

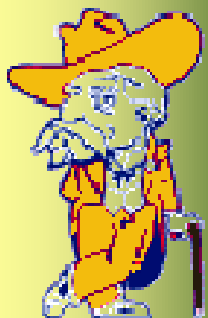
The New Tatler

NEWSLETTER for alumni of Woodlawn High
School, Birmingham, Alabama
Download from www.WoodlawnHigh.org



March 2013

Editor
George Nelson
WHS '55



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NEXT ISSUE:

1 May 2013 - Memorial Issue

Margaret LaVelle Fitzpatrick

Hollywood Screen Name:

Gail Patrick

1911-1980

Woodlawn Class of 1929

Scholar, college dean, Hollywood actress, femme fatale, TV producer, multi-millionaire, celebrated American beauty and inexorable lover of life.

Margaret Fitzpatrick was born June 20, 1911 in Birmingham, AL at 2227 7th Avenue North, one block from where Phillips High School would be later built.

Her grandparents, Michael Fitzpatrick and Margaret Morgan, both natives of County Cork, Ireland, immigrated as impoverished refugees to the US at the height of Irish starvations during Ireland's great potato famine. He was a Union soldier in the Civil War, after which they settled in Kentucky. Their youngest son Lawrence C. Fitzpatrick (1864-1935) married Virginia-born Margaret LaVelle Smith (1887-1951) then shortly moved from Kentucky to the booming new industrial city of Birmingham. There they raised two sons and one daughter - our subject Margaret.

Margaret Fitzpatrick's story can be considered yet another fulfillment of the celebrated *American Dream*, wherein she realized fame and fortune as just a second generation descendant of utterly destitute immigrants to this promise land. We pay tribute here to Margaret, but also to that *dream*.

Margaret was exceptional from her early childhood. She was a brilliant child and excelled at school both academically



and socially. She made friends effortlessly and was a natural but unassuming leader and perpetually happy. While at WHS her personality and beauty blossomed, and she was involved in many club activities and social events.

She graduated WHS with honors in 1928 and entered Howard College (now Samford University) that Fall. She was one of the relatively few young women of her time and limited middle-class advantages

Gail Patrick - continued on page 2

Gail Patrick - continued from page 1



Sophomore at
Howard College-1930

to continue formal education beyond high school. She knew she had a special future ahead of her, and she was ready to go for it.

At Howard College she was quickly and easily recognized by faculty and classmates for her gifted intellect, spirited personality and ability to organize and lead. She was elected President of the

Freshman Class, Treasurer of the Sophomore Class, and Secretary of the Allied Arts Club. Academically she was an Honor Roll student every semester. Having a naturally commanding presence, she was a poised and effective orator and was Vice President of the Howard College Women's Debating Counsel.

In extra-curricular activities, Margaret was President of her Delta Zeta sorority and a star athlete on the Howard College Women's Basketball Team. The national magazine "College Humor" tapped Margaret to its prestigious *Collegiate Hall of Fame*. In Howard's 1931 yearbook *Entre Nous* Margaret was predicted to become "the first woman Governor of Alabama."

After graduating from Howard with a B.A. degree she entered the University of Alabama and briefly studied Law. But she was shortly presented with the incredible offer to return to Howard College and accept the appointment as *Dean of Women*. She immediately withdrew from the University and became the youngest ever to fill that Howard faculty executive position.

But Hollywood Called

Fate had something else wonderful in store for this lady. Margaret was a tall, slim, sloe-eyed, dark haired beauty with a captivating and elegant Southern drawl. By happenstance, she entered a nationwide contest by Paramount Studios to find an actress to play "The Panther Woman" in their forthcoming movie "Island of Lost Souls" starring Charles Laugh-ton. Margaret won the trip to Hollywood for the try-out but lost that exotic role to actress Kathleen Burke. Despite her loss, Paramount wound up offer-

ing her a studio contract at \$50 a week which she negotiated to \$75. She moved to Hollywood and began her new Hollywood life as the gorgeous starlet

Gail Patrick.

