Montgomery Celebrates Its Centennial

Montgomery School is celebrating its Centennial year in 2015-2016, a milestone in the school’s history. Learn more about the Centennial in the pages of this edition of The Bell Magazine, as well as on the school’s website at montgomeryschool.org/centennial.

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Editors:
Stacey Kley
Kami Mulzet

Photography by:
Stacey Kley
Kami Mulzet
Mark Tassoni
Steve Bayles
Amy S. Martin

To submit articles or information for The Bell, please contact:
Stacey S. Kley, Director of External Affairs
Montgomery School
1141 Kimberton Road, Chester Springs, PA 19425
610.827.7222, ext. 229
skley@montgomeryschool.org
Looking Ahead to our Next 100 Years

MONTGOMERY SCHOOL IS IN THE MIDST of a year-long celebration of its Centennial year. We celebrate significant milestones like this one because they afford us the opportunity to look back at all of the wonderful accomplishments achieved by the school and its graduates over that time. In this issue you will read about alumna Chase Markee’s endeavor to gather the most worthwhile of the school’s archives and organize these treasured documents to allow us a clearer understanding of our history as an educational institution. You will also have a chance to see examples of the lasting friendships Montgomery School creates in both its students and their families. Truly, the experience shared by Montgomery students and those closest to them forms bonds that time does not unravel.

This moment in our school’s history also compels us to consider important questions about not only where we have been as a school, but where we are going. Observing 100 years of Montgomery’s successes loses some of its gravitas if we do not consider what work and foresight it will take to ensure that our wonderful school will thrive for the next 100 years. Specifically, we must continually evaluate both the relevance and viability of the academic program we offer and the space we occupy in the community we serve. What are we known for? What are we best at, and what must we do better to keep our school current with rapidly changing times and educational demands?

Certainly, an area of emphasis for every exceptional school in the present day is the ability to prepare students for a future in which they will gather information from a seemingly endless array of sources at previously impossible speeds. Our students will need to use the technological tools so widely available now and to keep up with continual enhancements to these tools. But the reliance on technology must not translate into a reliance on its power at the expense of critical thought. Montgomery graduates will need to apply the skills they’ve learned here of active learning, acquisition of knowledge across disciplines, and asking the necessary questions to get the best answer. Computers, tablets and smartphones are not and will never be substitutes for engaged individuals who use what they have learned to think, reason and solve problems. Helping our students find that balance is one of the most crucial responsibilities we have.

Fortunately, in addition to the strong support I receive from those working in the school’s interest, we have the wise counsel of great educators to set and sharpen our vision. The re-accreditation visit by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools last year yielded a report that contained numerous commendations of the areas where our school excels. It also offered suggestions of where aspects of our program and our execution of the school’s mission can be improved. I have shared these findings with the community at campus events and it will provide the foundation of our work in the coming years.

We are also able to draw from the wisdom of the talented professionals who address the challenges faced not just by our school, but by all such enterprises at this time in history.

Tony Wagner is an Expert In Residence at Harvard University’s new Innovation Lab, who has interviewed hundreds of CEOs in business, non-profits and educational institutions. He then distilled these interviews into a list of seven skills that people will need to survive and thrive in the 21st century. We cannot know precisely what lies ahead for our students, but we can safely predict which skills they will need once they get there. Per Wagner, these are the seven most important survival skills for the 21st century: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence, Agility and Adaptability, Initiative and Entrepreneurship, Effective Oral and Written Communication, Accessing and Analyzing Information, and finally Curiosity and Imagination.

Hopefully you looked at that list and quickly recognized how each of these skills is already a point of emphasis in Montgomery’s educational mission and curriculum. Further, you probably can recall specific examples of how these elements have appeared in either your own education at Montgomery or in that of the children you have sent to us. We will continue to be intentional about fostering these skills as we look toward a bright future for Montgomery School.

A 100th birthday is a remarkable achievement. It marks countless storms weathered, many great opportunities afforded, and a motivating purpose that transcends the simple arithmetic of tallying up years. Montgomery School embodies something bigger still: the desire to go on educating and leading. I hope you will mark your calendar and plan on joining me on May 21, 2016 for our Centennial Celebration. This will be a special day for our school community, our alumni and friends as we mark this most special of anniversaries.

Congratulations, and here’s to another wonderful century of Montgomery School excellence in education.

Sally Keidel
Head of School
Montgomery Celebrates Its Centennial

2015-2016 is a special year in the history of Montgomery School, as we are celebrating our Centennial this year. Montgomery has a remarkable 100 year history, which includes two geographic moves, 11 school leaders, and changes in the grades served and the type of school (from single sex to coeducational, and from boarding to day.)

Montgomery School was founded in 1915 by the Reverend Gibson Bell as a country day school for boys in grades one through twelve on Montgomery Avenue, from which it takes its name. In 1921, the school moved to the Hopper Estate in Wynnewood. In 1988 the school moved once again, this time to its current beautiful campus in Chester Springs. Throughout the school's 100 year history, Montgomery's focus on educating children in mind, body and character has remained a constant.

The school is marking its 100th year of operation with a series of events, gatherings, and presentations. Alumni, current and past parents, faculty and board members are invited to participate in our Centennial Celebration on May 21. Enjoy these next pages and the photographs from Montgomery's earlier days. When you visit our campus in Chester Springs, stop by the library and enjoy perusing the new Archive collection that is housed there.
MONTGOMERY CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL

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1915 - 2015
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centennial feature
Object Lessons
FROM THE MONTGOMERY SCHOOL ARCHIVES

By Chase T. Markee ’05
Beginning in the Spring of 2015, alumna Chase Markee ’05 developed a plan and then carried out that plan to bring organization and preservation to many boxes and binders of photographs, documents and other artifacts. The impetus for this work was Montgomery’s Centennial celebration. The archives are now preserved and housed primarily in the J. Bennett Hill Jr. Library in the Gresh Academic Center, and are available to faculty, student, alumni, and others who may wish to do research or just to peruse this treasure.

Objects are a means through which to study the world around us. In examining an object, what are our initial impressions or understanding of its form or function? What is the object’s original context? How is it constructed? Does the object encourage us to explore broader narratives?

IN ORGANIZING MONTGOMERY’S ARCHIVES, I began to explore some of these questions. Take this photographic print for instance (left): At first glance, it’s a mere black and white photograph—an antiquated artifact akin to those of forgotten attics and cluttered closets. The image depicts a single figure framed by the shadowed delineations of the foregrounded space. Seemingly unaware of the viewer, a girl is quietly immersed in her studies. She’s perched at a desk upon which a variety of didactic objects rest—a desk globe, a row of books secured by a simple metal bookend, a closed composition book. The light from the overhanging bay windows and latticed windowpanes directs the viewer’s gaze towards the center of this tunneled scene, transporting us to a secluded nook from decades past. It’s a striking image, and perhaps one of my favorites in the Montgomery School Archives.

In preparation for Montgomery’s Centennial, the School’s administration and I proposed a timely archival processing project to organize the Archives. Archival processing is a term used to describe the process whereby a repository’s collections are weeded, arranged, described, and provided with quality housing for storage and use. The Montgomery School Archival Processing Project aimed to address the Archives’ long-term preservation needs, to design and implement an organizational framework that would guide the Archives’ future growth, and to facilitate greater access to the many materials that tangibly chronicle Montgomery’s one hundred year history.

