



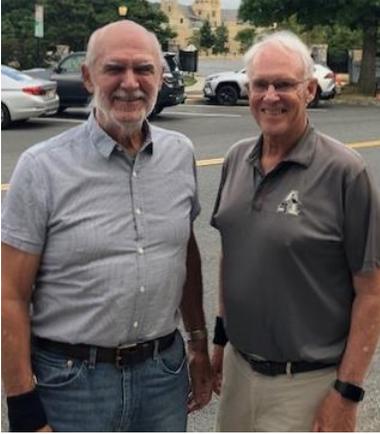
DAVE GERARD
8822 Harbor Circle
Terrell, North Carolina 28682
828-478-9813
Gerarddw68@gmail.com
<http://www.westpointclassof1968.com/>

Classmates More than Traditionally Participate in End of Beast March Back

During this year's March back, seven members of the class participated and wore black wristbands in **Tony Ambrose's** memory. Long-time stalwart **Pres Miller** (wearing Tony's lanyard/ID as well as his own) joined Beast roommates **Terry Wildrick** and **Craig O'Connor** for the full distance in from Lake Frederick. **Dutch Hostler, Dale Hansen, Dave Martin, and Jerry Holderness** opted for the short stroll in from the ski slope. At the post March back luncheon, the Supe told the story, acknowledging Tony's stalwart support of the program and the Academy and called for a moment of silence in Tony's memory. Dutch Hostler noted that it was a fitting gesture and a touching moment. Tony had marched the full distance of each March back since Tony and Dutch participated in the first one in 2000. Even during the height of the COVID pandemic, Tony marched the full distance – albeit locally. Knowing Tony, he probably walked during that time with greater precision than most old grads who participated in that manner. Tony had signed up for the march back from Lake Frederick again this year. A few weeks prior to the event, Tony sent an email to the Class cohort walkers who have been convening for the March back year after year, indicating that a medical issue had arisen that cast doubt on his doing the full distance march. Tony subsequently withdrew his name from the full distance March back list so that another grad on the waiting list might be able to participate. The group all hoped to see him for the short march, although he had quipped that he wasn't particularly fond of the thought of being awarded the dreaded “flip-flop” pin. We now know, of course, that Tony had suffered a stroke and was subsequently diagnosed with the complication of pancreatic cancer, then suffered a second stroke on the way to his ultimate passing.



Photo #1 – “2022 Class March back participants Jerry Holderness, Craig O’Connor, Terry Wildrick, Pres Miller (with Tony Ambrose’s lanyard/ID) Dutch Hostler, Dave Martin, and Dale Hansen at the West Point Ski Lodge”]



[Photo #2 – Beast roommates Craig O’Connor and Terry Wildrick reuniting for the 2022 March back”]

Tony Ambrose Will Be Remembered Far Beyond this Year’s March Back

True to form, **Tony Ambrose** had registered to join in the March back event prior to his and Linda’s participation in the Remembrance Weekend in June. During that event, he made one last pitch to classmate brides to contribute reminiscences of their adventures with their husbands for the distaff volume of our *Both Sides of the Wall* memoirs and coordinated with **Andy Shaffer** for the book’s format and publication. No one at the Remembrance Weekend but God knew that he would not be with us in body by the time of the March back. In another true to form gesture, **Pres Miller**, another long time participant, asked the AOG for Tony’s ID lanyard to wear during the walk back to the cadet barracks.



[Photo #3 – “Warhorse classmates Tony Ambrose and Andy Shaffer at the Vietnam Memorial portion of our Remembrance Weekend. Photo courtesy of Betty Shaffer”]



[Photo #4 – “Pres Miller honoring Tony Ambrose by wearing Tony’s lanyard/ID during the full March back with the Class of 26”]