After the usual grooming in movie bit parts, Gail Patrick moved up the ladder to featured roles in a wide assortment of genres including the fantasy *Death Takes a Holiday* (1934), the melodramatic thriller *The Crime of Helen Stanley* (1934), the musical *Mississippi* (1935) and the easy comedy *Early to Bed* (1936).

Just as quickly she began playing the occasional co-star or leading lady -- that of a woman lawyer in *Dis-barred* (1939) and a romantic diversion in the Zane Grey western adaptations of *Wagon Wheels* (1934) and *Wanderer of the Wasteland* (1935). She became mostly identified, however, in manipulative second leads usually tangling with the star femme as the "other woman," or as a haughty socialite or a scheming villainess. It was popular in that time for love stories to have complex conflicts between beautiful and competing women, and Gail Patrick could easily adapt her skills to portray a cold, calculating, hard-as-nails female with stunning beauty and irresistible allure whenever the script demanded.

Gail participated grandly in three well-known film classics. In the screwball comedy *My Man Godfrey* (1936) she was at odds with Carole

Lombard as a spoiled, treacherous sister. In the *Stage Door* (1937), she had some marvelous cat fights with Ginger Rogers as a cynical wannabe actress. In *My Favorite Wife* (1940) she played Cary Grant's exacting second wife who had to contend with the unexpected and complicating reappearance of his supposedly dead first wife Irene Dunne.

Gail always exuded wit, confidence, assertiveness and elegance in



Margaret Fitzpatrick - age 21
Dean of Women, Howard College



Now the 1933 Paramount Starlet
GAIL PATRICK

Gail Patrick - continued from page 2

all her characters, and her male co-stars were the sturdiest assortment Hollywood could offer, including Bing Crosby, Randolph Scott, Cary Grant, Richard Dix, John Howard, Preston Foster, Dean Jagger and George Sanders.

In 1947, she abruptly left her successful acting career following her third marriage. She gave this quote to the media:

"I always felt self-conscious as an actress because I'm tall. I see that it came over as haughtiness. I just don't have an actress's soul. I think mine has a dollar sign on it"

After involving herself successfully in clothes design, she became (as Gail Patrick Jackson) executive producer of the "Perry Mason" (1957) TV series (1957-1966) starring Raymond Burr, along with her co-producer husband Thomas Cornwell Jackson. This classic courtroom "whodunnit" had a long and highly successful run. Yet one of the few failures in her life was in her attempt to revive that series in 1973 with "The New Perry Mason", but Monte Markham was an inadequate substitute for Raymond Burr in the title role, and the show quickly tanked. She and Jackson divorced in 1969.

Gail's first husband Robert H. Cobb owned a famous Hollywood restaurant and was immortalized as creator of the nationally known "Cobb Salad". During her second marriage to Arnold White, she gave birth prematurely to a set of twins - they died shortly after birth. She and her third husband Cornwell Jackson adopted two children.

Widely respected throughout the stage and screen communities, Gail Patrick withdrew quietly from the public eye in the mid-70s, a multi-millionaire business woman and a forever stunningly beautiful lady in body and soul. She died of Leukemia at age 69 on July 6, 1980 at her Los Angeles home shared with her fourth husband John Velde Jr.

In her will she left to her Delta Zeta sisterhood at Samford Univ. (formerly Howard College) one million dollars, the largest alumnae gift ever received by the sorority.

In 1956 this author formally welcomed and introduced Gail Patrick to the Woodlawn student body assembly during a nostalgic visit to her home town. She spoke inspiringly to all, but especially to the young women of WHS .

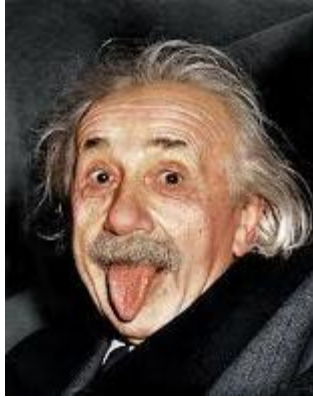


A little Woodlawn girl with brilliance and talent who chased and captured great dreams.

