

For a **WEB EXTRA** with links to historical publications and previous articles about the history of women at DMS, see dartmed.dartmouth.edu/f10/we06.

DOG DAYS: A dozen dog-and-owner teams, certified by Therapy Dogs International, are among DHC's 600 volunteers. A visit from a friendly pooch has been shown to relax patients, slow their heart rate, and even lower their levels of stress hormones.



Cause for celebration: A 50th and a 50/50 ratio

Half a century ago, a dean at Dartmouth Medical School wrote the dean of Radcliffe College and asked her to look for qualified women who might be interested in attending DMS. That letter made Dartmouth history and changed the course of Valerie Leval's life.

Then a recent Radcliffe graduate and now Dr. Valerie Leval Graham, she became, in the fall of 1960, the first woman admitted to DMS. In fact, never before that fall had a woman been admitted as a regular student to any program at Dartmouth (rather than just allowed to take courses). A woman was also admitted to Dartmouth's graduate program in zoology that fall. But it would be 8 years before a woman was admitted to Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business, 10 years for the Thayer School of Engineering, and 12 years for the undergraduate program.

That 1960 letter was a signal to Graham—a fine arts graduate of Radcliffe who had just completed her premed requirements at Harvard—that DMS would be open to her application, even though the School had never before admitted a woman.

Blackwell: In fact, DMS passed up a chance to make history a century earlier. In 1852, the faculty rejected an application from Emily Blackwell, whose famous older sister, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, in 1849 was the first American woman to earn an M.D. "In the opinion of this Faculty we should not be justified by the medical profession of New Eng-

land in complying with her request," wrote Dr. Edmund Peaslee, then secretary of the DMS faculty. (Emily Blackwell did go on to earn an M.D., graduating from Western Reserve Medical College in 1854.)

As for Graham, she'd been out of college for four years by 1960. She'd worked first as a teacher in England, then at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Still unsure what to do in life, she took an aptitude test, which revealed that she was best suited for medicine or teaching. Having tried teaching, she opted for medicine.

Idea: "I loved the idea of having a community of patients in a practice," she recalls, but being a trail-blazer for women "never crossed my mind." Her high school and college experiences had instilled in her the idea that she could do anything she set her mind to. However, she says, "my family was very conventional. It never occurred to them that their daughter would do such a thing. But," she adds, "they were supportive." She felt confident about the course she'd chosen when she earned an A in organic chemistry at Harvard.

Today, 50 years later, that letter from DMS's associate dean, Dr. Harry Savage, is a clue that the faculty had changed its mind since 1852, deciding not only to admit women but to seek them out. DMS had also just begun to accept more students from colleges other than Dartmouth.

Back then, DMS offered only a two-year preclinical program (graduates transferred to other schools to complete their M.D.'s), and the tiny—just 24 students per class—all-male student body came almost entirely from Dartmouth.

Graham applied to 10 schools and was offered three interviews. (An in-person interview is required for admission, then and now, to most medical schools; being offered an interview is almost as exciting as being accepted.) It was late in the summer of 1960, and DMS needed to fill the place of a Dartmouth premed who had dropped out.

Savage had lined up six interviews for Graham the day she visited Hanover. Midway through the day, her father called to say she'd been admitted to Boston University, and if she intended to accept the offer she'd need to start classes the next day.

When the interviewers heard that news, Dr. Heinz Valtin told

her, "Come back at three o'clock and we'll have an answer for you." Upon being offered a place in the Class of '62, Graham was speechless for a moment. Finally, one professor said, "Well, are you going to accept?"

Attitudes: When classes began, she was at first met with open resentment from her 23 male classmates. They had not expected to find a woman in their midst, and they thought one of their Dartmouth friends should have gotten the open place. Most DMS students back then lived in the medical fraternity house, Alpha Kappa Kappa (AKK), while Graham roomed in a private home. But gradually her classmates' attitudes began to change, and she became a regular at the Sunday faculty talks at the AKK house. By the year's end, the fraternity asked her to be a member—a move the national organization rejected.

After graduating from DMS she went on to Harvard Medical School, along with most of her classmates. Graham has done the



The DMS Class of 1962 was the first to include a woman—one among 23 men.

math on the male-female ratios at both schools: At tiny DMS, she constituted 4% of her class; Harvard, six times larger, still had only 4% women.

