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PHOTO BY EMMA FRINGUELLI '23

No Orchard Here, No Orchard There: The Forgotten Story of Smith's Orchard

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Cross Country Collects Wins at James Earley Invitational

HILLARY CONNOR '26

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The Geothermal Energy Project: What It Is, How It Works and What It Will Do

SKYLER WILLIAMS '25

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Editorial Statement

BY HELEN MCCOLPIN '23J,
RAINA OKONOGI-NETH '23

We, the members of the Editorial Board, are pleased to present the first print edition of the 2022–2023 school year. This academic year presents many exciting changes for The Sophian and for journalism at Smith more broadly. This year will be the Journalism Concentration's first active year at Smith, with Naila Moreira as director. We are pleased to be working with Moreira and the rest of the Advisory Board to make

student journalism more accessible and prominent at Smith. As a student journalism organization, we appreciate the importance of journalistic hard work, but we also know that student journalism is a time consuming undertaking for already busy college students. Because of that, institutional resources and support are important to making the paper function. We are excited to work with the Advisory Board to

create a better system of reporting, with more input from seasoned writers with journalistic experience at national and local newspapers. Still, we want to emphasize that although we will be working more closely with institutional structures within Smith College, we will not be approaching our investigations of the college with any less rigor. It is our responsibility as student journalists to shed light on the issues we see

within the structures of this college. At The Sophian, communicating unbiased information to the Smith student body will always be our first priority. ●

WOZQ Hosts the Rapper Oompa for Their Annual Fall Concert

BY SASHA RTISHCHEV '26

On Oct. 14, the Smith radio station WOZQ welcomed the greater Five College community to dance along to the musical stylings of Emma Blue Jeans and Oompa for the fall concert.

Oompa, a rapper from Roxbury, Mass., chose to perform at Smith because of her perception of the campus as an accepting and vibrant community. She said, "It seemed like everybody kind of clusters on campus, so people seem to really enjoy each other and know how to navigate each other's space."

The crowd seemed to emulate this concept at the show as they danced, sang, swayed and screamed along with Oompa throughout her set. Emily Drennan '23, one of WOZQ's station managers, said, "I think the way Oompa wants to have fun is by being inclusive and energetic. She brought the energy, and Smith recognized that and gave energy back."

This enthusiasm was especially strong during the more dynamic numbers at the conclusion of the show, such as "IT AIN'T SAFE" and "LEBRON." Oompa said, "I feel like I get to kind of just go all out, and it's towards the end of the set, so if I go out of breath, it's all good."

The audience remained engaged and energized, allowing Oompa to in-

teract with them throughout the show.

"I like those crowds that are receptive and are down to just buy in," Oompa said, noting that this makes the show more enjoyable for both the audience and herself.

Crowd members seemed to agree with this notion. Station Manager Suzanne Strauss '23 said, "Feeling really united with a crowd is really awesome,

and I feel like when you're all doing the same motion, it's really easy to find that kind of unity."

WOZQ planned this event to connect the Smith and Five College communities to music, but also to provide students with a chance to let loose. Drennan said, "I think we wanted to provide an occasion where people can just be with their friends and listen to

music and not be engrossed by technology or requirements."

Oompa is planning to release new music at the end of October. On campus, WOZQ is continuing to host events throughout the semester, including two more shows as part of their coffeehouse series and a music trivia night. ●



OOMPA, PHOTO BY MARIAM HABIB '25J

The Geothermal Energy Project: What It Is, How It Works and What It Will Do

BY SKYLER WILLIAMS '25

Construction workers broke ground on Upper Elm in May 2022 for Smith's Geothermal Energy Project. The \$200 million project will cut Smith's carbon emissions by 90% by transforming campus heating and cooling systems and is expected to be completed in 2028. Upon completion, Smith will be one of the only schools in the United States to reach carbon neutrality without transitioning to biofuels (which can have negative environmental impacts) or using carbon offsets.