The photograph on the opposite page was one of many objects I encountered during an initial survey of the Archives in April 2015. This first phase of the Project provided valuable context that would shape my organizational strategy and understanding of the Archives as a material history of the School. Navigating the Farmhouse’s split-level floors and tucked away spaces was not unlike a treasure hunt in many respects. The Archives contain an array of materials including: albums, artwork, audiovisual materials, correspondence and memoranda, directories and handbooks, event programs and schedules, newspaper and magazine articles, photographs and photographic materials (contact sheets, negatives, and slides), plaques, periodicals, promotional materials, scrapbooks, textiles, and yearbooks. At the time of the survey, these materials were stored throughout various rooms in old bathtubs, closets, and other assorted nooks and crannies characteristic of a nineteenth century farmhouse.

While the survey focused on documenting this range of materials and their storage conditions, it became clear that the physical spaces themselves played an equally important interpretative role in understanding Montgomery’s history. Any Montgomery student, parent, graduate, or staff member who has witnessed the School’s geographical transformations over the past one hundred years, let alone the past ten years, might argue that space is just as tangible an artifact of Montgomery’s history as any yearbook or photograph. The Farmhouse, for instance, is the last remaining structure of the original Beachwood Farm upon which the Chester Springs campus was built in 1988. Over the years, this building has silently witnessed the School’s growth and transition: students using SmartBoards, iPads, android tablets, Chromebooks, and even Makerbot 5th generation 3D printers in the classroom, enrollment of 238 students, and construction of state-of-the-art facilities such as the W. Perry Gresh Academic Center that currently houses the bulk of the Archives.

Based on the survey findings, the next step of the Project was to develop an organizational strategy that would promote the long-term preservation of the Archives’ materials.
understanding of an object’s construction determines best practices for its care and preservation. For example, the photograph noted above of the Wynnewood campus is more compositionally complex than one might suppose.

Twentieth-century prints are often comprised of a paper base and a light-sensitive coating, or emulsion layer, in which a photographic image is suspended. Both the paper and the emulsion layer are susceptible to fading from light exposure as well as physical deterioration from pollutants such as dust particles or adhesives.

As visitors to the J. Bennett Hill Jr. Library will note, a majority of the Archives are now housed in archival-quality boxes that not only shield materials from light and pollutants, but the boxes themselves are composed of acid-free materials that preserve their contents. Compared to larger record cartons, a smaller box size with a reinforced metal edge design decreases the risk of physical damage that could occur during storage or transportation, and allows users to manageably remove them from the Library’s shelves. Within each box, acid-free folders provide convenient organizational reference points, and sheets of acid-free paper interleave records or photographs that contain exposed adhesives. These re-housing initiatives will help ensure that Montgomery’s archival material will remain in stable condition for years to come.

In addition to preservation, the Project focused on designing a consistent, straightforward organization that would serve the Archives’ current needs, while proving relevant and adaptable in accommodating future archival material. The Archives contain an inventory—a spreadsheet that records the category, folder title, year, and location for every object processed thus far. An inventory’s basic function is to serve as a map of the archives. Whether interested in all school panoramic photographs from the 1930s, a yearbook from 1997, or copies of the “Cool School News” (a student publication from the early 1990s) researchers will be able to easily locate these materials.

Archived materials were stored in a bathtub prior to this project.
Despite the significant work accomplished last summer in processing a majority of the School’s archival material, there is still much work to be done, especially in regards to digital material. The inventory will help future volunteers incorporate these unprocessed objects into the Archives. Beginning in 2004 Montgomery largely transitioned to digital formats in photography, correspondence, and publications. While processing the School’s significant collection of digital material was outside the scope of this initial project, it raises questions as to how the past twelve years of digital history will be incorporated into the School’s foundational “hard copy” materials. Here lies an exciting future project, and hopefully the groundwork from this recent processing project will help bridge the notable transition between the material and the digital.

In considering the Archives as a resource to explore Montgomery’s one hundred year history, we can revisit the aforementioned photograph of the girl by the window from yet another perspective. The photograph’s Wynnewood setting represents a significant time period in the School’s geographical narrative. Founded in 1915 by the Reverend Gibson Bell, the School resided on Montgomery Avenue in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania before relocating to forty-five acres of land on Old Gulph Road purchased from the Hopper Estate in 1922. The photograph’s female subject speaks to the School’s transition to a co-educational day school under the Almy-Ratledge administration of the late 1930’s. The Archives reveal that many of the Montgomery traditions we cherish today are products of the Wynnewood years. For example, the Archives contain event programs from Montgomery’s annual Thanksgiving Service from as early as the 1940s, which include student artwork, hymns, and copies of Thanksgiving proclamations from several United States presidents. The early days of chariot races and steal-the-bacon—signature events of the annual Greek and Roman Games, or “A Festival of Games” as they were once called—are documented in the Archives. Apart from the circa-1970s plaid blazers, photographs of Montgomery’s weekly chapels have changed very little.

Numerous photographs like the one of the girl immersed in her studies document Montgomery’s longstanding commitment of educating its students in mind, body, and character. The Archives as an educational resource and material record of Montgomery’s history can likewise serve that mission. The Archives’ range of primary and secondary sources not only offers students the chance to develop strong research and analytical skills, but it prompts creative classroom activities and enhances students’ engagement with local and communal histories. How does one measure the value of collections or archives? Value, as it’s understood in terms of monetary or intellectual worth, can be determined in part by archives’ scope and contents or by the uniqueness or significance of a few noteworthy objects. In my experience, though, organized archives are perhaps the most valuable as they allow users to more easily access their contents. Why keep boxes of photographs if they are just going to remain untouched on forgotten shelves? This archival processing project will allow researchers to easily identify and locate materials relevant to their interests and research needs. In perusing the inventory, researchers will be able to contextualize objects within the broader scope of the Archives.

Organized, well preserved, and accessible, the Montgomery School Archives offer a valuable resource to its community. Materials matter: whether in terms of context, construction, or interpretation of broader narratives, objects play a creative role in helping us understand and appreciate the world around us.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
I would like to acknowledge, with gratitude, the support from members of the Montgomery School community who helped make this project possible—to Montgomery’s administration for their financial support and guidance; to Georgia Dahn ’13, Patty Dahm, Stacey Kley, Stephanie Kley ’06, Michele Oakes, Kami Mulzet, Heather Schelhorn, and Susan Werner who generously volunteered their time in processing the Archives; and to the helping hands of Rose Collins, Mark Murray, Ryan Naylor, and Gregory Tomko for relocating the Archives to the J. Bennett Hill Jr. Library.
ASANTE SANA

Kami Mulzet teaching in Wamunyo, Kenya.

Photos by Amy S. Martin.
Adventures in Kenya and Tanzania

By Kami Mulzet, 6th Grade Language Teacher and Advancement Associate

Even before we saw the students, we heard their excited cheers, and then the beautiful singing. As the safari truck pulled into the school, we saw a sea of students lined up cheering, clapping, and smiling. Their threadbare uniforms and often bare feet did not diminish the brilliant smiles and warm welcome given to us by hundreds of primary and middle school children. Teachers and administrators greeted us with warm hugs and their welcome: “Karibu!” (welcome!) and “Jambo!” (hello!).

