



Helping Children Soar



Soaring

September 2015

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us on for our annual Groton Community Home Tour on Saturday, November 21st (Snow Date November 22nd)! This annual fundraising event for the school showcases unique and distinctive homes in our community. View beautiful interiors, and do some holiday shopping from local artisans and vendors in each home. Additional vendors and artisans are also on site at Groton Community School for the morning, in addition to our famous Bake Sale! See our website for more information: www.grotoncommunityschool.org/home-tour.



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GCS Celebrates 70 Years!

Early supporters paved the way for educational excellence for young children in our community

By Lisa Stafford, Assistant Director

Part one of a three-part series

Groton Community School is proud to celebrate a long, rich history of serving children and families. It took many generous, visionary people to make the school what it was and continues to be today.

On September 24, 1945 "Groton Community Kindergarten" first opened its doors to 28 eager-to-learn children, ages three to six. The school was located in the First Parish Church on Main Street, and established by the Groton Alliance women's group along with the support of Rev. Rettig. Families paid just \$2.50 per week.

Generous donors helped fund the purchase of playground equipment including two teeterboards, five tree swings, two sandboxes, and a steel swing/ trapeze. Enrollment grew over the years, and 1st and 2nd grades were added.

We owe a debt of gratitude for the insight of early organizers Marion Torrey, Virginia May, and Eleanor Smith, and we appreciate the dedication of early educators noted in historical accounts, including Adelaide Torrey (Luca), Mrs. Thornhill, Martha Gordon, Mrs. Pease, Olive Tolles Taylor Mrs. Roy Davis, Mrs. Thomas Park, Miss

Constance Sheedy, and Mrs. Charles Murphy. These remarkable people established a tradition of educational excellence for young children in our community.

Groton Community School's roots can actually be traced even further back to a one-room brick schoolhouse (also known as Lawrence School or Schoolhouse No. 3) on the corner of Long Hill Road and Farmer's Row. Originally utilized by Lawrence Academy (then Groton Academy) in the late 1700s, the schoolhouse became one of the area's district schools in the 1800s, relying on a bucket of water for drinking, woodstove for heat, and natural light for reading. In the late 1920's GCS founder, Marion Torrey held a Kindergarten Class in the schoolhouse along with property owner Harriet Dumaine. The Kindergarten then moved to the Torrey house on Main Street with the assistance of daughter-in-law Adelaide Torrey (Luca), before our official beginning at First Parish Church.

We are very happy to be celebrating everything that Groton Community School has stood for the last 70 years, the many lives of children and families that have been touched, and the bright future that we can look forward to, for many generations to come!

Why I Give

One Donor's Perspective

*A chat with Amy Mead,
Current GCS Parent and
Vice President of the Board
of Directors*



GCS: What is your connection to GCS?

Amy: I have been a GCS parent since 2008 and Board of Directors member for the last 2 years. I'm currently serving as Vice President and my youngest son Owen is in Pre-K.

GCS: Why did you choose GCS for your child's early childhood education experience?

Amy: From the moment I first stepped foot in GCS, I knew it was a special place. The teachers/staff are the most amazing group I've ever met, and truly like family to us. It was important to me to find a preschool that would help my boys become better "people" not just better "students" and they have exceeded my expectations. It has been the perfect foundation for all three of my boys and I am grateful for our time spent at GCS.

GCS: What do you think sets GCS apart?

Amy: The school has the perfect blend of fun and learning, with an adaptive and engaging curriculum and new ideas to bring excitement into the classrooms. No two days are alike and I love how animated my son gets telling me about what he did at school.

GCS: Why do you choose to support the GCS annual fund?

Amy: My volunteering at the school is a way for me to give back now and supporting the annual fund is a way for me to give towards the future. Giving to the annual fund ensures that other families will get to experience what an amazing community GCS really is, for many years to come.

GCS: Your gift was matched by your employer. What can you tell us about securing a matching gift?

Amy: One of the reasons I chose to work at Bemis Associates was because of their dedication to giving back. They support so many charities and encourage employees to do the same by offering a match for donations. What I give is being doubled. It's a great benefit that I hope more companies will consider providing.

GCS: What can you tell us about you?

Amy: In addition to trying to keep up with three very active little boys, I work full time as a financial analyst. I love traveling, yoga, reading, and being outdoors.

Want to join Amy in becoming a sustaining supporter of GCS? Consider donating to our annual fund! Call (978) 448-6179 to learn more.