The project, essential to Smith's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, has myriad other benefits for students and the environment. It will lower Smith's water consumption by about 10%, improve air quality, reduce the college's operational expenses by \$60 million over 30 years and make houses more comfortable through better heating and by adding air conditioning.

According to Beth Hooker, Director of Sustainability and Administrative Director of Center for the Environment, Ecological Design and Sustainability (CEEDS), 90% of campus emissions come from heating and cooling systems powered by fossil fuels, so this project will allow for huge cuts in Smith's carbon emissions. The project is a transition from a 70-year-old heating and cooling system reliant upon natural gas and oil to a renewable, electricity-powered system reliant upon geothermal energy.

"Because of the high upfront costs of drilling wells, geothermal is most suitable for community projects where return on investment is much quicker," said Corinna Davis '23, a Sustainable Energy Education Intern at CEEDS. "There are

many successful examples of using geothermal [energy] for district heating and cooling, and many other colleges are implementing similar systems."

The project is ongoing in different parts of Upper Elm. In the coming summers, it will move to the Quad (2023-25) and to Central Campus (2025-28). According to Gary Hartwell, a Smith College Project Manager who has been working on this project since its beginnings, many houses will receive either heating system renovations or full heating system replacements. Air conditioning will also be added to most of these houses, including six houses in the Quad. To carry out this work, about 600 800-foot deep boreholes will need to be drilled in total.

The Geothermal Energy Project has been in the making for over a decade. In 2010, Smith released the Sustainability and Climate Action Management Plan, which laid out plans to research how to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. The Study Group on Climate Change, which included students, faculty, staff and trustees, was formed in 2015 with the goal to investigate how Smith could best fight climate change.

According to Hartwell, work by the District Energy Working Group (a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees that also included students, staff and faculty) and the Study Group on Climate Change's "began to inform the [Board of Trustees] of the potential benefits and economic feasibility of a large scale fossil fuel

replacement project. Geothermal energy (using renewable electricity) was the obvious solution. Without that early work, it would be hard to receive approval for such a large project."

The "Report of the Smith College Study Group on Climate Change" suggested converting the campus heating system to a geothermal energy system, while the District Energy Working Group led by David DeSwert, Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration, "focused on every aspect of the project — policy, technology, cost — asking questions critical to

pump transfers the cool water to the radiators for air conditioning. To power the heat pumps, Smith will buy renewable energy sources, like wind and solar.

Hartwell said that "improvements to heat pump technology in the last few decades and [improvements in] energy efficiency in buildings helped identify geothermal energy as the best solution, technologically and economically, for Smith College."

In 2019, Denise McKahn, Associate Professor of Engineering, began to lead research that acted as a pilot project for the campus-wide

The project is a transition from a 70-year-old heating and cooling system reliant upon natural gas and oil to a renewable, electricity-powered system reliant upon geothermal energy.

ensuring a successful project," said Hooker.

Smith's geothermal system will use three heat pumps, as well as pipes extending 800 feet underground that circulate water. In the winter, the water is heated by the sedimentary rock beneath the frost line in the ground, which has a naturally stable, warmer temperature. It is then transferred to the heat pump which heats the water further and sends it to be used by different buildings' radiators for heat. In the summer, water circulating under the ground discharges its heat to the surrounding rock, and the heat

geothermal energy system at Smith's Field House. A borehole was drilled and a heat pump installed, allowing the Field House to be powered by geothermal energy.

The data from the project was used to help inform the planning of the campus-wide system and to ensure that ground temperatures would not be changed in a way that would negatively affect the environment. Additionally, Hartwell said that various geothermal energy studies from the last decade have helped in the project's design.

In addition to the two groups and McKahn's project, various

consultants and the Facilities Management team have been crucial to the realization of the project.

Davis, the Sustainable Energy Education intern at CEEDS, said that there are many “educational opportunities surrounding the project, such as possible theses and class specific projects.” Hooker is also trying to “involve our community in our goals to become carbon neutral.” She said that classes are engaging with the project in ways like creating digital story maps with Geographic Information System GIS and using cinema to interpret the project. She also said that CEEDS’s “doors are open to talk about our efforts to become carbon neutral.”