~ by Roland Monette (WHS '57)
with thanks and credits to biographer Gary Brumburgh, to Samford University and the archives of Fandango.

What Did Einstein Ever Do for WHS Alumni ?

Over a hundred years ago Albert Einstein created and published theories that were so abstract and far-reaching in behavioral descriptions of cosmic physics that only a few scientists in the world could comprehend him, and still fewer believed him. Today we all take for granted that he came up with some good stuff, whatever it is, but few of us know, or even care, if any good and practical consequences may have ever come from all that genius to enlighten our lives or contribute tangibly to our health and comfort.



So just for purely educational entertainment let's examine briefly how some of his theories today actually do affect our lives. Let's start with a short list of Einstein propositions implicit within his famous Theory of General Relativity $E = MC^2$.

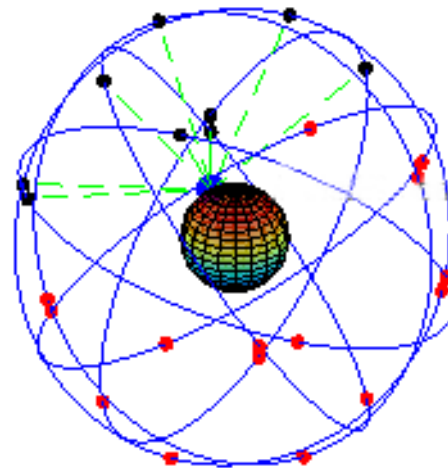
1. Say we have a ticking clock on the ground. If we take that clock up on a mountain top or fly it in an airplane, the clock will tick faster, due to an effect Einstein called *space-time bending*. More simply, the higher the clock, the weaker the gravity, the faster the clock ticks.
2. Now if we set that clock in motion, it ticks slower; meaning, the faster the clock moves, the slower it ticks, said Einstein.
3. One more: Einstein said if an object is in motion it will tend to physically expand depending on how fast it's travelling. So if we could drop a yard stick out in space from a fast orbiting space ship, that yard stick would actually increase in length. And the orbiting space ship itself expands also. It happens without any structural stress or stretching metal or creaking rivet joints; it just happens, and the space ship is mysteriously longer than when it sat on the launch pad. And so are the astronauts.

This is akin to scientists' agreements now about *Black Holes* in space: that if you get sucked into one you will no longer exist, but also *you will have never existed*.

Now, none of the foregoing phenomena could be noticeable by us unless we got very, very high in the cosmos or travelled close to the speed of light. So

nobody ever really thought these hair-brained sub-theories would ever be observable or ever be confirmed right or wrong.

But lo, the unfathomable brilliance of that man has made possible one of our greatest engineering physics master-achievements that today benefits people all over the world - the Global Positioning System (GPS). Here's why we were compelled to believe Einstein, and how we proved his wild, rope-smoking ideas beyond any expectations that old 20th century theoretical physicists could have ever hoped for.



Bare with us. First let's describe, simply, how GPS was conceived - without any Einstein stuff - yet.

GPS has 30 satellites circling Earth. Each satellite continuously knows its own precise location in space and is constantly broadcasting its space position down to our GPS receivers (in our hands, autos, ships, airplanes). When a GPS receiver gets the position and timing of 3 or more satellites, then it can compute the rather straight-forward Euclidean geometry solution determining the receiver's precise location in both space and time.

Simple though is the mathematics, the timing accuracy presents a problem Einstein predicted. GPS must use atomic clocks accurate enough to keep time that will not vary even one second from true cosmic time in maybe 40,000 years at a resolution of more than a billionth of a second. Theoretically, this would be mathematically sufficient for GPS to produce navigation positioning to within 15 meters anywhere on Earth.