As we walked toward the school, the children fell out of their lines and began to hold our hands and escort us, saying in English, “How are you?” When I replied in Swahili, “Mzuri,” meaning “I am well,” the students smiled even more broadly. We were greeted with delighted laughter and great smiles when we used the small amounts of Swahili that we had learned. The walk into that first school, Kyamatula Primary School, with so many eager and sweet faces, was so overwhelmingly warm, I found myself overcome by the kindness surrounding me.

There were six of us on this trip. I was traveling with Laura Carter, a sixth grade Language Arts teacher from Annapolis, Maryland. Laura was visiting Kenya for the sixth time and had put this trip together with Kenya Connect (kenyaconnect.org), an organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and schools in the Wamunyu region of Kenya. Laura is a board member and great champion of the students in Wamunyu. We also traveled with Ali Oliver-Krueger, Executive and Artistic Director of Interactive Story Theatre (interactstory.com), based in Maryland. Ali would run a two-day professional development workshop for local Kenyan teachers, as well as teach in the schools. Photographer Amy Martin (amysmartinphotography.com) had been invited by Laura to document the trip in pictures for Kenya Connect. In her own words, “As a documentary photographer, I use my camera’s lens to make the world a little smaller — in hopes of increasing awareness, understanding and compassion across physical and social barriers.” We were also joined by James Musyoka, Co-Founder and Field Director of Kenya Connect, and Exaudi John, director of Allure African Safari in Tanzania, Africa.

At each of the schools we visited, we were invited to drink tea (a staple in the Kenyan day), asked to sign a guest book, and then given front row seats. The students and the school’s parents sang, danced, and recited poetry in our honor, and we joined in at every stop. As is the tradition, the students gave us Kamba names, partly to make remembering our names easier for the students. The Kamba tribe is the dominant tribe in the Wamunyu area, and makes up about 11% of the population in Kenya. They are known for their hospitality and warmth. I was given the name Mwende, which means “beloved,” another in a series of kind and welcoming gestures that moved me deeply.

For the past six years, Laura Carter has worked with Kenya Connect to help promote health and literacy in the Wamunyu region of Kenya. This organization has helped the schools in the area by building special water tanks to collect rain so that the students don’t have to trek to the closest water source (often a river) twice a day to haul water. There are 54 schools in the region and they continue to support new schools each year as funding allows. Kenya Connect also has begun a de-worming medical program in many of the schools, and they have found that attendance and test scores have gone up as a result. Finally, Kenya Connect has built a Learning Resource Center (LRC) through the generous support of donors in the U.S. and East Africa, and was built by local laborers using locally purchased materials.
The LRC is equipped with 20 Mac computers to be used for professional development for the teachers, and computer classes for students. The LRC has a lending library and space to hold training classes. Kenya Connect’s only paid staff are those from Kenya, as the American staff and board members are all volunteer, including Laura, who designed this trip as an opportunity for American teachers and trainers to work with Kenyan teachers on professional development, and to model classroom teaching for arts integration to enhance literacy skills. The nonprofit is now raising funds for a “Magic School Bus” that can transport students to the LRC. At this point, it only services students and teachers who can walk there, but they hope to draw from a broader area with this bus to transport students.

The next two days found us at the LRC as Laura Carter and Ali Oliver-Krueger ran a two-day professional development workshop for 28 Kenyan teachers. The workshop focused on teaching techniques for kinesthetic learning, and arts integrated lessons incorporating music and movement to enhance literacy. Professional development does not really exist in Kenya, and the teachers were eager to learn new teaching techniques, and to share information with their colleagues from other schools. The workshop was a huge success, and the teachers were enthusiastic participants.

We then spent two days visiting three area schools where we taught classes in partnership with the classroom teachers. I was given three grade levels of middle school in each visit, ranging from 40-60 students. I worked with the students using improvisational theater techniques. Kenyans, I quickly learned, are great storytellers, and these students were no exception. I talked to the students about what makes a story interesting, and we discussed some of the basic elements that stories need to be successful. After I told my story, I asked for a student volunteer to come up and share a traditional folktale, or to try telling a collaborative story as I had done. Though the students were initially shy at each of the three schools I visited, with encouragement, a boy or girl would come to the front of the room to share a story. Next, I had several students act the story out. We had great fun with this exercise.

Kenyans prepare vigorously for their national exams, which help determine who will move on to secondary school and beyond. Though primary school is free through eighth grade, secondary school is expensive, and only students who pass the National Exams (given in English), and can afford the tuition, move on to secondary.
Though a very high percentage of students attend primary school, less than half of those will move on to secondary school. Most of the preparation for the National Exams requires memorization rather than creative thinking. However, people who can problem solve are best suited for participation in the global economy. By modeling classes in kinesthetic learning, arts integration, and S.T.E.A.M. (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), which include the theatrical telling of a story, or a simple lesson on making and flying paper airplanes, students learn about collaboration and problem solving, valued skills in the global economy. After each of the classes, the teachers told us that they were impressed by what their students could do. The students clearly enjoyed the opportunity to think creatively and to problem solve collectively through arts integration.

The last three days of my trip were dedicated to visiting cultural communities and taking a safari in Tanzania. Our safari leader, Exaudi John, head of Allure African Safari, drove us four hours south, where we crossed the border into Arusha, Tanzania. Our first stop was Tarangire National Park, where we had a close up view of elephants and giraffes among other animals. On the second day, we visited the Ngorongoro Crater, a collapsed volcano that rings a huge savanna filled with wildlife. On our two-day adventure, we saw lions, elephants, baboons, zebras, and a black rhino, among other wonderful sights. We even witnessed a pride of lions sharing a cape buffalo that they had brought down. Our guide was knowledgeable about the wildlife, and his number one priority was to keep us safe throughout the adventure. It was an absolute thrill to see so many beautiful animals up close!

As part of a “cultural safari,” we also visited several self-sustaining collaboratives. The chance to meet and talk to people who are so different, and yet in many ways so similar, was just incredible. We visited a homestead run by women who specialize in weaving baskets, a wood carver’s coop, and a Meru community that has built three schools as a direct result of being given a cow from the Heifer International organization. The group has grown to include a large cheese-making business, beekeeping, and coffee growing. Finally, we visited a Maasai village where the community members danced and sang for us, gave us a tour of their bomas (huts), and showed us how to make fire from a stick and a piece of wood. In each of these visits, we were given the opportunity to shop for items that help to support the village group. There was a palpable feeling of pride in their ability to be self-sustaining.

This incredible trip was made possible for me by Montgomery’s Whittlesey Bratton Professional Development Grant. I am truly grateful for the opportunity for professional exchange with the many Kenyan teachers I met, for the warmth and creativity of the Kenyan students, and for the exciting cultural lessons I learned in various communities and on safari. I know that this trip will enrich my teaching.

This incredible trip was made possible for me by Montgomery’s Whittlesey Bratton Professional Development Grant. I am truly grateful for the opportunity for professional exchange with the many Kenyan teachers I met, for the warmth and creativity of the Kenyan students, and for the exciting cultural lessons I learned in various communities and on safari. I know that this trip will enrich my teaching. Montgomery students PreK through 8th grade have begun a pen pal program with Sofia Primary School and are exchanging letters and art work throughout the year. I look forward to sharing my experience with my students in the years to come, and for Montgomery students to develop a meaningful connection with the students in Wamunyu, Kenya. “Asante Sana” is Swahili for “Thank you very much.”