More general information about the project can be found on Smith’s geothermal project website. ●



PHOTO BY EMILY MESCHERTSON '24

No Orchard Here, No Orchard There: The Forgotten Story of Smith’s Orchard

BY ELLA LANGENTHAL '25

In the early years of Smith, students didn’t wait for Mountain Day to go apple picking. An apple orchard spread across much of what is now Chapin Lawn and the surrounding area. As the campus expanded, especially throughout the early 20th century, the orchard got smaller and smaller until it eventually disappeared altogether.

For students in these first decades of the college, the orchard played a prominent role in student life and campus culture. Photos from the College Archives show students spending time under the trees and swinging in hammocks. According to the Smith Alumnae Quarterly from February 1924, students would tack calling cards to the trees they wanted to swing from in order to reserve spots for their hammocks.

The orchard was also used for more formal student events, notably Junior Prom. Many issues of the Smith College Monthly, a combination literary



“ORCHARD, SMITH_CA_MS00137_AS7844_001. SMITH COLLEGE ARCHIVES.” COURTESY OF SMITH COLLEGE ARCHIVES.

magazine/school newspaper from the early to mid 1900s, give descriptions of Junior Proms occurring in the orchard. The orchard was an integral part of this event for many students, as was shown in a poem by Mary Rice, class of 1911, titled “The Plea of Future Promenades.” The poem was written about the first time the prom was held outside of the orchard. “Was there no room, save only ’mongst the trees/ of our loved orchard, which they cruelly judge...” Rice wrote in the beginning. She ended the poem with the statement, “By all that makes our Prom what it is not — / give us our dear old orchard back again!” Perhaps her plea was successful, as in later years, descriptions of the junior prom again mention it being in the orchard.

The prominent theme in the story of the orchard is that it was a space highly important to students but often unacknowledged by the college. As buildings were constructed, sections of the orchard often had to be torn down. A description of a photo from 1894 places it where Chapin House now stands, so the house’s construction in 1903 must have required destruction of the orchard there. However, this does not seem to have been a concern of the college, as the orchard is not mentioned in the files on the history of Chapin House in the College Archives. In even earlier photos, hay bales are visible on the lawn beneath the trees. According to Nanci Young, the College Archivists of Special Collections, Burton Lawn used to be a hay field, so it’s possible that at one point, the orchard spread from Burton to Chapin Lawns, perhaps even further.

When Smith was planning to build Neilson Library, students realized that it would mean further destruction of the orchard. They turned to the Smith College Monthly, where, in 1906, Katherine D. Hinman wrote “A Plea for the Orchard,” asking the college not to “sacrifice” the old orchard. “Oh cannot we find another place just as suitable, and at the same time preserve the orchard?” Hinman asked. She added that the orchard provides a “free and



CAPEN GARDEN, PHOTO BY MARÍA DELGADO '25J



“ORCHARD, SMITH_CA_MS00137_AS7844_001. SMITH COLLEGE ARCHIVES.” COURTESY OF SMITH COLLEGE ARCHIVES.



PHOTO BY MARÍA DELGADO '25J

open space” which was important to the college. As a final question, she asked, “what would we do without it on Prom afternoon?”

Even so, over the years, the orchard did slowly disappear. In the Smith Alumnae Quarterly, alumni reminisce about when the orchard was more robust. In February 1932, Harriet Bliss Ford, class of 1899, returned to look at campus, and wrote, “beyond Wallace and Dewey the old orchard has been invaded, vistas opened, buildings stood oddly where hammocks had swung.” The orchard is still mentioned, but mostly just as a meeting spot, such as for the Ivy Day alumnae parade. In the July 1924 issue, the Smith Alumnae Quarterly acknowledged that “we believe the program doesn’t call it ‘orchard’ anymore, but we are sure there is still one apple tree.” As time moved on, from the ’20s to the ’30s and beyond, mentions of the orchard slowly stopped, until now, when hardly anyone on campus knows about it.