But Einstein's theories kick in and would defeat the whole GPS concept - had not GPS designers ultimately believed Einstein and developed sophisticated

Einstein - continued from page 4

compensations to deal with his space-time predictions. True to his Relativity, GPS satellites travelling 14,000 km/hr at 20,000 km altitude do indeed experience Einstein's clock tick drift phenomena, giving timing offset errors accumulating up to some 45 microseconds per day. This would produce a 10,000 km positioning error and break down GPS operational functioning in about two minutes. Fortunately, GPS satellites, receivers and control components are fitted with sensing and computational wonders that constantly adjust transmission timings to correct for those Einstein's Relativity anomalies.

So you might want to *THINK ABOUT EINSTEIN* every time you ask GPS to direct you to the nearest pizza shop, or have OnStar automatically send an ambulance to your wreck on the highway, or guide your Tomahawk cruise missile to blow away your husband's girlfriend sunbathing on a beach 100 miles away, or help you select which club to use for a golf shot, or track the wanderings of a Tasmanian Devil, or tell you that you're gonna arrive at your own wedding 22 minutes late, or use your cell phone to tell somebody very precisely where you're buried in an avalanche in Switzerland, or track your husband who says he's working late at the office, or prove your neighbor has run his fence on your side of the property line, or find your



Poodle after it's been carried off by a coyote, or many other such gotta-have capabilities.

Einstein probably smoked something strong in his pipe, because he dreamed this stuff up during his spare time working at a boring job at the Berlin patent office.

He was not interested in ever being proven right or wrong. But 100 years later GPS is circling

Earth broadcasting the truth and tribute to this greatest theoretical physicist who ever lived.

Next time you're on an airplane making a dark night landing in a blinding rain storm, think about GPS in the pilot's cockpit, then look out the window at the lightning and whisper, "You did real good, Al."

Einstein won the 1921 Nobel Prize but not for these astounding space-time theories that remained unproven for 30 more years after he died in 1956.

~ from Albert Einstein's papers and biographies and from a classmate's experiences working on GPS development

Stuff we just don't say right no more

Lotsa things we say today don't seem to make sense, because they are corruptions of their original intent or usage. Here's a few warranting deep pondering.

1. When a child looks just like his father, you probably will say:
"He's the spitting image of his daddy."
That sounds so goofy. You shoulda correctly said:
"He's the spirit and image of his daddy."
Listen to yourself say it fast.
2. If you ride your girlfriend around on your back in the swimming pool, you just might say, "I carried Myrtle Sue piggy back in the pool." This is another garbled phonetic from the original expression that referred to how laborers and farmers long-ago carried tools and stuff on their backs to a work site, specifically by *Pick-and-a-Pack*. So next time you should correctly drawl out, "I carried Myrtle Sue pickanapack in the pool". Authority: *Poor Richard's Almanac, 1740*. Thanks, Ben.
3. You might say to a greedy person, "You can't have your cake and eat it too." We really dorked this one up, because it originated as a jealous woman's shriek at her two-timing hubby: "You can't have your Kate and Edith too you scumball!"
4. If you say somebody "...chomps at the bit", next time correctly say he "... champs at the bit". That's what horses use to do when they wanted to get home to the barn.
5. For all intensive purposes, this ain't right. Say "For all intents and purposes".
6. If you had an elderly grandmother from deep Appalachia who might say she wanted to "get shet of her husband" or "I wish I was shet of that varmint", then she was correctly speaking an Old Saxon expression surviving in America from Elizabethan times. It translates to "rid of".
Pass all these old folk expressions on to your children for them to laugh at - and quickly forget.

Note to Goofy Contributors: We apologize for declining some of your goofy expression submissions that did not meet the minimum Tatler goofiness standards for this applause-winning literary tour de force.

Obituaries

Warren F. Aderholt WHS '42, age 90. died 16 Jan 2013 in Marietta, GA. He was a veteran of three wars, retiring as LtCol USAF. He was a combat fighter pilot in both WW2 and Korea and served as an Air Commando in Vietnam. He was the last of five Aderholt brothers from Woodlawn High who served in the wars of this nation with high honor and distinction. [His obituary](#)



Martha Whetstone Gambrell WHS '44, age 85, died 12 Jan 2013 in Birmingham. She graduated Univ. of Alabama in 1948 where she was President of Delta Zeta sorority. She was a Director at Camp Winnataska, a Girl Scout Troop Leader, and a teacher at Lewisburg and Fultondale schools. She was married to the late Charley Gambrell. [Her obituary](#)



Toby Holland WHS '60, died Jan 2013

Rita Gail Hendry Worchester, WHS '57, died 15 Jan 2013

Steve Blackwelder, WHS '61, died 8 Jan 2013.