A Word from Our Director

Hello and happy fall to all of our GCS friends and families, past and present. The lazy days of summer are a pleasant memory, and now it is time to get down to the business of "back to school". This time of year always conjures



a tingle of anticipation and exhilaration, even for those beyond their own or their child's school years. It is time for a more regimented mind set and schedule, a seasonal change of clothes, and perhaps a few new supplies to reinvigorate our day-to-day work. We are certainly buzzing with the excitement of a new school year at Groton Community School, as we meet new friends and happily greet returning families.

Adding to the excitement is the celebration of Groton Community School's 70th anniversary this fall. As I reflect on the humble beginnings of our school and think about all that GCS has become, I can't help but feel tremendous gratitude for you, our loyal supporters, who help make GCS the special place that it is for our children.

Countless young children have started their education here, beginning back in the early days of the one-room brick school house here in Groton. As we begin to plan for the next 70 years, and imagine what GCS will offer to thousands more young children in the generations to come, I am confident that Groton Community School, will continue to grow and evolve while always offering the finest early childhood education experience, as it has for the past 70 years. Thank you for celebrating this milestone with us. GCS wouldn't be what it is without you.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Linda".

Linda Kosinski
Director

2015 Memorial Scholarship Awarded

Supporting GCS Alumni
in Memory of
Taylor Benjamin Young

GCS awards the Groton Community School Scholarship in Memory of Taylor Benjamin Young to a graduating high school senior. Taylor was a sweet and caring little boy, who lost his life at the tender age of four. Taylor is fondly remembered, especially because he embodied our school's philosophies for celebrating "Peace" and engaging in "bucket filling" to share kind words and actions with others. He was energetic and curious, with a wonderful enthusiasm for school activities and friends. It is these characteristics that the Scholarship Committee looks for in the annual pool of bright and diverse candidates.

The decision to select a recipient is always exceedingly difficult! This year scholarships were awarded to two excellent alumni candidates, Emma Smith and James Pember. Emma and James have taken flight personally and academically after leaving GCS, and it is an honor to support their future academic endeavors. We encourage all of our alumni to continue to keep in touch with the school that helped them grow wings as young children to soar in life!



A Peek inside Our Classrooms

Young Children Build a Wealth of Knowledge through Exploration

By Jennie Fitzkee

Each activity in an early childhood classroom, whether planned or a teachable moment, is like putting a penny in a jar. Every penny is important and adds to a child's wealth of knowledge in a variety of curriculum areas. Here are just a few examples of the "pennies" that children have put into "our classroom jar" in a typical week at GCS:

SCIENCE

Classroom activities extend beyond physical walls to the outdoors with a wealth of hands-on discovery and learning. The bark of maple trees is a happy home for beetles, and we love gently playing with them. Ensuing questions abound. Why do trees have cracks in their bark? Where do beetles live? Real experiences foster curiosity and open-ended explorations.

MATH

We enjoy rolling foam dice, counting all the dots, then clapping out and saying the numbers aloud. Children choose to roll one, two, or three dice. At the end each child gets to ring the bell, adding even more excitement to our game. Sharing a classic book that the children love, *Millions of Cats*, is also a math activity. The chant

in the book, "hundreds of cats, thousands of cats..." is a powerful tool to learn math terms and placement.

DRAMATIC PLAY

In our pretend grocery store we can read the numbers on price stickers, and enter them onto the cash register. We're reading labels of food, sorting and counting, as we stock the shelves and fill our bags. Favorite books inspire young actors to create props for repeated retellings. Reading *The Story of Little Babaji* has even prompted a school-wide performance of our play.

ART AND MUSIC

We like exploring art in unexpected ways, such as painting with natural and recycled items or kitchen utensils. Creative art activities can be infused with learning about other cultures and history, as we explore famous artists or paint to diverse types and tempos of music. Serenading other classes with the children's autoharp favorites on a rainy day may end the week on a musical note.

Each and every day at GCS, tremendous opportunities for learning come from our rich classroom environments, teacher inspiration, and the inquisitive and enthusiastic nature of our young children.





Shining Stars Helped Groton Community School to Soar in 2014-2015

Thanks to our amazing community, the GCS annual fund raised a record amount in our 2014-2015 fiscal year. Overall, the campaign grew by 63%, raising just over \$50,000 from 104 donors. We sincerely thank these shining stars for their generous support of Groton Community School!

