A View from Melrose

Thomas L. Hellie
Linfield College

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Saying farewell to our graduates

I am writing this essay on the day before baccalaureate, just 40 hours until commencement. It’s a glorious Friday afternoon. Bleachers, chairs and stage are now filling the commencement green. Students are loading their cars, hugging their friends and chatting about their return in the fall. Others, staying for the summer, are sprawled on the lawn, enjoying the sunshine that separated the clouds as finals ended. And then there are the seniors. Some are with their friends on the grass, not quite ready to leave Linfield. Others are at their computers, frantically updating (or creating) their résumés and finally facing a future outside the Linfield bubble. Many are emptying their rooms and packing up, loading their cars, hugging their friends and chatting. A few are in their classrooms or athletic fields where they competed. A few are with their parents, pointing out buildings where they took classes or places where they competed. A few are at their computers, frantically updating (or creating) their résumés and finally facing a future outside the Linfield bubble. Many are emptying their rooms and thinking about the trek to new apartments and jobs in distant cities.

All week long I’ve seen students signing their names on the senior bench, painted this year with the outline of an oak tree. It is one of the happiest weekends of the year. It is one of the saddest weekends of the year.

In higher education, we expend all of our energies to reach this day. We embrace our calling because we believe so fiercely in the development and success of our students. And we celebrate their arrival as Linfield alumni, as our equals in the world of learning and work, as citizens and leaders in communities all over the world. We take pride in who they are and what they have become. And yet we also know that we will not see these graduates very often in the future. We will miss them because they have enriched the life of this college. We know that they will succeed, we rejoice in their future, because they have enriched the life of this college. We also know that we will not see these graduates very often in the future. We will miss them because they have enriched the life of this college. We know that they will succeed, we rejoice in their future, because they have enriched the life of this college. We also know that we will not see these graduates very often in the future. We will miss them because they have enriched the life of this college. We know that they will succeed, we rejoice in their future, because they have enriched the life of this college.

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On the cover:
Front: A firing at the Anagama kiln, owned by Nils Lou. Turn to page 20. (Joe Robinson ’09 photo)
Back: Scenes from 2008 commencement. Turn to page 34. (Laura Davis, Mardi Mileham photos)

Editor
Mardi Mileham
mmileham@linfield.edu
503-883-2498

Assistant Editor
Laura Davis

Graphic Design
Candace Salmen III

Photography
Kelly Bird
Laura Davis

Editorial Board
Ellie Cohn
Katherine Krygowski ’09
Mardi Mileham
Rob Reynolds
Joe Robinson ’09

Contributors
Kelly Bird
Debbie (Hansen) Harmon ’90
Thomas L. Hellie
Marvin Henberg
Beth Rogers Thompson
Kasey Richter ’09
Rick Pullen ’67

Linfield students have a tradition of being busy, which is evident in Marvin Henberg’s snapshot of student life, the final in our sesquicentennial series. Students are still involved and engaged, as shown through several student features in this issue. In one we follow a student during a marathon 12-hour day. Another tells about the combined work of students and community members in Guatemala. View some stunning photos shot by a student during a kiln firing in the Coast Range near Willamina. We say farewell to three extraordinary professors and share some of the wisdom of Professor Emeritus Win Dolan, who at 99 years young, addressed the class of 2008. Even as we look to the end of our sesquicentennial celebration, we anticipate the rich and vibrant future that lies ahead for Linfield College.

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Features
6 Linfield at 150: Snapshots of student life
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16 Retirees look back on the years
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18 Building hope in Guatemala
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