The years melted away as I sat in the Gull’s Nest in October as a part of the Homecoming/Family Weekend festivities. A string quartet was playing in the background as we were warmly greeted by a hostess and escorted to our table. The trendy décor was a backdrop for a beautiful array of breakfast entrees. My husband, Jon, and I and our three children, two of which are currently students at Salisbury University, had been looking forward to the morning. It was going to be such a nice respite from our hectic schedules as well as a rare opportunity to share with them a ‘37 “Evergreen” yearbook that we recently uncovered in an antique shop.

Opening the pages of the yearbook, we were transported to another time. It was remarkable to see beautiful and majestic Holloway Hall sitting alone on the landscape with black “model T” Fords lining the circular drive. The slender white columns reached up to reveal “Maryland State Teachers College” above the front doors.

Turning page after page, we discovered eight smiling faces making up the senior class. One of them, Samuel L. Sherwell, is the late grandfather to our children. The Parsonsburg address, however, does not adequately describe the journey taken by Sam and his family in order to be in that picture. Originally from England, the family moved in the 1880s to Mexico to help build the railroad. Sam’s father married a Hispanic woman and they immigrated to the United States at the turn of the century. Eventually settling in Parsonsburg to farm, Sam entered MSTC and was at that time enjoying success as a budding actor and journalist.

In the picture of the sophomore class, we located his sister, Beatrice. Her pretty face smiles back at us from the academic awards as well as the May Day festivities where she is runner-up to the May Queen. Their brother, Harold, is also pictured with the freshmen class where he is listed as the class vice president. Helping to satisfy our curiosity about life on campus in those days, my daughter and I peer at these black and white photographs attempting to put it all together from the clues the pictures give us. It occurred to us that, at a time when diversity was seldom thought of, MSTC was blazing paths.

When I graduated in 1975, I was unaware of the history of my family-to-be at SU. I was also unaware of the twists and turns my life would take to bring us to the President’s Brunch on this particular fall weekend. Jon (McDaniel College ’73) and I were married in 1976 and in subsequent years met each of our children, born in South Korea, at the airport on three separate occasions. Gazing across the table on this fall morning, I could never have anticipated the role diversity would play in my family, nor imagined the thrill of having our children become a part of the SU family.

Our oldest son, Michael, plans to graduate next December with a degree in finance, whereas Jamie, our daughter, is a freshman majoring in psychology. Greg, our high school junior, is interested in making his application next fall. We are looking forward to continuing the tradition!

One alumna reflects on her family’s long and strong ties to SU
by Linda James Sherwell, ’75

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