarily foster care and adoptions, then training. Along the way I got a divorce, a Master’s Degree in Social Work and became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Certified Behavior Analyst. I commuted to Tampa for several years, training child welfare workers through USF. I moved to Tallahassee to help implement and direct a statewide program incorporating behavior analysis into the state child welfare system. The program was innovative and nationally recognized, but fell prey to state budget cuts. I was able to retire and did so. I continue to work on contract with the State Adoption Program and until recently (budget cuts again) taught parenting classes in the community.

I wrote a short internet vignette for the 30th anniversary of the flood and was invited to appear on Italian television as a representative of the Mud Angels. In November 1996 I returned to Florence and was filmed with others in the Piazza della Signoria. I visited Sra. Scala who owned and was running a hotel near the train station. She asked about so many of us from the program. I was, as a result of the Italian filming, interviewed at my home in Bradenton for the History Channel’s natural disaster series, The Wrath of God, for their feature on the Florence flood. You’ll see me several times, but I’m not credited – they probably lost my name along with the FSU Mud Angel photos I loaned them.

The FSU Florence Study Program opened my mind and my life to art and culture and has added a depth of joy and feeling of connection with the world that is unsurpassed. I wish I could adequately express my appreciation and love for my classmates and professors; they have enriched my life beyond measure.
Photos:

Cathy Williams, November 1969, being interviewed

Cathy Williams
Monte Morello, Italy, 1966

Cathy Williams 2016
Memories:

Floodwaters and Fango

Alluvione and fango - two words I never thought I would need to know - entered my Italian vocabulary on November 5th, 1966.

On the 4th of November, the evening before the famous flood, as I rode over Ponte Santa Trinita (most likely returning from dinner at ‘La Fettunta’ – AKA Casa Machiavelli – where we dined as usual on fetta unta, baccelli beans, salcici, fagioli al’uccelletto, pecorino fresco with honey..Yummm), I remember being surprised at how high and angry the water in the Arno was. It seemed to reach the very bottom of the arches.

Sleeping in on Saturday the 5th, I wasn’t fully aware of the catastrophe unfolding in other parts of the city. When I did venture out with several other students, we saw the water creeping towards us on VII Aprile, first in the gutters, then covering the street surface. Fortunately for residents of our immediate neighborhood, the flooding was mostly in the basements. A few streets away, however, an entirely different scenario was playing out.

The floodwater receded fairly quickly in many areas – but the infamous fango it left behind destroyed artwork and personal possessions indiscriminately. The lack of essential services: electricity, water and sanitation, gas, and transport impacted the entire center of Florence and beyond.

I was one of the Biblioteca Nazionale crew. How bitter cold it was standing in those long lines for hours with freezing feet on cold stone steps. It was critical to keep up the chain passing hand-to-hand the icy-cold spongy mud-soaked blocks. (Although I have had secret guilt feelings for 50 years wondering if the way we handled the books turned them into just so much historical paper mache’!) Gloves and clothing were wet within minutes. I recall the sense of true international camaraderie as we all worked together to salvage the precious volumes - and how that lunch of Panini tasted really good.

My angeli moments were fairly fleeting however. Teenage vanity did me in. Disdaining the swan pond emersion option, I decided to wash my hair in ice-cold mineral water. Without electricity for a hair dryer, or heat in the hotel, bronchitis was the inevitable result. When the rest of the FSU group went to Rome, I was left behind at a “casa di cura” – an Italian convalescent clinic. At the casa di cura I discovered a unique feature of convalescent care at Italian facilities (50 years ago) – patients were expected to supply their own personal hygiene items like soap, toothpaste, toilet paper and Kleenex! Fortunately in that wonderful way of Italians, the relatives of the young woman in the next bed took it upon themselves to take care of me also.

I was able to join up with the Roman retreat in time for the semi-private audience with the Pope. ..and the trip to Naples, Pompeii and Capri ...or was that later? My main memory of Rome, other than the Pope, was the disco and watching with amazement as one of our group demonstrated “The Gator” on the floor to the fascination and horror of the Roman patrons.

...
Update:

My time in Florence accentuated my love of travel. During the year, as well as number of cities in Italy, I also managed trips to France, Spain, Algeria, Morocco, Greece and Germany, usually in the company of one of my roommates and usual comrades in arms; Christine Crane and Betsi Britten. When I returned to the States, I accelerated my graduation date by a trimester continuing straight through the summer of 1967.

After graduating in early 1968, I hopped on a plane and returned to Florence, where I got a job as an assistant designer in a knitwear firm. I lived in Florence until 1971, when I moved to Atlanta, Georgia. In the 70’s in rapid session I opened and closed a high fashion clothing store, joined a specialty catering firm, took over the firm, and expanded the business to catering for films, before moving to San Francisco to re-join the fashion industry, my first love, in 1978. For the next 30 years I worked in the apparel industry, transferring body and soul to New York City in the early 80s. In that industry I traveled frequently, spending a third of the year in Europe and Asia. That wasn’t quite enough international travel for me, so in 1997, I accepted a Thailand based job on the USAID funded US-Asia Environmental Partnership Program as a Program Manager for Greening the Supply Chain. In the subsequent years, I continued to lead other management, sustainability or environment programs for a private contractor to USAID. In addition to spending time in South Africa and Sri Lanka, I was based full-time two years in Mindanao, The Philippines and two years in Delhi, India. My last major posting was to Jakarta, Indonesia, where I was Climate Change Advisor to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN.

For me the primary downside to living in some countries and traveling extensively regionally (there are ten ASEAN member states ranging from Myanmar and Singapore to Indonesia and Cambodia), is the difficulty in having pets. Currently, I am enjoying life in Manhattan with my miniature wire-hair dachshund and traveling less, except to Italy of course).
Photos:
ZIEGLER
Marla Moore Ziegler
Mziegler47@comcast.net

Memories:

I went to college wanting to be a chemical engineer. My parents insisted that I take 2 years of liberal arts before finalizing that curriculum. My year in Florence as a sophomore changed my life. (Thanks Nancy Covington for convincing my parents that the Florence Program was right for me!) Art, architecture and history everywhere. I adored it. I loved travelling during our breaks and those 3 day weekends.

Update:

When I returned to FSU I became a history major and ultimately got my Ph.D. in German history at the University of Virginia. I married in Germany (our honeymoon was in Florence and Venice), and then worked as a college professor and administrator in Virginia. In my thirties, I went to law school, clerked on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and ultimately became a partner in a Minnesota law firm. I adopted a beautiful baby girl in Paraguay in 1989. I was later diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis and ultimately decided to return to the warmer climate of Charlottesville, Virginia where I raised my daughter. My love of history and architecture led me to rehab/restore one Edwardian and two Victorian houses (while living in them and working at the same time!). I love hiking, white water rafting and travel. Our year in Florence and the November flood taught me to enjoy opportunities whenever possible lest they vanish overnight.