

Your form "North Campus Restoration Story Submission" has received the following response:

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Q. Your Name:

R. Greg Green

Q. Your Email:

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Q. Your Story:

R. I had moved into Hunt Hall during my sophomore year (1974) as the food was better and more consistent than I found living off campus my freshman year. It was a great place to both live and socialize, but it was also a place filled with young men, and all the male bluster that could be squeezed in one building. It was blustery, even when the mail arrived.

In this time well before email and text-messaging, letters were still the dominant way of communicating long-distance. There was a public phone in the building, but long-distance calls were too expensive (as I was reminded every time I called home). Receiving a letter from home was something to look for, and a crowd often built around the mail slots during the daily sorting.

Many of the guys that loitered at mail time were not anxious about hearing from family, but rather were awaiting a letter from the "girl back home". A letter from the "girl back home", or GBH, was clearly an Alpha Male indicator, and mail-room staff and letter recipients alike were often vocal about it. "Hey Bob, you got another letter from your girlfriend", or "Sorry guys, is the perfume on the letter from my girlfriend bothering you?" Yes, having a GBH made dorm life socially more interesting, especially later in the school year when GBHs became much rarer as they migrated back towards the more local guys.

I did not have a GBH. At mail time I was pretty much a persona non-gratis, noted only for the occasional letter from Mom or the U.S. Army recruiting office. I certainly was not "in" with the GBH crowd. But that was about to change.

Returning home for a weekend visit that fall (it was only a couple hours away), I stopped in to see my friends Ann and Dennis. Dennis had been my high school teacher and, as former neighbors, both had been part of my growing up. When asked about dorm life, I told them of new friendships made, the food, the size of the room, and how many beers we could keep cool on the window ledge. But I also let slip the cachet of having a GBH, and my obscurity of not having one. Normally sympathetic, I was surprised, and a bit hurt, that Ann found the subject quite humorous.

A week later I was wandering down from my dorm room when the typical idlers around the mailroom stopped talking and just stared at me. A kind of stare that combines quizzical and amazement into plain bafflement. My own confusion was broken when a voice from the mailroom told me to check my mail slot. It was stuffed with letters! And not just any kind of letters, but rather ten GBH letters! Each in a different, colorful, flowing, beautiful, feminine handwriting. It made absolutely no difference to the mail guy that names on the return addresses were "Dolly Varden", "Dixie Cupp", "Lolly Gagger", or "Myrtle Wood", (and each contained a fragment of a single letter that needed to be pieced back together to read), the word still spread. Greg had received ten letters from GBHs!

I never received another, of course. But (thanks to Ann) for a short period, a skinning kid from a small, eastern Oregon town, whose conversations with young women usually ended right after "Hi", was the dorm Casanova. I still have the letters.