Asante Sana, for this opportunity!
Celebrating Friendships at Montgomery

By Julia Krumenaker, Parent of Gene ’14

“Take a look at the people sitting on either side of you. You have the most valuable tool you need to succeed in what lies ahead sitting right next to you. The friends you made at Montgomery will be with you the rest of your life. You guys grew up together, and whether you realize it now or not, you’ll still be talking ten, fifteen, twenty years from now. I met my closest friends at Montgomery, and though we haven’t gone to school together for about seven years now, they still play a very real role in my daily life. Though I might not speak to them every day, I know in my heart that I can call on them and they will be there for me.” EXCERPT FROM THE 2008 GRADUATION SPEECH BY CAROLINE OUWERKERK, ’01

AS MONTGOMERY SCHOOL COMMEMORATES A CENTURY OF EDUCATING CHILDREN, much thought is given to history, traditions, and growing students in mind, body and character. While these elements remain at the heart of a Montgomery education, an important byproduct also comes to mind—friendships. While learning how to solve an algebraic equation, complete a chapel presentation, or delve into a Make a Difference project, friendships at Montgomery just kind of happen.

When I was asked to write a piece about friendships, I began to think about my own experience at Montgomery. On graduation day in 2014, I watched as my son Gene and his classmates marched out of the gymnasium, not looking back, but anxiously looking forward to the next chapter of their lives. It occurred to me that this was the last time they would all be together, at school, as they had been day in and day out for so many years. This was a group of students who knew everything about each other. They were capable of bringing out the best, and the worst, in each other, much like siblings. They played together on the playground, and later on the athletic fields. They were with each other during the carefree days of Lower School, and through the somewhat tumultuous years of adolescence in Middle School. They made mistakes together, and learned from each other. They were there for each other when things went wrong, and celebrated together when things went well. Outside of school, they shared birthday celebrations, holidays, summer camp, and family vacations.

I knew all of Gene’s classmates, and most of their parents. Many of us shared the fun, and the worries, of parenthood through those years (and still do). We too, celebrated many wonderful milestones together, navigated through uncharted parental territory together, and supported each other during times when our children didn’t always support our expectations. I admired and respected these parents, many of whom I knew I could call upon for help, when needed. Several of Gene’s friends became like my own kids to me, and I remember feeling the same pride and happiness for them during occasions like their eighth grade chapel, receiving their high school acceptance letters, and graduation. As our children marched through the years at Montgomery, my fellow parents and I spent many hours together, planning school events, driving carpools, and pulling together when families needed help during a difficult time. Our common thread was our children and our dedication to their school, but somehow, along the way, we developed meaningful friendships that continue to endure even as our children move in different directions.

From her home in Baltimore, Caroline Ouwerkerk recently reflected, “I shared that anecdote at graduation with the students because it was, and is, so true for my life. I am so thankful for the friendships I formed at Montgomery, specifically with Peter Zimmerman and Chimdi Nwosu, and I know that even though we don’t talk as frequently anymore, when we do touch base again, we will pick right back up where we left off and it will be like no time has passed at all. Because we grew up together and formed these friendships at such a young age, they were built on a bedrock of authenticity and openness that seems to be socialized out of us as we get older. Although we haven’t gone to the same school in over fourteen years, haven’t lived in the same state or time-zone for most of that time, my relationships with them are healthy and vibrant.”

“I think of Peter as my second brother, and of Chimdi as the sister I never had,” she adds. “I know their stories and their families. I am so proud of both of them, of how they’ve followed their passions, of how Peter has created an entire career out in San Francisco, and of how Chimdi has passed the Bar in three states. Peter made up a song about me in fourth grade and I still remember all the words! This May, I’ll be serving as Chimdi’s maid of honor as she marries her fantastic fiance. I’m so grateful for the amazing experience I had at Montgomery—for the traditions that marked the passage of the years and the friendships I formed with my classmates which have lasted nearly a
quarter of century and which I firmly believe will last a lifetime."

Peter Zimmerman ’01, recalls, “I first attended Montgomery in PreK. After the move from Wynnewood to Chester Springs, everyone was buzzing with excitement about new opportunities to truly build something from the ground up. For me, however, it was just a great place to meet new friends. In kindergarten, I met Caroline Ouwerkerk. I specifically remember that she was the only one to ask for homework from our teacher! That made all of us groan and complain, but looking back, I smile and think about how much verve and excitement Caroline brought to the classroom. I remember being drawn to her then and wanting to be her friend. At that point, we started building what has become a friendship that has lasted over 23 years.”

“A lot happens in 23 years,” Peter notes. “People change, grow, and things become less focused on multiplication tables, games of red rover and field trips. Instead, as we move to high school, college, and then adulthood, so many circumstances arise that work to destabilize and compromise friendships – distance being a major hinderance. But Caroline and I have always made an effort to stay in touch and have remained quite close. I attribute a lot of that to Montgomery School. There was a warmth to the community that really engendered deep connections. We embraced each other for our differences and celebrated the things that made us unique. We spent quality time with each other, so we really got to see deep into each other’s minds and souls, and that created a spirit of togetherness and resilience. Montgomery School was a family. Many days I miss that tight-knit feel – having 20
“People change, grow, and things become less focused on multiplication tables, games of red rover and field trips. Instead, as we move to high school, college, and then adulthood, so many circumstances arise that work to destabilize and compromise friendships – distance being a major hinderance. But Caroline and I have always made an effort to stay in touch and have remained quite close. I attribute a lot of that to Montgomery School. There was a warmth to the community that really engendered deep connections. We embraced each other for our differences and celebrated the things that made us unique.” PETER ZIMMERMAN ‘01
“If you understand the nature of Montgomery School, you can understand how we [as parents of Montgomery students] became such close friends. We were a tight-knit community and we shared the mission of trying to build the school for the sake of our kids... When you find people with whom you work well, then realize you can actually be good friends, that just adds to the experience.” JUDY VAN BEUREN

Making friends as a kid is easy. Yet Montgomery is a place where adult friendships also form, and flourish. Judy van Beuren’s eldest son Teddy began kindergarten at Montgomery School in 1988. “It was our first year in Chester Springs, and we were still in trailers,” she recalls. “The Head of School, Geoff Campbell, approached me about being president of the parent guild, which I was happy to do. He told me he had a vice-president in mind, and her name was Karen Thurman, who coincidentally had a son, Kyle, the same age as Teddy. Karen is my best friend to this day! We became friends, our kids became friends, and our husbands became friends as well. Over the years, we have traveled together, attended weddings together, and enjoyed so many great memories. We get together over the holidays when the kids come home, and it’s like old times. We have such great memories.”

When I spoke with Judy recently, she had just thrown a baby shower for Karen’s daughter. “Five people from our original group at Montgomery were there,” she notes. “If you understand the nature of Montgomery School, you can understand how we became such close friends. We were a tight-knit community and we shared the mission of trying to build the school for the sake of our kids. We ended up doing many projects together, including four benefits! When you find people with whom you work well, then realize you can actually be good friends, that just adds to the experience. We spent many years working to help the school, and had a lot of fun along the way.”

Madison Fertell ’06 met Stephanie Kley ’06 in kindergarten, and Lawriece Reeder ’06 joined them in fifth grade. They have been close friends ever since. “All three went on to graduate from Westtown School together, where Steph and Madison were roommates,” adds Madison’s mother, Bonnie Fertell. “They went to different colleges but always stay in touch and see each other when they are home. I love the connection they still share. I met some great moms through Madison’s class with whom I still stay in touch, two of whom I consider my closest friends.”

