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Update on Our Latest Memoir Volume – From the Ladies

Tony Ambrose sent an email to our Company Reps soliciting (begging for) input for our latest Memoir Volume of Both Sides of the Wall. He related that on the outsets of this effort, it was envisioned that we were looking for compositions about distaff experiences as the “ladies left behind” during our tours in Viet Nam. There have been many submissions in that vein, and they make for intriguing and, often, profound reading. However, there have been an equal number of stories submitted about other experiences (first dates, the fun of moving across oceans, even some entertaining stories from women who did not climb aboard the Class of ’68 train until decades after graduation). Sadly and tragically, we've lost almost as many spouses as we have lost classmates. Along with that pain, it is hard to grasp that their stories dim over time and are lost to generations to come. Unfortunately, Tony reports that they have only about half of the number of pieces necessary to assemble a publishable volume. It appears that our brides have picked up some of our habits cultivated since cadet days – put stuff off until first draft=final draft=final submission. We have only a few weeks to submit stories and recollections to ensure they are all properly edited, correlated, collated, and published in time for our 55th reunion. We all know that the lady across the kitchen table, besides her other countless virtues, is bright, articulate, and generally not hesitant to share what's on her mind. Tony is asking you to remind your better halves and persuade them to create and submit an essay (more than one if possible) about their experiences as a Class of ’68 spouse. This is all of our times to shine – to produce a meaningful tome well worth reading.

E-3/H-3 Classmates Make the Most of the Army-Wisconsin Game

Joe Henry reported that back in June, **Jack Bussa** sent out an email to coordinate a K-1/E-3 company gathering (including spouses) for the Army-Wisconsin game in Madison in mid October. The plan was to meet in Janesville, WI, where Jack lives. Some drove to Janesville, while others flew into Chicago or Madison. **Tom Vollrath** took the train to Chicago with the goal to imitate the cadet train ride we took to Chicago for the Army-Air Force football game. On Friday, they all met at the Cobblestone Hotel and then ventured to the Buckhorn Supper Club along the shore of Lake Koshkonong, in Edgerton, WI. The gathering consisted of about 20. The next day, they met at Jack's & **Marilyn's** home for lunch and to share old stories. There were a few exaggerations but lots of laughs and of, course, various medical issues under discussion. About 4 PM, they took off in a huge bus for supper in Madison. Kudos to the restaurant staff at Buck and Honey's Monona restaurant – they served everyone quickly and even did separate bills. Joe noted that all meal festivities were moved inside to avoid any harmful medical adjustment issues for **Earl Newsome** due to temperature acclimation from Houston, Texas to Wisconsin. Extra gloves, scarfs, warmers, beanies and thermals were provided. For **Dave Hatcher**, the

journey "Mad-town" was an informal "homecoming" weekend with two Alma Maters opposing each other. After fulfilling his military obligation, he enrolled in the alleged arch-conservative Mid-West University of Wisconsin where he dazzled a variety of faculty, graduate co-equals, and awestruck undergrads in communication arts and other departments. He also played a key role (midfield) in the newly formed lacrosse club there, with overly lopsided defeats at U of Michigan and Ohio State. Then, it was off to the game at Camp Randall stadium with tickets that Jack was able to acquire. The place was packed and finally Army picked up the pace in the 4th Quarter, only to lose by one touchdown. It was a long ride back to the hotel by bus. Future planning calls for a golf outing at Palm Springs, California in February 2022 and then a company gathering in Naples, FL in early May 2022.



