

At the end of June, we packed our brushes, paints, jeans, bathing suits, one good suit for him and two dresses for me and took off for Asheville on an overnight train. The thing that holds Black Mountain together is that they are building their new buildings with their own hands. It is a great sight to see the trucks go down the mountain every afternoon filled with teachers and students, boys and girls. It is something hard to describe in words, I helped on the wall one afternoon and felt happier at the end, more whole and ready for thought than I have in years.

Elaine de Kooning

The College without locks and keys, without prerequisites and administrative regulations, was also like an open dish in the universe. It allows ideas, like particles or spores, to fall into it. I learnt and saw with my own eyes that the passionate pursuit of ideas and meaning was life-fulfilling.

May Sarton

Hannelore Hahn

The school activities engulfed us like a warm breeze. Anasis Nin, who was printing her own books in NYC, came to help us set up our print shop. Drawing in wire in space to create air volumes, the farm looks well, it was fun to see it change with three seasons. It was a relief in the fall with the different greens of winter wheat, rye and barley cover crops replacing the tired silage corn and soy-bean stubble. The excitement and energy released in the ritual of harvesting the corn gave magic to the hard physical labor taking place in the sun, making the work seem effortless.

Elaine de Kooning

Hannelore Hahn

Maragret Kennard Johnson

Mary Gregory

The window, the saving feature of the studio for me, faced a dreamily beautiful lake with lush dark-green foliage all around it. Off in the distance, there was a long dock with students diving off and splashing around in the sunlight. A girl's dormitory upstairs in the North Lodge called "the attic" was connected to our large airy bathroom. This room was a large irregularly shaped one, with bays and dormers facing in three directions... arranged in appropriate summer-camp style. Often the dressing-up for supper took place after a good soak in the old fashioned cast-ironed tub on claw feet. The tub stood on the bare wooden floor just above where the string bass stood during chamber-music rehearsals that took place each afternoon. During those late-day immersions in bathwater enclosed in the iron tub, I imagined the rafters supporting this heavy load to be vibrating gently to the plucking and bowing of the enormous thick strings belonging to the double bass down below. Those baths were musical ones.

Elaine de Kooning

Ruth Lyford Sussler