I know my experience at Montgomery is no different from the many other parents, and students, who have passed through the school. Montgomery is a place where the bonds of friendship can happen subtly and unexpectedly, yet grow tremendously.
Make a Difference 2015

The goal of the Make.a.Difference projects is that by learning about people who make a difference, students will then start making a difference on their own, and be the change they wish to see in the world. Students share these capstone projects with the community each spring.
Service Learning
Montgomery Style

MONTGOMERY STUDENTS VOLUNTEER
AT LAMANCHA ANIMAL RESCUE

MONTGOMERY SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN SERVICE LEARNING at every grade level and at various times throughout the year. Service learning differs from community service as it has an academic as well as a service component. While both types of programs give students the opportunity to help others, service learning is woven into the school’s academic curriculum. Service learning helps students to understand broader issues, explaining the “why” of service.

At Montgomery, there are examples of connections between service and the curriculum at each grade level. For instance, second grade students are studying heroes throughout the year. One of those heroes is Helen Keller. For service, students will be collecting eyeglasses for the Lion’s Club to be sent to Africa. Fourth grade students are reading One Hen: How One Small Loan Made a Big Difference by Katie Smith Milway. The story teaches the value of giving and the effect a small kindness can have on many lives. Students will earn money to donate to this One Hen Project. Not only do the students learn the importance of service to others, but this project ties to their science curriculum of sustainability.

Montgomery Middle School students are working with Choose 2 Matter, a global movement and call to action for young people to get involved in some of the world’s most difficult problems to help solve them. Montgomery students meet in their advisory groups and brainstorm solutions that they can put into action. Students participate in “Genius Hour” as they work toward solutions. Choose 2 Matter is an empowering message for our students, giving them the tools that they need to become productive problemsolvers and hands-on helpers. The underlying message is that each student matters, and every person has the potential to make a difference in the world.
Middle School Musical
ONCE UPON AN ISLAND

1915 2015
MONTGOMERY CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL
Fifth Grade Play
PEGGY THE PINT-SIZED PIRATE
MONTGOMERY CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL

fine and performing arts

F.A.M.E.

Visiting Artists
When did you realize when you wanted to be a teacher?
I was fourteen years old, and I had volunteered at an orphanage tutoring kids, and that’s when I decided that I wanted to be a teacher.

Is there a teacher that changed your life?
Yes, my fourth grade teacher, Miss Roselle. She taught over forty children in her class, yet was so very patient, so kind, so lovely, and so positive.

What makes Montgomery School unique?
While delivering the proposed curriculum at my grade level, I can deviate and explore other ways to make the curriculum more relevant and interesting to my students. The school encourages that kind of creativity. Montgomery is also very supportive of teachers’ professional development. As an attendee at the October Keystone State Reading Association Conference in Lancaster this year, I was able to bring back new reading and writing ideas to implement directly into the current fifth grade curriculum. Lastly, the students’ motivation to learn and parental support of student learning, make Montgomery a unique place to teach.

What are you most passionate about in your teaching?
I am especially passionate about teaching language arts and incorporating different types of literature along with the writing process and reading instruction. I use mentor texts to model strategies, and I like to keep current about research on reading and children’s literature. I am always on the lookout for new books to use as read-alouds in my classroom.

What is your favorite movie?
My favorite movie is Rocky with Sylvester Stallone. I enjoy seeing the hometown of my childhood, Philadelphia, on the big screen. I also like movies where the underdog comes out on top.

Where would you travel to if you could choose any destination?
I would like to travel to Italy and France; they are on my bucket list. Italy is the country of my heritage, and I’ve always wanted to travel to France as well.

What would you be doing, if you weren’t a teacher?
I would have a job in business in Human Resources, where I could use my passion for teaching to conduct employee training, as well as work on improving company policies for the betterment of the company and its employees.
MONTGOMERY CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL
BETSY BENNATI BEGAN HER MONTGOMERY CAREER AS A SECOND GRADE TEACHER, AND THIS YEAR SHE IS TEACHING 5TH GRADE.

Is there a place in the world where you would love to visit?
One place I’ve never seen and would love to go is Disney World – I’ve always wanted to go and see the castle, and the fireworks display. It would be an amazing family trip for sure! I also want to go to Italy someday. As a young adult I just love seeing photos of Italy. My husband is Italian and my daughter Sienna is named for a city in Italy, so it would be even more meaningful to visit now.

Do you have a “hidden talent?”
One hidden talent I have is baking. I’ve been baking for my students and for the faculty this year, and it’s something I enjoy doing with my daughter. I also don’t think people know that I was recruited to play college softball. I loved playing in high school, but I chose not to play in college.

What is your favorite movie?
My favorite movie was A League of Their Own. My parents showed me that movie when I was young because of my love for softball.

If you weren’t a teacher, what would you be?
If I were to have a different job, I would love to be a dessert maker and wedding cake decorator. That would be fun for me.

Can you describe an adventure that you’ve had?
Before Sienna was born, Adam and I took a 3200 mile road trip through the New England states and into Canada and back. I especially loved Maine and New Hampshire, and I would love to go back to both states. We would pull over on the side of the road and climb a waterfall, for instance. It was such a fun trip and we hope to make that another family vacation someday.

When did you know that you wanted to become a teacher?
I decided in second grade to become a teacher because my second grade teacher, Mrs. Harclerode, was so wonderful. I remember that she loved cats, although I prefer dogs. I taught with her when I was student teaching and I was star struck! Some of the same projects that I had done as a student were hanging on the wall. She had a wonderful way to get students to write. Later, I decided to become a reading teacher, and that’s why I went back to get my reading specialist certification.
Greek and Roman Games
Grandparents and Special Friends Day
What is your favorite movie?
My favorite movie is *The Red Violin*, and I love this movie because it involves history and intrigue and romance and high end auction items. It’s about a violin that was made in 1400 and the path that violin follows as it ends up in Christie’s auction house before it was stolen.

What do you still have on your personal bucket list?
I am dying to go snorkeling or scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef off of Australia. I would love nothing better than to swim with all sorts of “Nemos.” I have been scuba diving twice before, but snorkeling is more my speed. We were snorkeling in Bora Bora with sharks and stingrays. On my honeymoon, we went to the Caymen Islands and you could bring Cheese Whiz and if you put that in the water, it attracts all the fish. In Barbados we snorkeled with sea turtles.

What inspires your professional development?
I am inspired by the world of technology and how it has changed teaching. Our world has gone way beyond the walls of the classroom to a global perspective on a daily basis. I’m fascinated by the changes that have occurred even over the past decade. I think books, papers, and pencils are going to be gone sooner rather than later. If I didn’t see it and understand it, I’d think that was awful, but I see it going that direction and it’s hard for me to imagine a world without books. But I think textbooks online works very well too. I would not invest in a publishing company or a bookbinder at this point. Still, I simply cannot give up my magazines!