[Photo #1 -- Outside the Buckhorn Supper Club along the shore of Lake Koshkonong, Edgerton, Wisconsin the evening prior to the Army-Wisconsin game, E-3/H-3classmates Dave Hatcher, Joe Henry, Jack Bussa, Bob Stroud, Mark Spelman, Joe Creeden, Bill Flowers, Earl Newsome, Al Catron, and Tom Vollrath”]



[Photo # 2 – “Once again – only prettier: Dave Hatcher, Joe & Carla Henry, Marilyn Bussa, Eileen Stroud Jack Bussa, Bob Stroud, Mark Spelman & Spelman, Judy & Joe Creeden, Gail Newsome, Bill Flowers, Earl Newsome, Grace & Alan Catron, and Sheryl & Tom Vollrath”]

Company Mates Pay Respects to Tom McConnell and Family

Jimmy Walsh reported that about half of C-1' classmates came to **Tom McConnell's** funeral in Chattanooga on Oct 9th. **Pres Miller** said that it was an emotional weekend as Tom had done so much for the community. At the Friday Vigil at the Chattanooga Basilica, the Bishop gave an informal and personal tribute to Tom for his wonderful leadership in developing youth activities, especially for the Hispanic community, and his founding of the prison ministries.

There was a tremendous turnout for the funeral on Saturday. On Friday and Saturday evenings the eleven C-1 classmates plus **Rick Hawley's** sister, Meg, got together at Tom's & Brenda's home reflecting on Tom's military and civilian accomplishments. Of course, there were many stories about Tom that kept all chuckling. Tom's family was extremely gracious and certainly appreciated the West Point presence. Tom was a special person as a cadet, an officer for 26 years, and an educator and deacon for over 20 years.



[Photo # 3 – “Classmates and brides mix in with Tom McConnell’s family – top to bottom: Chuck Canella, John Dallen, Lee Outlaw, Bill Robinson, Jim & Peggy Walsh, Harold & Kay Yager, Brenda McConnell and family, Pres Miller. Ron & Bonnie Yasukawa, and Jack Cochran. Not shown: Ron & Kathy Feher and Brian McKenna”]

Bachmans, Pirnies, and Greeby Gather in Massachusetts

During the last week in September, **Skip & Joan Greeby** were in Boston pretending to be there on business. To stay true to our Honor System, they really accepted **Bill & Jane Bachman's** kind invitation to visit them whenever in town. In town means South Natick, Massachusetts, some 30 miles to the west of Bean Town. While there, Bill called **Lyle & Margot Pirnie** and asked them to join them for some big bites at a local restaurant. Bill is “somewhat” retired after teaching at Boston University, and Lyle is still working as Economic Development Coordinator for the Town of North Attleborough nearby. After a few adult beverages, the stories, as usual, began to flow, both about cadet and Army days. As it should be, it seemed that all remembered the good times better than the bad.



[Photo # 4 – “Bill Bachman, Lyle Pirnie, and Skip Greeby in the People’s Republic of Massachusetts picking up where they left off during cadet days”]

Classmates Solve World Problems

As mentioned earlier, in an effort to remain social (and occasionally civil), during the lockdown, classmates got together virtually via media such as Zoom. One of the more prominent call clusters was put together by **Ron Warncke** for his A-1 classmates; however, it quickly expanded as other classmates were invited to participate in weekly sessions. As time passed, quarantine directives ebbed, and they started to venture out with old and new found friends. One such sojourn formed when Fr. **Mike Cerrone** mentioned that he had a time share upgrade and asked if anyone cared to visit in person to continue Zoom conversations in person in Destin, Florida. Coordination was easy – **John & Margie Hedley** drove down from North Carolina and **Ray & Mary Jane Rhodes** flew in from Texas, and the conference began. After three grueling days enduring bright sun, salt air, and diminished crowds as a result of kids being back in school, the guys came to the conclusion that there were far more people working to screw things up, and for every problem they'd solve, five more would pop up. In all, they declared victory because sun, salt air, and friendship prevailed.



[Photo # 5 – “Mike Cerrone, Ray Rhodes, and John Hedley enduring Destin, Florida last September”]