1930's Circle* \$10,000+

Nancy and Steve Webber[^]

Leaders* \$5,000+

Lisa and John Conner[^]

Deborah and Scott MacDonald[^]

Partners* \$2500+

David Moulton[^]

Associates* \$1000+

Kathleen and Randall Barron[^]

Alisa and Daniel Barton[^]

Christine and Herbert Cline[^]

Susan and William Ellerkamp ^(M)

Kate and Jim Joyce[^]

Sally and Brad Smith

Elizabeth and Albert Stone[^]

Jennifer and Steven Stone[^]

Pamela and David Stone[^]

President's Circle \$500+

Diane and John Amaral

Dr. Dorothy and Niels Christiansen

Shelley and Larry Grove ^(M)

Betsy and Scott Kehoe[^]

Loreta McKeown and Charles Lippman[^]

Lorrie and Jon Morgan[^]

Beth Lindstrom and Ray Murphy

Andrea and Peter Myette[^]

Janet and John O'Brien

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Benefactor's Circle \$250+

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Bemis Associates Inc.[^]

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Margaret and Rev. Harold Lloyd[^]

Chuck McKinney[^]

Karen Scammel and Roland Meijer

Laura and Robinson Moore[^]

Linda Luca Tarpey

Nancy and David Wilder[^]

Red & Blue Circle \$100+

Mini Singh and Matt Arner[^]

Sarah and James Belcher[^]

Dawn and Levent Bozkurt[^]

Melissa Cannavino

Jenny and Andrew Cathrow[^]

Emily and John Clark

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Marie and Stephen Lane[^]

Anna MacDonald[^]

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Amy and Jon Mead ^(M)

Stacie and Geoffrey Moeser

Sara Fitzpatrick and Vik Narayan

Catherine and Eric Pauly[^]

Natina and Bryan Perrotti[^]

Barbara and Paul Pugh

Hannah and Paul Pugh[^]

Susan and Kelly Roberts[^]

Cindy and Bard Salmon[^]

Dyan and Daniel Sierra[^]

Linda and Brian Sullivan

Tamara and Scott Swain[^]

Jessica and Edward Wenzell

Jessica and Luke Williams[^]

Friends Circle up to \$99

Jessica and Daniel Barie[^]

Linda and James Belcher[^]

Wesley Cline[^]

Rachel and Michael Culley[^]

Jennie and Steve Fitzkee[^]

Ellen and Balint Fleischer[^]

Christiane and Christopher Gorycki[^]

Judith Goss

Jenn and David Greenwood^{^ (M)}

Group 1 Automotive

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Cathy and Stephen Henderson[^]

Tina Galanti and Joseph Horvath[^]

Amy Lovell and John Kelly[^]

Christine and Todd Kobelski

Oi Sze Lo and Chan Kong

Joshua Kosinski[^]

Ryan Kosinski[^]

Christopher MacDonald[^]

Claire and Peter Macy

Agnes McKinney[^]

Mary and Ned Mitchell[^]

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Marcia and John Pauly[^]

Jessica Miller and Alan Quinn

Elizabeth Reeves[^]

Martha and Michael Resch[^]

Susan Randazzo and Stuart Schulman[^]

Christine and Gerard Stelzer

Cheryl and Bill Townsend

Claire and Paul Zukauskas[^]

(*) Adelaide Luca Giving Society Members

(^) Made annual fund gifts in 2 or more consecutive years

(M) Gift includes a corporate match



GCS Soars Because of Our Strong Community of Supporters

Behind every child at GCS stands a community of people helping them soar. We gratefully acknowledge our 2014-2015 donor groups for their generous support. Your investment in Groton Community School is an investment in each child's future. THANK YOU!

Trustees 2014-2015

Diane and John* Amaral
Kathleen and Randall* Barron
Alisa and Daniel* Barton
Christine* and Herbert Cline
Lisa and John* Conner
Betsy* and Scott Kehoe
Deborah* and Scott MacDonald
Laura and Robinson* Moore
Andrea and Peter* Myette
David Moulton
Cindy and Bard* Salmon
Nancy and Steve* Webber

Board of Directors 2014-2015

Mini Singh* and Matt Arner
Sarah* and James Belcher
Melissa Cannavino
Rachel* and Michael Culley
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Christine* and Mark Emma
Jenn* and David Greenwood
Loreta McKeown and Charles Lippman*
Amy* and Jon Mead
Stacie* and Geoffrey Moeser
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Dr. Dorothy and Niels Christiansen
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Tina Galanti* and Joseph Horvath
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Agnes McKinney
Mary* and Ned Mitchell
Beth Lindstrom* and Ray Murphy
Cathy* and Paul Olson

Natina* and Bryan Perrotti
Susan* and Kelly Roberts
Linda* and Brian Sullivan
Nancy* and David Wilder
Jessica* and Luke Williams

Alumni

Wesley Cline
Joshua Kosinski
Ryan Kosinski
Anna MacDonald
Christopher MacDonald
Daniel MacDonald

Families 2014-2015

Nancy and Jim Beckwith
Emily and John Clark
Jackie Reid and Chris Ellsasser
Krystyna Kostka and Tomasz Gornisiewicz
Kate and Jim Joyce
Oi Sze Lo and Chan Kong
Kristyn and David MacInnis
Sara Fitzpatrick and Vik Narayan
Cindy and Steven Rizzo
Claire and Paul Zukauskas