Who is a teacher that changed your life?
Believe it or not, it was my sixth grade math teacher, Mrs. Lapin, and she was a very glamorous, middle-aged, smart, tough cookie. She had very high standards, but she was very kind, and her passion for what she did was infectious. And I knew when I went to her, she would give me 100% of her attention, and I also knew she would give me a straight answer. And because of that, I have always wanted to give my very, very best.
FIRST OF ALL, CONGRATULATIONS!
FIFTH GRADE GRADUATES! Today is a big day.
I remember, as if it was only yesterday, sitting right where you are today. It’s a day filled with anticipation, excitement, and more than a few nerves. But it is a day you will remember from this day forward. Each one of you embodies what Montgomery has taught you through the years. This journey began from your first day, when you learned to have the courage to stray from the safety of your parents and homes, right through to today, as you gather together, excitedly summoning courage once again, this time to leave the safety of Lower School behind. Despite any fears or nervousness about the future, you will be able to do this, because Montgomery will forever be part of each one of you.

As eighth grade students, each of us is asked to reflect on our time here at Montgomery. As I reflect on my eleven years, what I know is that this was more than my preschool, elementary school, and middle school. By going to school here, I was given an amazing opportunity to become the very best version of myself. At three years old, I became a student for the first time. I was nervous, shy, and scared. But my teacher and the school embraced me and nurtured me into a curious and excited elementary student. As the years went on, it was no longer me that needed embracing, it was my curiosity as a student, my growing interest in different subjects and topics each year. In first grade, I lit up with my diorama of a monarch butterfly project. In third grade, the study of Egyptian culture by making sugar cube pyramids and canopic jars ignited my interest in ancient civilization and the broad world beyond. In fifth grade, my creativity was unleashed as we made up our own words complete with parts of speech and primary and alternate definitions. What an exciting time it was to feel as though you had the power to create and influence the way people expressed themselves. Sadly not many of our new words were adopted by Webster’s — but the idea that we could one day create something new, permanent, and useful was exhilarating.

As fifth graders, this year, you were given the opportunity not just to develop in mind, but also to develop in body by joining a middle school sport. When I had this opportunity, I was able to step out of my comfort zone and try field hockey. It was encouraging. The team was good, full of eighth graders who had played together for several years. The only problem was that I had never even picked up a stick. To be candid, it was rough, and, yes, there were some tears. But I was encouraged to stick with it, no pun intended. The upperclassmen helped me. They were patient and kind, and I am very glad that I had their support. Who would have thought just a few short years later, it would become such a big part of my life.

**Graduosity**: a state of being in which you are aptly prepared in mind, body and character to take on the world!

Lower School Moving Up Ceremony Remarks by Eighth Grader Marra Cunliffe
I remembered the empathy and leadership that was so important to me as I was learning, and I, in turn, tried to mentor the new players to the team this year. And most importantly, I had the opportunity to try it here first, in the safety of my school community, with the option to fail without feeling defeated, if it came to that. This is even more true of the other sport in my life, horseback riding. Montgomery opened the door to riding for me, and I have never looked back. My very first champion ribbon was earned right here on Montgomery’s campus, and I know that every ribbon or medal I win in these sports in the future, will be because our school, Montgomery School, not only made it available to me, but also gave me the courage to try. That speaks not just to the building of body, but also character. I have had the opportunity to try things, to discover things about myself that are not limiting but enlightening! As you go into middle school, you will learn things about yourself, some that may surprise you. I discovered: I can act! I can sing! I can participate in STEM challenges! Our classes are filled with unique and engaging approaches to learning. 

Raising and releasing trout is the apex of environmental sciences, not to be outdone by seventh grade and the launching of rockets. Exploration of the physics behind roller coasters will be solidified by your class trip to Florida. I would never have thought I would describe myself as feeling passionate about physics, but it’s true! I have the hands-on approach to science here to thank for my placement in honors physics at my new school! 

Having gone to school here for so long, when I am on campus I feel that I am more than just a student. I am part of a family. And I can tell you, from my heart, that when I graduate on Friday, I will walk off campus for the last time with a group of amazing friends. We will, as you will one day soon, hold our heads high, and our minds and hearts will be full of all that we have learned, shared with each other, and grown from during these amazing years.

The warm embrace of our time here will be carried forward with us, supporting us, as the backbone of all our future adventures, discoveries, life changing moments. The three years for you between now and then will be magical. As I anticipate graduation, ironically, I think back to my fifth grade year, and have created a new word to capture that feeling, **graduosity**, an innovative noun, that obviously means a state of being in which you are aptly prepared in mind, body and character to take on the world! Congratulations fifth grade! I look forward to returning and seeing what amazing individuals each of you has become.
At a crossroads? Truth, loyalty and caring will guide you.
Commencement Remarks by Lauren Willcox ’07

HAPPY GRADUATION CLASS OF 2015! I say happy because today is a pivotal and exciting moment in your lives that marks the beginning of a new chapter.

I graduated from Montgomery in 2007, The Agnes Irwin School in 2011 and Lehigh University this past May. In reflecting on what exactly I wanted to share with you all today, I attempted to synthesize what has guided me to my greatest of successes and led me through my failures. I have to admit, as a 21 year old I am still in the midst of figuring out the answers to many of life’s greatest questions.

But I can tell you what I have figured out so far. There are two important questions that you need to ask yourself moving forward. They are: 1. What do you value? And 2. What is it that you love? This leads me to my small revelation that my core values and my passions are what have guided me throughout my lifetime thus far. I am certain that if you are able to answer these questions, they will lead you most importantly to happiness followed by success.

To begin, what is it that you value? And how will this relate to your success? This is both a simple and complex question. My answer is this: what you value will guide you in making important choices. I have some good news, many of these core values that will lead you to success in high school and beyond already exist inside of you, thanks to Montgomery. Graduates, I want you for a moment to think about what it is that you value and have learned in middle school. What qualities are important to you? For me, Montgomery cultivated my character, challenged my mind and showed me the importance of serving others. Truth, loyalty and caring. Those three words have stuck with me.

My point is that when you come to a crossroads in life, let what it is that you believe in guide the way. There is no doubt that as you move on to high school you will be faced with all sorts of challenges. You will sometimes fail and you will often times succeed. It is ok to be scared. But find comfort and assurance in the fact that you already have the skills needed to navigate through those situations.

Now to address the second question, what is it that you love? Finding your passion is what will put you on the highway to happiness. In high school you will be allowed access to a multitude of resources and exposed to all sorts of new experiences. My advice would be to say yes. What do I mean by say yes? I mean say yes to new things, take risks and get involved as soon as possible. Play a fall sport, join a club, go on a service trip abroad, pursue things that have already peaked your interest at Montgomery and explore them. Think about the subjects and extra curricular activities that you have excelled in already. My love of athletics and science were both seeded at Montgomery.

I remember back in the 8th grade Mrs. Sheldrick assigned us a project in which we had to build a small paper car designed to hold an egg in a simulated car crash. Our cars were then tested and their effectiveness determined by the survival of the egg passenger. In an instant, my car had gone sailing off the ramp, the egg becoming airborne and subsequently smashing on the floor. I was nearly devastated that my design had failed. Although I may not have realized it in that moment, I have come to absolutely love the scientific process, that is the formulation of new ideas and testing of those hypotheses. After high school I went on to get my Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and will hopefully be continuing my education in medical school.

Mrs. Sheldrick believed in me and gave me the confidence to pursue my love for science even after my failed egg car. The support you have received
Overall, my point is that Montgomery has already laid down the foundation for you to explore whatever it is that you want to pursue. For some of you it may be athletics, for others Art or Theater. Try it all. Trying new things and embracing change will help you find things that you didn’t know you would be passionate about.

As many of you look back, you will not necessarily remember your graduation day in particular but all of the lasting memories that you have made with each other. Be proud of your accomplishments and know that Montgomery has prepared you well to move onward as intelligent, kind and successful young men and women.