David Harold Abbott, WHS '70, died 1 Jan 2013

Joyce Penton Baker, WHS '54, died Dec 2012



Legion Field - John Blane coached Woodlawn against Phillips High in 1927, the first game ever played in this new 21,000 seat stadium. It now seats 80,600 and hosts many type sports and other events.

Words We Pronounce Kinda Funny

..... mostly because we're Southern. Only Asian students, who win all our English spelling bees, say all these words correctly .

1. **athlete** – Has two syllables, not three. Say *ATH-LETE*, not *ath-uh-lete*.
2. **barbed wire** – Notice the AR in the first syllable. Say *BARBD-wire*, not *bob-wire*.
3. **cache** – The word is French but does not end with an accented acute é. A cache is a hiding place or something hidden: a cache of supplies; a cache of money; a cache of drugs. Say *KASH*, not *ka-shay*.
4. **drowned** – Past participle of verb *to drown*. When speaking past tense, say *DROWND*, not *drown-ded*.
5. **February** – Lotsa people drop the first r in February. The spelling calls for *FEB-ROO-AR-Y*, not *Feb-you-ware-y*.
6. **forte** – English has two words spelled this way, one from Italian and the other from French. The Italian word, a musical term meaning “loud,” is pronounced with two syllables: *FOR-TAY*. The French word, an adjective meaning “strength” or “strong point,” is pronounced with only one syllable: *FORT*.
7. **height** – The word ends in a T sound, not a TH sound. Say *HITE*, not *highth*.
8. **Illinois** – As with *Arkansas*, the final “s” in **Illinois** is silent. Say *IL-I-NOY*, not *il-li-noiz* (and *Ar-kan-saw*, not *ar-kan-saus*).
9. **irregardless** – No such word. Just say **regardless**.
10. **mischievous** – Adjective form of *mischief*, meaning “calamity” or “harmless fun”. It has three syllables with accent on first syllable: **MIS-CHI-VUS**. Don't say *mis-chee-vee-us*.
11. **niche** – From the French word, it cries out to retain a long “e” sound and a SH sound for the *che*. Try hard to say *NEESH*, not *nitch*.
12. **ticklish** – Two syllables. Say *TIK-LISH*, not *tik-i-lish*.
13. **barbiturate** – *BAR-BIT-U-RATE*, not *bar-bit-u-ate*.
14. **mayonnaise** – *MAY-ON-NAZE*, not *man-naise*.
15. Had **enough** (*EE-NUFF*) of this?
A. True B. True C. True D. True

NOTE: This is only meant to entertain. Say those words however you wish. It's OK. All languages are forever migrating like this. Only the Brits have a royal committee trying to keep English pure, proper and unalterable, a no-doubt failing endeavor.



REUNIONS
and Other Happenings
in 2013

Also see information on these and other events at
www.WoodlawnHigh.org

What	When	Where
<p>▶ CLASS OF 1953 - 60th REUNION. 10:00 am Welcome - meet & greet 11:30 am BBQ Luncheon and Program \$ 45 per person Contact Becky Robinson Griffith at 205-979-2993</p>	Saturday 6 April 2013	Birmingham Botanical Garden 2512 Lane Park Rd, B'ham 35223
<p>▶ CLASS OF 1958 - 55th REUNION. Contact Ann Slye Thomas at ATRN@windstream.net More details coming. Stay tuned.</p>	17-18 May 2013	Marriott Grandview Parkway, US280 South
<p>▶ CLASS OF 1955 and FRIENDS - 58th REUNION 4 pm Meet & Greet, 6 pm Dinner & Dancing. Contact Larry Vance at 205-969-0732 or Mary Kate Scruggs Gach at GachM@bellsouth.net</p>	Saturday July 27, 2013	Marriott Grandview Parkway, US280 South