But while the old orchard may be gone, that doesn’t mean there isn’t hope for a new one, according to John Berryhill, Landscape Curator for the Smith College Botanic Gardens. Berry-

hill showed a row of trees sitting in the back of Capen Gardens. According to him, these are dwarf varieties of apple trees, grafted onto smaller trees so they’ll produce fruits earlier, and they were planted about three years ago.

The overall design of the Capen Gardens are “reflective of a very white Eurocentric Smith history,” Berryhill said, as they are modeled after European botanic gardens. Berryhill says they are currently being reimagined, not to erase every bit of history in the garden but to focus on conservation, food and community. To him, part of this reimagining includes focusing more on food producing plants, like apple trees. He imagined that the old apple orchard would have been used in this way by Smithies of the past. “Food and community is an easy entry to the botanic world,” Berryhill said. He added that this is something he feels passionate about, to give more people access to botanic garden education.

Al Torrens-Martin ’25 said they were excited about the possibility for a new orchard at Smith, especially in regards to sustainability. “I think that revitalizing the orchard space at Smith would uphold our commitment

to becoming a greener campus and continue to create a culture of regenerative agriculture and community,” Torrens-Martin said. “Additionally, by doing this, we would be contributing to reforestation, which is a process that is so sadly lacking in the world today,” they added.

“I would like to make the landscape more valuable and therefore more memorable to Smith students,” Berry-

hill said. He hopes that having a visual reminder of the cycle of food production, such as through an apple orchard, will help to make this happen. ●

***“Was there no room, save only
’mongst the trees
of our loved orchard, which they
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By all that makes our Prom what
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again!”***

- MARY RICE, CLASS OF 1911, “THE PLEA OF FUTURE PROMENADES”

Cross Country Collects Third Team and Individual Win at James Earley Invitational

BY HILLARY CONNOR '26

The Smith College Cross Country team experienced a roller coaster of COVID-19 outbreaks and injuries this season yet still managed to recently pull out another win at the 26th Annual James Earley Invitational. Smith placed seven runners in the top ten of their respective heats. Four made the top ten overall out of almost 250 total runners.

This past weekend the Pioneers competed at the Connecticut College Invite, a key race to ensure they make their return to the NCAA Division III National Championship, hosted this year in Lansing, Michigan. In order to receive a bid, they needed to beat out regional teams at the upcoming meet and place well at the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) Championship. Last year, Smith was the underdog qualifier, pulling through with the first national bid in 20 years. This year, however, they have already received high national and regional rankings throughout the season and are faster than ever. The Pioneers finished seventh place, proving their bid wasn't a fluke and that they belong at the top.

The team boasts three meet victories this season out of the four they have attended, and three individual first place finishes as well. Two of these individual titles are held by Laurel Kruger '23J. These were Kruger's first collegiate wins. She also received the honor of NEWMAC Runner of the Week this season. At the recent James Earley Invite, Anna Louise Wildes '25 came in first with a speedy 5k finish of 18:49, a full 11 seconds ahead of the second place finisher, earning her NEWMAC Runner of the Week as well.

Some other standout returners include Pria Parker '25, the 2021 NEWMAC Rookie of the Year, Shams

Ferver '26J who placed 6th in the James Earley meet, and Mack Case '24, who placed 11th in the Williams Purple Valley Classic and shaved almost a full minute off their performance on the

While Smith Cross Country has seen their fair share of success so far, the team is still ready to fight for their Nationals spot.

same course just last year. After suffering an iliotibial (IT) band injury for the entirety of last season, Jonna Rosenthal '25 is back and better than ever, breaking 20 minutes in the 5k for the first time this past weekend with a time of 19:48, a full two minutes faster than the year before.



ANNA LOUISE WILDES '25. PHOTO COURTESY OF SMITH COLLEGE

While Smith Cross Country has seen their fair share of success so far, the team is still ready to fight for their Nationals spot. These upcoming races will be the first time this season that their entire top seven squad runs. This past weekend, the team split up between the Connecticut College Invite and the Golden Bear Invite and dominated in both races. Head Coach Ellen O'Neil says the team has built "great momentum" as they "head into the championship races ahead."