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Dawn and Levent Bozkurt
Tracy and Joseph Guth
Cathy and Stephen Henderson
Linda Hoffman
Kate and Jim Joyce
Christine and Todd Kobelski
Amy and Joshua Kritzer
Karen Scammel and Roland Meijer
Jessica Miller and Alan Quinn
Martha and Michael Resch
Susan Randazzo and Stuart Schulman

Dyan and Daniel Sierra
Sally and Brad Smith
Pamela and David Stone
Christine and Gerard Stelzer
Tamara and Scott Swain
Cheryl and Bill Townsend
Kristen and Alfred von Campe
Jessica and Edward Wenzell

Staff 2014-2015

Jennie* and Steve Fitzkee
Shelley* and Larry Grove
Lisa Stafford* and Steve Kalter
Linda Kosinski*
Lorrie* and Jon Morgan

Staff - Past

Ethelind (Lindy) and Robert Hanninen

Friends

Margaret and Rev. Harold Lloyd
Linda Luca Tarpey

Businesses

Bemis Associates Inc.
Fidelity Bank
The Feingold Companies
Group 1 Automotive

Grandparents

Judith Goss
Donna and Robert Halloran
Janet and John O'Brien
Marcia and John Pauly
Barbara and Paul Pugh
Elizabeth Reeves
Elizabeth and Albert Stone

Continuing Educational Excellence

As Groton Community School commemorates its 70th anniversary this September, it is the unparalleled longevity of the talented staff which makes GCS not only a great place for children and families, but also the place where many staff members have found a “home away from home” throughout the years. The most notable milestone is 30 years of dedication and hard work by our Director, Linda Kosinski. In her 30 years, and counting, Linda has been a Preschool and Kindergarten Teacher, Assistant Director, and has served as Executive Director for the past 20 years. She has shared her kind and caring ways with our community, her knowledge of child development and early childhood education with families, and her talent for guiding and helping teachers grow and

develop as educators. Linda has also shared her own family with the school, with two sons as GCS alumni. We owe much of our success with national accreditation to Linda’s passion to always strive for what is best for young children and their families. Be sure to stop by our school lobby to see a framed photo mosaic with numerous images of happy memories of GCS for the last 30 years, which families, staff, and Board members shared with us in honor of Linda’s 30th year. Also celebrating milestones this year are Assistant Director Lisa Stafford (20 years), Full Day Coordinator and Camp Kaleidoscope Director Terri Martin (20 years), current Teacher and Past Board President Noreen Keras (15 years), Preschool Teachers Inga Nuccio (10 years) and Sarah Helfgott (5 years), and Bookkeeper and Past



Board Member Lorrie Morgan (10 years). Overall, our current staff members have been with the school ranging from 3 to 31 years, with 71% having reached a 10-year milestone and beyond. GCS has had such a talented group of educators throughout its school history, and is extremely fortunate to enjoy the expertise in education of many staff for many years.

Look Who’s Soaring Now! *Eamonn Farrington*

Groton resident Eamonn Farrington, a Pediatric ICU nurse at Mass General Hospital, was in the Aqua Room in 1987-88. He distinctly remembers that though he was anxious about new places, he loved going to school – the playground and outside water play in particular - and was very fond of his teacher Jennie Fitzkee.

During senior year he completed a practicum at GCS, and worked at GCS throughout college and beyond. He even had the unique opportunity to work alongside his former teacher Jennie in the Aqua Room, and they are now lifelong friends. He shared, “As a staff member I loved reading with the children one-on-one, using that time to really connect with them. As a Camp Kaleidoscope counselor, I worked with the older kids and was always the “prop” – a tree or rock – In the plays they wrote and performed, and felt honored they wanted me on stage with them.”

A strong work ethic, independence and autonomy are characteristics Eamonn attributes to working at GCS. In his words, “I learned that I passionately enjoy working with children.” He is proud of taking passion from his work at GCS and translating it into a career that is deeply rewarding.

In their free time Eamonn and his wife Lindsay both love to run, and he still plays ice hockey year-round. But their favorite pastime is spending time with ten-month-old son Colin. Perhaps someday this story will come full-circle with Colin attending GCS in the Aqua Room. Eamonn tells us, “I truly loved my time at GCS, and certainly recommend it to any parent, child, or teacher. On all fronts, they become a second family.”



Jennie, Colin, and Eamonn

Do you know a GCS alum who is soaring? Contact us at alumni@grotoncommunityschool.org to share a personal story or nominate someone you know to be featured in our “Look Who’s Soaring Now” article.