To summarize, let me break it down into a few simple sentences. Know that you already have the qualities needed to steer you in the right direction when you are faced with a difficult decision. Figure out what it is that you love doing and be open to the possibility that you might find something you’re passionate about that you never thought was possible. Lastly, have confidence in who you are and your unique skill set that Montgomery has given you.

In summation, I encourage you all to say yes and fearlessly pursue your dreams because you have the educational foundation, the character and the support from your Montgomery family to do so. Congratulations class of 2015, we cannot wait to see what you accomplish!

“Know that you already have the qualities needed to steer you in the right direction when you are faced with a difficult decision. Figure out what it is that you love doing and be open to the possibility that you might find something you’re passionate about that you never thought was possible. Lastly, have confidence in who you are and your unique skill set that Montgomery has given you.”

Lauren Willcox ’07
I came into Montgomery School as a shy little girl. I never talked to anybody unless it was absolutely necessary. I didn’t know anybody in the grade, and I kept to myself. This was the way that I had been throughout my whole childhood, but when I entered Montgomery, I began to change immediately. It might not have been obvious to a lot of people, but I made new friends and began to talk more. This change was gradual, but as many of my classmates and teachers can agree, I’m definitely not the quiet little girl I once was. No matter how long we have all been attending this school, this experience has changed all of us in different ways. Through all of the class trips, Greek and Roman games, chapels, recesses, projects, away games, and memories we have made, not one of us is the same person that we were when we joined the grade.

One of the things I remember the most is being in first grade and seeing all of the people in the grades above me. They all seemed so much smarter and bigger and more responsible than I was. I couldn’t wait to be like them. I thought it would be so great when you instantly become better than before. Every summer you would instantly be taller and know so much more than you did the year before. I can tell you it isn’t like that. It’s like when you blow out the candles of your cake on your birthday. You don’t feel any different, but somehow things have changed from last year. Every year, I don’t remember getting taller or any smarter, but somehow I’m definitely not the same as I was in first grade. Now, as an eighth grader, I realize how much we all have changed. We have all of the responsibilities that I once looked up to, but nothing seems different.

In first grade, we got our first homework assignments. We had our own desks with our own homework folders. These were the coolest things in the world at the time, but we saw the second graders with their big reading projects. We thought it would be so much cooler to be like them. First grade was just the beginning, and we knew there was so much more to look forward to.

Second grade came, and we did our big book reports. We learned so much about chocolate and the United States. We had mad minutes in math and started reading chapter books. Third grade was coming up, though, and of course it would be so much better.

In third grade we were cooler than before. We ran the mile run for the first time and went on awesome field trips such as the Renaissance Faire. Our class got to build cardboard castles, and we had computers in our rooms for the first time. At the end of the year we sang to our eighth grade buddies. We all saw how big they were and how much they had accomplished. We couldn’t wait to be like them.

We soon entered fourth grade, the year all about history. We learned about the Native Americans and used technology to create our first big projects. We got our first lockers as well as our first lower school buddies. It was the year when people got to run for class president, and our grade began to make decisions for itself. We knew fifth grade would be...
better though, because we would be the heads of lower school.

Before we knew it, we were in fifth grade. So much changed that year, and we finally got to drink from the juice machine at lunch. Our uniforms changed, and our class finally got to do the big fifth grade play. We had so many new responsibilities as the heads of lower school such as being table heads, putting up the flags every morning, and becoming bus and car safeties. Our teachers started to give us actual letter grades rather than checks and check pluses. We all knew how much better middle school would be though, so we couldn't wait.

Sixth grade was a great year. We didn't have homeroom teachers anymore, just advisors. Our grades started to matter more, and we couldn't get by with simple Es and Ms in subjects. We were responsible for going to classes on time, and we got to use big lockers for our books rather than desks or cubbies. We got to have gym lockers with combinations, too, and we joined the school sports teams. It was the first year of going to the bake sale and not having actual recess. A highlight of that year was the first middle school trip to Echo Hill. Another great part was that we had access to unlimited drinks from the juice machine during lunch. We made so many memories in sixth grade with our new freedoms, but of course we were all looking forward to seventh grade.

In seventh grade we all had to work harder. We got new science, social studies, language arts, and math teachers. As seventh graders we finally got to go to the stage for receiving honors and high honors. Everybody told us how the work was equivalent to that of an eighth grader, and we definitely felt it... especially when we entered the big scary world of real practice sheets! Seventh grade was fun, but every one of us was looking forward to the big eighth grade. We were tired of listening to the excuse “it’s eighth grade privilege”, and we couldn't wait to start using it.

This year was our last year here at Montgomery School. We all have completed our chapels, our last Greek and Roman games, and the Make a Difference project. All of our final exams are completed, and we have attended our last chapel sitting in the back row of Bell Hall. We’ve been to Echo Hill, Florida, Washington DC, and best of all, Canada.

Some of us have been here since the age of three, and others came during this year. All of us have applied to different high schools and will soon be spreading out from this place we have called home. This was the last year. After looking forward to it since I was five, I can’t believe it’s already over. All of the opportunities we have heavily anticipated have now passed. We have gone through big milestones as a grade, and there is nothing more to look forward to except for this, graduation. Our Montgomery experience has come to an end.

As I continue my journey throughout high school and, hopefully, college I will always remember the Class of 2015. I will bring with me and always treasure the lessons I have learned here. I can say with confidence that the rest of my grade will, too.

To the all of the teachers and faculty, thank you. Thank you for making our time here the best that it could possibly be. Every one of you has helped to enhance our journey here at Montgomery, and none of us would be the same person that we are now without all of the hard work and care that you have put in. Thank you for shaping this grade into who we are and who we will be for the rest of our lives.

To the students in sixth, seventh, and the grades below, I suggest that you take your time. Take advantage of every opportunity that you are given and strive to find more. Your time here will be over in what seems the blink of an eye, so live in the moments you have rather than trying to move on to the next. Leave nothing behind, and don’t forget to have fun.
Commencement Awards 2015

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION
Seventh Grade who had demonstrated academic excellence in all subject areas.
Awarded to Patrick Kovaleski

CITIZENSHIP AWARD
A citizenship award is given to a student in grade six or seven who has consistently demonstrated qualities of community service, responsibility, thoughtfulness, and citizenship.
Awarded to Gaetano Calafati

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
The Community Service Award is given on occasion to a member of the graduating class whose efforts to serve the greater community have significantly exceeded the School's service learning program.
Awarded to Nicole Vertigan

ATHLETICS AWARD
The Montgomery Athletics Award is the highest single honor for a Montgomery School athlete. The award is presented to a boy and a girl who each displays a sportsmanlike attitude toward competition, is respected by fellow athletes and coaches, shows leadership qualities, and proves to be an asset to his or her team.
Awarded to Emma Diaz, William Brassington

MIDDLE SCHOOL CUP
The Middle School Cup is given to that student in Eighth Grade who exerts the greatest influence for good throughout the year.
Awarded to William Brassington

FACULTY PRIZE
The Faculty Prize is awarded to the member of the Eighth Grade class who best demonstrates the qualities of scholarship, character, service and leadership for which Montgomery stands.
Awarded to Hossein Seyedroudbari