One of the team's greatest assets moving forward, according to O'Neil, is "packing." During practice, the team trains in groups of three to four runners methodically in stride with one another. This helps the athletes build stronger momentum by pushing as a group and intimidating opponents by creating a wall of yellow jerseys taking over the trail. This method allowed them to dominate the podium at their home meet just a few weeks ago, where

Smith claimed five of the top 10 slots with less than a 45-second span in between their finishing times.

The next few weeks will be the true test for this crew. They hope to continue to place highly through "packing," so that they can then pack their bags for Michigan and establish themselves as a national powerhouse at the Cross Country National Championship on Nov. 19. ●

The STEM/Humanities Divide is Difficult to Ignore

BY ISABEL BIRGE '25

Every week, I receive an email from the Lazarus Center for Career Development listing numerous career and internship opportunities for students pursuing business, computer science, engineering and the like, but rarely for fields in the humanities. I'm not complaining; it's just a fact.

I, like many other students, chose Smith because of its open curriculum and rich tradition of liberal arts. Smith has a wide variety of majors and minors, and student interest isn't concentrated in just a few departments. While this provides a hopeful picture that Smith places equal value in all its academic disciplines, I've found this is not always the case.

We live in a rapidly modernizing world, one that has begun to distinctly prioritize science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education as opposed to fields in the humanities. It's not just at the college level; there has been a growing emphasis placed on the importance of children learning basic coding skills as early as elementary school. I am by no means criticizing this development; increasing the accessibility of STEM education is undoubtedly important. However, I think this increased incentive towards STEM comes at the expense of overlooking the value of the humanities and the students who choose to pursue these disciplines.

Amidst the push towards STEM education, there's sometimes an underlying assumption that students concentrating in STEM fields are in-

herently more intelligent than those who are not. I think at the crux of this disparity is the perception that STEM classes at the college level are more difficult than humanities classes. There is an unspoken academic hierarchy that devalues the humanities, and Smith is not immune to it.

This isn't a plea for pity for humanities students, but I do want

the grand scheme of things, useless.

I love humanities classes at Smith. Every professor I've had has been deeply passionate about their subject and that enthusiasm is contagious. Classes are challenging and engaging, and I've found that my classmates share this sentiment. It is outside of the classroom, however, that the priority given to STEM as opposed to the humanities becomes

make more money at their first job than an English major. It's not just money though; STEM career paths tend to be more concrete, whereas for humanities, I can hardly recount the numerous times I've been told I can "do anything" with my degree. This is true, but not entirely comforting. While there are no rules dictating anyone's career path, resources like the Lazarus Center exist

to provide guidance — something that is scarcely afforded to those of us on non-STEM paths. The broadness of "anything" can easily dissolve into a barely tangible future.

As a historically women's college, Smith occupies a unique position in promoting STEM education for women. Still, Smith remains a liberal arts institution, which means there is — or should be — something for everyone. But there remains an implicit divide between STEM and the humanities, both on a departmental level and among students.

For those of us whose brains are more attuned to words than numbers, it's easy to feel left behind.

For Smith to truly embody its liberal arts promise would be to ensure that doesn't happen. ●



PHOTO BY SHERRY LI '25

to address some underlying assumptions. I've often heard my STEM friends boast about how they could easily fill a paper for an English class with enough "BS" to get by because "everything is subjective" in the humanities and "there is no right answer." Don't get me wrong; I love run-on sentences and 50-cent words. It can be discouraging, though, to realize that many students regard what I'm studying as merely supplementary to their far more important disciplines and, in

more noticeable. Opportunities promoted by the Lazarus Center, for example, tend to be more geared towards STEM majors. Perhaps this is because there are just more jobs available in these fields. That's a much larger issue than Smith can account for, but it is a truth with which humanities students will likely have to contend after graduation.

Moreover, a great deal of the messages incentivizing STEM are based on financials. We all know that an engineering major will likely

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