

# Famous Lovers

"The course of true love never did run smooth", that's what Shakespeare said. It seems to hold true for many historical couples—both real and imaginary.

Take Romeo and Juliet, for instance. It seems that the Capulets and the Montagues were feuding. Romeo Montague met Juliet Capulet at a banquet; they fell in love at first sight and were secretly married by the kindly Friar Laurence. Later, Romeo's friend Mercutio was killed by Juliet's cousin Tybalt. Romeo avenged his friend's death and was banished from the city for the deed. The grief-stricken Juliet took a potion, given to her by Friar Laurence, which put her into a death-like sleep. The Friar sent word to Romeo, but the messenger was delayed. Hearing of Juliet's "death", Romeo visited her tomb and killed himself. Juliet awakened to see her dead husband lying on the floor of the tomb. Taking Romeo's sword, she killed herself.

How about the story of Heloise and Abelard? They lived in Paris in the 12th century. Peter Abelard was one of the greatest scholars of the time and Heloise was a girl of nineteen who had come to Paris to live with her Uncle Fulbert and continue her education. They met and fell in love. Abelard ceased writing his philosophical papers and began writing poetry for his beloved. Uncle Fulbert learned of their love and refused to allow Abelard to see his niece. Abelard persisted in urging Heloise to marry him until she was convinced and they were secretly married. Uncle Fulbert heard of the marriage and sent a group of thugs to maim Abelard. The scholar fled from Paris in disgrace. Heloise entered a nunnery and became the head of her convent. Abelard wandered from monastery to monastery, searching for peace for himself. Meanwhile, they wrote to each other. Today, in a small cemetery outside Paris, Abelard and Heloise lie side by side.

Also consider this pair—Antony, a Roman statesman, and Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt. She accompanied him in several battles, and he gave her extensive areas of land. When Antony's enemy Octavian declared war on Egypt in 32 B.C., Antony divorced his wife Octavia (Octavian's sister) and spent a year in festivities and amusements with Cleopatra. After losing a decisive naval battle, the couple fled to Egypt to defend Alexandria from Octavian. Cleopatra took refuge in a mausoleum near the Temple of Isis and circulated rumors of her own suicide. Antony heard the reports and threw himself on his sword. Before he died, he heard that Cleopatra was still alive and had himself carried to her, dying in her arms. To avoid being taken captive to Rome, Cleopatra killed herself, reportedly by inducing the bite of a poisonous snake.

Upon the death of his father in 1936, Edward VIII became the first bachelor king of England in 176 years. Edward wanted to marry an American, Mrs. Wallis Warfield Simpson. The opposition to the proposal developed into a constitutional crisis. The problem was not that Mrs. Simpson was an American, nor that she was a commoner, but that she had already divorced one husband and was in the process of divorcing another. Edward declared that he had the right to choose his own queen. When he found it impossible to reach a compromise with his cabinet, Edward stepped down, and his brother became King George VI. In his farewell address, Edward said, "I have found it impossible . . . to discharge my duties as King without the help and support of the woman I love." On June 3, 1937 he and Wallis Warfield were married at Monts, France.

Nicholas and Alexandra, the last Czar and Empress of Russia met with fairly little opposition. Alexandra, a German princess, the granddaughter of Queen Victoria, made her first visit to St. Petersburg at the age of twelve. Sixteen year old Nicholas gave her a small brooch, which she returned. They met again five years later; Nicholas took her skating and tobogganing and persuaded his parents, who disliked Alexandra, to give her a tea dance. Four years later, the couple became engaged. They were married in November of 1894, one week after Nicholas became Czar of all Russia. On her wedding night, the Empress wrote in her husband's diary: "At last united, bound for life, and when this life is ended, we meet again in the other world and remain together for eternity." The next morning she wrote, "Never did I believe there could be such utter happiness in this world, such a feeling of unity between two mortal beings. I love you, those three words have my life in them."

# Saturdays are for Lectures?!

Saturday morning projects are by now a familiar way of life for NCSSM students. The Kathleen and Joseph Bryan Saturday Morning Symposium is a lecture series intended to mentally stimulate students. These activities are instructionally related, and require attendance.

The sessions aim to serve a variety of purposes, ranging from college admissions advice to opportunities for interdisciplinary studies and discussions not easily done during the regular week.

Subheaded "Decisions for the Year 2007", the sessions feature guest speakers, all of whom will deal with some aspect of the year 2007. This year was chosen because it will mark the 25th anniversary of the first graduating class at NCSSM.

Following each lecture, students discuss the issues presented in discussion groups. Each group keeps a record of the questions and problems its members addressed. At the end of the lecture series, all the findings by the discussion groups will be compiled and placed in a time capsule which is to be embedded on campus sometime this year. The capsule will be opened in the year 2007.

"Can the Outer Banks Be Saved?" was the topic of February second's lecture by Orin Pilkey, a geology professor at Duke University. He discussed various trends, such as rising sea level and island movement. Pilkey then expounded on six truths of the shoreline that he had come up with through his research. Several problems were raised, such as the eventual destruction of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, and the effects of sea walls on the coastline. Pilkey's solution, to "work with nature and do nothing", was explored later in discussion groups.

The next lecture planned is on "How Will Computers Impact Our Lives in the Year 2007".

(This is the first in a series of articles on the Saturday Morning Projects.)



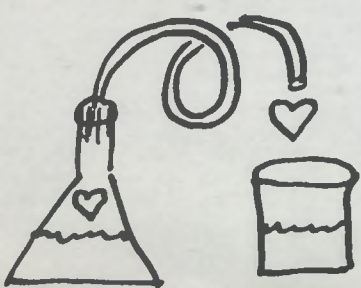
"Oh, that. It just sits there and evokes reactions." Submit your reaction to The Stentorian.

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IT MUST  
 BE THE  
 CHEMISTRY  
 BETWEEN  
 US.