She took three years to finish at Harvard. Partway through, she married a fellow student and had a baby. "I would probably have dropped out then, but my husband pushed me to finish," she says. In 1965, she and her husband, Dr. William Graham, and their one-year-old moved to New Mexico. There, she completed a rotating internship and residency. In 1969, the Grahams moved to Charlotte, Vt. Valerie Graham had two more children and for 20 years taught medical students and nursing students at the University of Vermont.

Mark: According to the Hippocratic Oath, she notes, "doctors pledge to freely pass on their knowledge to those learning the profession. In medicine, I think my major contribution was teaching." So that long-ago aptitude test was on the mark in revealing her proficiency in medicine and teaching.

Graham was concerned that not a single woman was in the class after hers. But "a lot of them came after I was gone," she recalls. In 1962, two women matriculated. And the numbers kept climbing.

The rest, as they say, truly is history. In 1987, DMS admitted a class with 49 women and 35 men. That ratio of 58% women made DMS, as far as is known, the first U.S. medical school not historically a women-only school to pass the 50/50 mark.

ROSEMARY LUNARDINI

CLINICAL OBSERVATION

In this section, we highlight the human side of clinical academic medicine, putting a few questions to a physician at DMS-DHMC.

John Nutting, M.D.

Assistant Professor of Orthopaedics

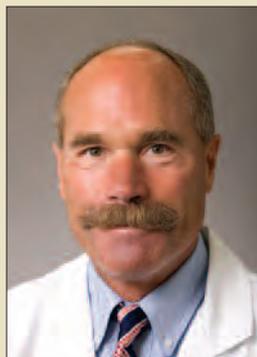
Nutting specializes in upper extremity surgery, especially of the shoulder, as well as sports medicine and reconstructive surgery. He joined the DMS faculty in 1986.

What made you decide to become a physician?

When I was a student at Johns Hopkins, I was working in the basement at the Baltimore Cancer Research Center doing experiments on mice with tumors. One day the primary investigator asked me if I wanted to see oncology patients at Hopkins Hospital who were getting some of the chemotherapeutic agents we were using to fight tumors. So I went up into the light of the hospital and thought, "I'd rather do this than hang with mice down in the basement."

How did you become interested in your specialty?

The decision to do surgery versus medicine was pretty easy. I love to operate. The decision about what subspecialty to do in surgery was harder because I liked so many of them. I realized that orthopaedics is a happy field, if you will, in that most people have had a bump in the road, you help them get through it, and for the most part they go back to their preinjury status.



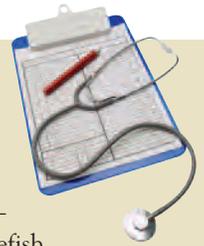
What do you like most about your job?

The people. My patients and the people with whom I work. My partners, as well as the residents and all the folks who work in our department, are really hard-working, good people.

What's your favorite nonwork activity?

I like to do stand-up paddle board and windsurf.

I also cycle and row a shell. In the winter, I ski and skate. And I also like to paint—watercolors, especially of bluefish.



What kind of music do you listen to most?

I listen to music whenever I can, whether it's in the operating room or at home. I like John Prine, Nancy Griffith, 6 Day Bender, James Taylor, and Alison Krauss.

What three people would you most like to have to dinner?

My two kids and [international health expert] Paul Farmer—because he has successfully done what I would like to do, and he has devoted himself to it.

What is your most memorable accomplishment?

My colleague Mike Sparks and I were involved in a seven-year project in Kosovo. We traveled there regularly to help to rebuild orthopaedics after the NATO bombing; we taught the orthopaedic surgeons there and supplied approximately five million dollars' worth of donated equipment. And this past January, we made an initial entrée into Rwanda, where we're trying to figure out a way to help them take care of folks with musculoskeletal problems. The way we think will be most helpful is to start at the village health center level, teaching them primary musculoskeletal care.

Where would you most like to travel?

Vietnam. My dad fought in Vietnam, and I feel as though that was an important place in my history when I was growing up. I've actually talked about going there with my dad at some point, but it hasn't happened yet.

What was your first paying job?

I was a lifeguard at a country club in Virginia and taught swimming lessons for little kids.

What about you would surprise most people?

A lot of kids think I look like I'm either mad or mean because of my mustache. I think what would surprise most people is that behind this big, bushy mustache, I'm usually smiling.