

## COMPOSING A NOTE FOR THE ALUMNI DIRECTORY

### ***Sue Allison***

Tiger lilies and foxglove grow in my garden, along with forget-me-nots and bleeding hearts. The petals of the phlox scatter on the dark mulch, which makes a nice effect, in all light. I listen to bird calls in the morning. I am as quiet as I used to be. I sit in my red velvet seat among other quiet strangers waiting for the soloist to begin. The songs, I find, are neither melancholy nor cheerful. They contain no sentiment and are like Latin that way: cool, perfect, clear. There are no subversive cesuras, no four and a half silent minutes in which I can hear my heart beat from the inside, nothing to shock or surprise or make you think. My *Peterson's* informs me that my orchestra is comprised of jays, robins, cardinals, and the coughing house wren, who, Mr. Peterson remarks, is known by her "lack of natural beauty and her dull call." My coughing house wren more than compensates for her lowly station by building a nest on the outside ledge of the window in my bathroom. Every spring I witness a fledgling fly for the first time and see for myself the phenomenon that, once gone, they never come back. I am trying to learn their calls, but each has multiple variations and it is difficult. They are tiny little things, if you even see them, but with piercing songs and it is worth the effort.