WHS Meet-up Groups and Dance Clubs

Meet-up Group	Meet when ?	Meet where ?	Comment
▶ Moody Lunch Group	Weekly, every Wednesday, 11:00 am	Bobbie's Lounge in Moody, AL	Everyone welcome. Lots of attendees from classes '50 to '80. Just show up.
▶ Pell City Monthly Lunch Group	Second Thursday of every month plus holiday parties and other gatherings.	Different locations each month. Please get on email list for monthly notifications.	Contact Mary Sue Stevens Landman '58 at MLandman0703@charter.net or Jackie Vandergrift at Jackie200@aol.com . Everyone welcome.
▶ Brookwood Mall Monthly Lunch Group	First Tuesday of every month at 12:00 noon	Brookwood Mall, Food Court	Been meeting 8 years. Also have annual Christmas parties, special outings, and short trips. Everyone welcome.
▶ W.O.W. !! Women of Woodlawn Lunch Group	Third Wednesday of every month at 11:30 am	Different surprise places. You will be contacted by phone.	Been meeting 12 years. We go to the latest and most interesting places for lunch. To get on call list contact Ernestine Shannon at 205-836-6909 or EShannon37@yahoo.com .
▶ Village Tavern Group	Third Thursday of every month, 6:00pm until about 9 pm-ish	The Village Tavern - on lower level of the Summit Mall	Everyone welcome. Lots of '50s, '60s, '70s folks always there. Contact Pattie Neil at Pattie-Neil@hotmail.com for more info.
▶ Trussville Cracker Barrel Breakfast Group	First Monday of every month at 8:30 am	Cracker Barrel, Trussville. At Trussville Exit off I-59	Everyone welcome. Just show up.
▶ BEACH SHAGGERS OF BIRMINGHAM	Every Tuesday night at 7:00 pm	VFW Club, 18th St. and 11th Ave North, Birmingham	Dance Club. Everyone welcome. Free dance lessons at 6:30 pm. Come learn how to SHAG. Contact Jackie Vandegrift at 205-884-7581
▶ MAGIC CITY BOPPERS	1st, 2d, 4th & 5th Wednesdays and 3rd Friday ea. month 7:00 PM	VFW Club, 18th St. and 11th Ave North, Birmingham	Dance Club. Everyone welcome. Free dance lessons at 6:30 pm. Contact Larry Vance 205-969-0732

TATLER CONTENT CONTRIBUTIONS ARE SOLICITED FROM EVERYONE

SEND US proposed articles, images, songs, videos, poems, jokes, quizzes, obituaries, factoids, whatever.

Email to: George Nelson at LonEagle@knology.net and
Roland Monette at Webmaster@WoodlawnHigh.org

IMPORTANT: All TATLER issues are downloadable from www.WoodlawnHigh.org .

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO EVERY WHS CLASSMATE YOU KNOW.

Issues are no longer distributed by mass-emails when published.

VETERAN PHOTOS WANTED

Future Tatler issues will run photos of WHS veterans and alumni presently in active service. Men and women, living or deceased, all class years, in or out of uniform. PLEASE HELP. Email or post mail to us any photo you wish with descriptions.



Send person's name, WHS class year, relationship, rank, service, photo date, date died (if deceased) and any other special achievements, info, or tribute to veteran or active service member.

Send to Roland Monette at Webmaster@WoodlawnHigh.org or 60 Creek Crossing Lane, Weaverville, NC 28787.

We cannot return photos.

THE NEXT TATLER ISSUE coming MAY 1st, 2013

MAY is the month of high Springtime in Alabama, and our May issue will endeavor to help us enjoy that feeling. But May also gives us MEMORIAL DAY. The TATLER will honor all of our Alumni who died in the service of this great nation, and we will present poignant tributes to certain of those individuals in celebration of their short but heroic lives.



May we always make the right moves.



With compliments from
the TATLER Editor, staff and contributors