

Frances Roth Abrams '22

Frances Roth Abrams '22, was president of our Alumni Association from 1954 to 1958. One of the founders of our Scholarship and Welfare Fund, she has given many years of devoted service to Hunter.

During her presidency Frances was especially interested in the growth of our Chapters. She saw that our activities on behalf of the College would gain needed strength from smaller organized groups, both in the City area and upstate, as well as in other states. Our Chapters have continued to grow and we now have twelve in the metropolitan area and eleven beyond.

Frances undertook the reorganization of the Alumni files, when she first took office, and for a long time supervised the task of bringing the records up to date. She also initiated a new investment policy for Alumni Funds. As a result, there has been a marked increase, just in the last few years, in the value of our Graduate Gift Fund.

From the inception of our Scholarship and Welfare Fund she has worked to enlarge it. With her husband's encouragement she has given generously to this good cause, establishing a "name" scholarship, among other gifts. She continues to sit on the Board of Directors of the Fund, as well as on the Association's Board. She is a member, too, of the Roosevelt House Board and has contributed to the support of the Opera Workshop in the College.

Service, as well as the support of good works, has been the keynote of her career, one may say.

Even as a very young girl she began to turn her gaze outward, seeking companionship and purposeful activity. She was only eleven when she joined the Clara Barton Club, a group which met under the sheltering roof of the College Settlement, on the lower East Side of the City. For all the years of her girlhood she had the chance in the summer to spend a ten-day holiday at the country house in Rockland County which the College Settlement maintained for children and young people who could not afford camp fees.

Frances Roth had met Sam Abrams when he too had come as a lad to the doors of the College Settlement, to become one of the "Knights" in a boys' club which met there. These two young people continued always to be grateful to the Settlement for the benefits they derived.

Today, there stands, on the original site—now enlarged—of the Settlement's old country house, the foundation known as Camp Williams, this year marking its



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twenty-fifth anniversary. The camp is named for Elizabeth S. Williams, who for many years, as director of the College Settlement, had exercised, as Frances put it, "a tremendous influence for good upon hundreds and hundreds of young people."

Every summer now, 360 children enjoy a three-week holiday at the camp, without charge. No donors perhaps have been more eager for the camp's growth (only about sixty children were accommodated annually in the old days), more generous in its behalf, than Frances and Samuel Abrams. Among other gifts they donated the funds for the Clara Barton Building at the camp. For many years Frances has organized benefits for the camp. Her husband was for several years the camp's president.

Frances had been well prepared for her career as a volunteer worker in social service. She had earned a Master's degree at Columbia after leaving Hunter, and taught school for seven years. After her marriage she left the schoolroom, to care for her two little children. But her interest in good works never flagged. She was, for example, one of the leaders in a campaign to raise funds for a new building in Fieldston for the Ethical Culture School, which her children attended. She has worked too in other enterprises on behalf of Ethical, and in a number of philanthropic causes.

Her home, her family, and now her grandchildren, are her delights. She began several years ago to collect some examples of American painting. She recalls that it was Professor Margaret Wilson, then Chairman of the Department of Physiology, Health, and Hygiene in the College, who first urged gallery-going upon her and other young majors

in the department. Frances once described herself as a frustrated ballet girl. Her love of the dance, of the theater, of music, continues.

She and her husband have travelled far, in Europe, in South America, in Africa. As a social experience she found, she has said, a visit to Israel perhaps the most moving of all their travels, because of the extraordinary progress there in building a new country, a new home for so many, in so short a time.

The good works of the kind of heart are the works of Frances and Samuel Abrams. Fortune has smiled upon them, and they have expressed their gratitude.

A. M. T.

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About our Contributors

David L. Stevenson is Professor of English at Hunter. He is the author of *The Love-Game Comedy*, published by Columbia University Press and with Herbert Gold edited *Stories of Modern America*, published at St. Martin's Press. He has contributed articles on Shakespeare to scholarly journals and on modern American fiction to such publications as *Daedalus*, *The Nation* and the *New York Times Book Review*.

Alice Griffin is Associate Professor of English at Hunter. She is the author of *Pageantry on the Shakespearean Stage and Living Theatre*. She is a regular contributor to the *Shakespeare Quarterly* on subjects relating to Shakespeare in the theater and is former Associate Editor of *Theatre Arts Magazine*.

Ethel *Feuerlicht* Guttman was an English major at College. She is a former teacher and has just finished writing a novel. She planned the Shakespeare garden on the Bronx campus as a tribute to Helen Gray Cone.

Norman Singer, whom the *Quarterly* greeted in its October 1962 issue, is Administrator of the Hunter College Concert Bureau. Professor Singer has taught at the Juilliard School of Music in the academic division. Subsequently he organized the music school at the Aspen Festival and served as its dean. He remained at Aspen for eight years, until he came to Hunter.