THE J. BENNETT HILL, JR. AWARD
The Bennett Hill Award for academic excellence is presented to that member of the Eighth Grade class who has focused his or her talents and energy on the pursuit of academic excellence. The prize is awarded on the basis of a record of strong study habits and high achievement in all subjects of study, all the while reflecting the three tenets of the Montgomery School mission.
Awarded to Georgia Dahm

HEAD OF SCHOOL AWARD
The Head of School Award is presented to that member of the Eighth Grade class who has made the most of his or her educational opportunity, has worked hard for self improvement, has made good use of what the School has to offer, and has made a worthwhile contribution to the life of the School.
Awarded to Matthew Eaglehouse

JANE WHITTLESEY BRATTON GRANT FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT
Jane Whittlesey Bratton, a former Montgomery teacher, with the help of her daughters, Julie Whittlesey Feeley ’56 and Ruth Whittlesey Schroeder ’58 established a trust to fund professional development opportunities for Montgomery faculty. Each year a faculty member is able to pursue a professional development opportunity over the summer that will enrich their interest in a particular subject.
Awarded to Kami Mulzet
Montgomery School Class of 2015

Samantha Bonnell
The Baldwin School

Liam Brassington
The Perkiomen School

Nicholas Cavalieri
Westtown School

William Christ
Downingtown STEM Academy

Marra Cunliffe
Linden Hall School

George Dahm
The Baldwin School

Anisha Devas
The Baldwin School

Emma Diaz
Westtown School

Matthew Eaglehouse
Bishop Shanahan High School

Azaria Ford
Oldfields School, Baltimore

Fritz Gessl
Westtown School

Claire Gola
Academy of Notre Dame de Namur

Grace Gordon
The Shipley School

Dellis Hernandez
Church Farm School

Daniel Himsworth
Laurel Springs School

Simone Karustis
Owen J. Roberts High School

Jack Kovaleski
LaSalle College High School

Teagan Krane
The Baldwin School

Laura Lewis
The Episcopal Academy

McKenna Matus
The Baldwin School

Oliver Mayer
Henderson High School

Sean McDonnell
Downingtown STEM Academy

Madison O’Donnell
Academy of Notre Dame de Namur

Ryan Poorman
Church Farm School

Joseph Seyedroudbari
Westtown School

Connor Stockenberg
Blessed Trinity High School, Atlanta

Noah Thies
The Shipley School

Nicole Vertigan
Bishop Shanahan High School

Amanda Wagner
Downingtown STEM Academy

Ethan Wait
Bishop Shanahan High School

Aidan Woolley
The Hill School
The Gilbert Family
Paul, Susan, Spencer, Elsa and Perry

The Chirillo Family
Frank, Cindy, Millena and Cianna

FRANK AND CINDY CHIRILLO FONDLY REMEMBER THEIR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF MONTGOMERY SCHOOL as being a warm and inviting community where visibly happy children are engaged in their learning. Their daughters Millena and Cianna joined our program in 2008, entering Kindergarten and Preschool. Since then Frank and Cindy have involved themselves in many aspects of the school community, including Cindy serving as president of the Montgomery School Community Association.

As they reflected on how the school has impacted their family, they said simply: “everything we do is related to Montgomery.” They love the fact that their girls love to go to school each and every day, and that Montgomery has been a great learning environment for their girls’ two very different learning styles and personalities. They know that their girls will be prepared for high school, college and for life through the foundation built here at Montgomery. Frank and Cindy have always been impressed by how approachable and responsive all the teachers and administrators have always been at Montgomery, whether during the school day or after hours.

When asked why they give back to the Montgomery community, their answer was: “Montgomery is family,” and they have always chosen to support and be involved with family. They have also seen the positive impact that their being involved as parents has had on their entire family. The girls have watched them support one another to balance life’s many demands, including their roles as volunteers, and feel that has been a great lesson for them. The Chirillo family believes in getting involved to make a difference in the school community, so that Montgomery continues to thrive and grow.

THE GILBERT FAMILY JOINED THE MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY IN 2008, when their oldest son Spencer (7th grade) joined the Kindergarten class, and Elsa (4th grade) and Perry (1st grade) followed in their brother’s footsteps. As then Director of Admission Susan Marotta toured them about the campus, Susan and Paul loved the beautiful campus, and realized that this was the kind of welcoming, nurturing and happy environment they were seeking for their family. Neither Susan or Paul came from an independent school background, but were impressed by Montgomery’s rich program, including the chapels, with their emphasis on values and allowing students the opportunity to develop their public speaking skills and confidence in front of an audience.

The Gilberts feel good about giving back to the school that is providing their children with the well rounded education they are seeking within this strong, supportive community. They have made a conscious choice to be involved parents at Montgomery, to show their children that getting involved is how you can help to make a better world. They enjoy participating in Fall Fun Day, Teacher Appreciation Week, chapels and many other activities at school. Paul joined the Montgomery Board of Trustees in 2014 and enjoys being able to help plan for the future of the school in this way. The Gilberts also make Montgomery School a priority in their philanthropy, as they understand that tuition alone does not cover all of the school’s expenses, and Montgomery must raise money each year to balance the budget. They have watched as their children have grown and developed while at Montgomery, and look forward to spending many more years here as a family.
Aliena Gerhard ’85 to Camden Kramer
I loved Montgomery – I loved the teachers, the traditions, and that I felt safe there. It’s a place to explore and lead and make mistakes and try new things – because you matter!

Ryan Owens to Hartley Connett ’48
I think it is cool that Connett kids went to the school for twenty years in a row! We still play Capture the Flag today and we all love it. We also play a game called Mission Impossible. We also go on a big hill for recess and when it is snowing outside we go sledding on the big hill it is so fun. Were you a Greek or a Roman? I am a Roman.

From Lilly Zawadkas to Cindy Savett ’67
Thank you for writing me a letter. My dog is a Shetsho Beshon and her name is Candy Cane and my bird died a few weeks ago. My dog is allowed on the bed. She is a small dog. My favorite book is probably My Weird School books which is a series by Dan Gutman. I play field hockey and I am going to do dance. My favorite subject is Gym. The maze at the Renaissance Fair is still there. What presidential candidate is your son working for?
Were you a Greek or a Roman? I am a Greek. What was your favorite event for Greek and Roman Games? What was your favorite subject and your favorite holiday? My favorite holiday is Christmas.

Anthony Wood ’73 to Gracie Eilberg
When I was there in 2-5th grades, the Headmaster was Dr. Reverend Martin. He was an Episcopalian minister and was very short and very stern. He greeted each student every morning as they arrived. He was very nice to me, but got very mad at me when I didn’t button my top button of my shirt! I was a sloppy kid. Back then the high school kids and college style was the guys had long hair and the girls didn’t make up their faces or do their hair. We were a motley looking bunch in 1973, when I was in 8th grade! At Montgomery we wore a coat and tie and the girls wore uniforms.
UPCOMING MONTGOMERY SCHOOL EVENTS

Middle School Musical
February 25-27

Book Fair
March 13-16

Lax Under the Lights
April 8

Middle School Trip Week
April 17-22

Centennial Benefit & Auction
April 30

Teacher Appreciation Week
May 2-6

Montgomery Art Show
May 5-12

GrandFriends Day
May 6

Make.a.difference Project Presentations
May 9

Greek & Roman Games/Alumni Picnic
May 20

Centennial Celebration
May 21

FAME/Spring Concert
May 26

Lower School Moving Up Ceremony
June 8

Commencement
June 10