“West Point Four” (Minus One) Travel Through Canadian Rockies

Bob Sweeney took the helm to report that , after a one-year hiatus (for obvious reasons), the “West Point Four” – **Jim Thome**, **Mike Hart**, **Jim Kelley**, and Bob – as they have become known internationally over the years – and their lovely brides – **Pat Thome**, **Janean Hart**, **Kathy Kelley** and **Ann Sweeney** – were ready to travel again for their Annual Fall Mini-Reunion. Delayed from last year, this trip – lasting from early to mid-September – was a Rocky Mountaineer Train Ride through the Canadian Rockies. When it came time to pull the trigger for tour payment, Jim & Kathy Kelley had just moved from their San Jose, California home of 40 years further north to Healdsburg, California to be closer to the grandkids (a familiar refrain) and found themselves surrounded by boxes in their new house. They decided that they just couldn’t make the trip and turn the boxes and house into a home in a reasonable period. The remaining six gave Jim & Kathy a bye, carried on without them, were able to face-time them on the trip and, afterwards, provided them a DVD with all of the beautiful photos. The trip was arranged through the AAA Travel folks and all agreed that it was fabulous – restful, inspiring, and executed without a care thanks to AAA. It started with a few days in Vancouver, Canada – a great city with warm and welcoming people. While there, they made the trip up to Grouse Mountain and took a walk on the Capilano Suspension Bridge – something everyone should experience! Then, they were off on a two-day train ride through the Canadian Rockies to

Kamloops and then on to National Park in Jasper, Alberta, Canada. Everyone could not get over how absolutely breathtaking the scenery was – US Rockies are nice but the Canadian Rockies are majestic!! That leg of the journey was followed by a four-day Motor Coach trip through the Jasper and Yoho National Parks and the Columbia Icefields where they got to walk on a glacier. The next stop was beautiful Lake Louise and Banff, and they finished up in Calgary for the trip home. As usual, there was lots of visiting, plenty of stories, some true, some might raise an eyebrow of an Honor Rep but he'd let it slide under the category of Social Honor, and plenty of laughs. Needless to say, they all had a wonderful time and are looking forward to next year's adventure – wherever it may be!



[Photo # 6 – “I am assured that this is a real setting and not a photo-op backdrop – Jim & Pat Thome, Mike & Janean Hart, and Ann & Bob Sweeney at Lake Louise and its Glacier in the background”]

Summer Wrap-up

In our mid-August Notes, I reported on **Tom Beierschmitt** and **Jim Swinney** going to support **Frank Nader** at Frank's bride, **Connie's**, celebration of life in Minnesota. In mid-September, Frank dispatched a deeply moving thank-you note to Tom and Jim and the remainder of the F-2 Zoo for their continued personal and spiritual support and for assembling an album of photos of Frank & Connie taken at F-2 events. Without intruding too much, the note did more than express his thanks and deep appreciation and respect for his company mates – it reflected the love and personal interaction between Frank and Connie during their marriage in a measured, strong, and romantic way that reflects a side of Frank that few outside the Zoo knew. He certainly is true to his motto from cadet days: “I can stop being gross any time I want.”

In mid-September, I reported on how New Orleans inhabitants **Dan Adams**, **Bob Shaw**, and **Vic Farrugia** and their families coped with Hurricane Ida. I based my research on our 50th Reunion Bio Book. After I hit the Send button to AOG and you all, I checked a recent AOG class drill roll that noted **Marvelous Marvin Markley** was also listed as an NOLA resident. After a mea coupla email, MMM explained that Katrina was enough for him. After Katrina in 2005(where he had a great place on Royal St in the French Quarter), he retired and moved to Shreveport (in NW Louisiana). There is still a Petroleum Club there and it is somewhat rare for a hurricane to get that far north (although Hurricane Laura was strong enough to blow-down BIG trees last year). He is keeping busy doing some oil and gas consulting and playing lots of golf.

Bob Stroud Conducts Amphibious Operation on West Point

Back in July, **Bob Stroud** and his two sons trailered his power boat (stink potter) from the Annapolis area to West Point and (as a member of the West Point Yacht Club) launched it at South Dock. With the help of his sons, they made a trip down river to NYC, and then a trip up river and thru the Champlain Canal for several days of beautiful cruising on Lake Champlain. They had a terrific bonding time seeing the historical sights such as Fort Ticonderoga, Valcour Island, and Crown Point. Once they finally made it safely back to West Point, they retrailered the boat and drove back to Maryland.



[Photo #7 – “Bob Stroud in a favorite setting – being chauffeured away from West Point”]