Hostlers Return to Mainland for More Service and Business

In keeping with the actions of many classmates after the Remembrance Weekend, **Dutch & Megan Hostler** went to a glamorous spot – their home in Hawaii for a few agricultural and laundry tasks in preparation to return to the Mainland for non-profit participation, AOG Leader Conference, and the traditional march back. Their first stop on their trip to the mainland was Brunswick, Georgia for a fundraising event in support of Nine Line Foundation’s current project: Golden Isles Veterans Village – a transitional housing project for homeless veterans. **Dan Kaufman** had graciously agreed to Megan’s request that he serve as guest speaker at a fundraising dinner event. Dan & **Kathryn** were both raised in Brunswick, so Dan is a hometown hero – a natural choice and perfect fit for the occasion. Kathryn was away on a long planned excursion to NYC with a granddaughter, but the night before the event Dan picked Dutch & Megan up at their hotel and they enjoyed a great dinner together at a local restaurant. On the way back to the Hostlers’ hotel, Dan was stopped in traffic and was rear ended by a truck towing a trailer. In lawyer-speak, the force of the impact caved in the back and drove Dan’s car into the vehicle stopped ahead of him. The culpable truck then clipped the vehicle stopped ahead of Dan’s car and veered into the woods lining the roadway. The driver abandoned that vehicle and vanished into the night without a trace. Megan was showered by shattered rear window glass - and Dan’s car was severely damaged (likely totaled). Fortunately, Dan, Dutch, and Megan all walked away from the wreckage without apparent serious injury (you can never be totally sure about possible “soft tissue” whiplash injury) – none of them bled that evening. The next evening, as we’d all expect, an unperturbed Dan reliably delivered an excellent talk on behalf of the cause at the fundraiser. No task too great.



[Photo #5 – “Dan Kaufman none the worse for wear with his car that can’t say the same”]

Classmates Gather to Offer Comfort and Bid Farwell to Claude Johnson

Paul Joseph reported that he and **Claire** traveled from their home in Virginia to meet with **Rick Rhoades** and his and **Mary’s** daughter (Kate) at the Box Car Restaurant in Short Hills, New Jersey to celebrate the wonderful life of **Claude Johnson** with his bride, **Tina**, and their family. Paul said that Claude’s family did a great job in making it a very nice evening honoring Tina’s husband, Christopher’s and Kathryn’s father, and our friend and classmate.



[Photo #6 – “Paul Joseph, Rick Rhoades, Tina Johnson, (Rick’s & Mary’s daughter) Kate, and Claire Joseph at Claude Johnson’s celebration of life last July”]

Traveling With the Dallens and McKennas

After an adventure in Morocco, **John & Frances Dallen** and **Brian & Karen McKenna** have cleared our calendar – the barge trip is now rescheduled for August of 2023 and they've decided to pass on the Dubai to Singapore cruise, and the trip to Japan was canceled by the tour company. To keep their tootsies in the travel pond, they scheduled a 21 day July tour that started in Denmark and included a cruise to several Norwegian fjords as well as a visit the White Sea, and to ports in Russia. Due to Tsar Vladimir the Terrible, the Russian ports had to be given up in place fo fascinating Scottish islands. John said that he was prepared to begin his journal their trip with the usual litany of complaints and near-disasters; however, aside from questionable airline schedules and food the excursion qualified as a veritable miracle. To get the full report, tune into dallen.posthaven.com.



[Photo #7 – “Brian & Karen McKenna and Frances & John Dallen at the North Cape globe monument in Norway – as far north in Europe as one can get by land, 71° 10’ 48” North. Although John reported that the weather included fog, rain, and wind, it eased enough to get this picture. **Andy & Betty Shaffer** and the **Gerards** only wished for their weather during their visit there three years ago”]

Hansens Take a Memorable Break in Preparation for this Year’s Marchback

After the Remembrance Weekend, **Dale & Joyce Hansen** participated in the Empire State Bike Trail – a five day trek covering just over 200 miles starting at the Battery in Manhattan and ending at the Rensselaer-Albany Train Station. They went with 10 others (eight of whom they have biked with several times) along with two guides. After that, Dale & Joyce took off to Germany for a week and a half. They started in Munich and stayed in the Hotel Platzl, a block away from the Hofbrauhaus. They then traveled to Oberammergau where they watched the five hour Passion Play (two and a half hours at a time with a 3 hour intermission for dinner.) After that, they traveled to Garmisch-Partenkirchen where they stayed at the Edelweiss Resort (what in our earlier days might have been the General Patton Hotel), the familiar the Armed Forces Recreation Center. Yearning for some exercise, they traveled to the Zugspitze and walked the Partnach Gorge prior to heading to Augsburg.



[Photo #8 – “Dale & Joyce Hansen (who didn’t check the uniform flag) with a few other rider friends on the Empire State Bike Trail”]



[Photo #9 – “Joyce & Dale Hansen cleverly hiding their refreshments at a beer garden in Augsburg”]

Another Classmate Family at the Passion Play

Speaking of the Passion Play, **Bill & Cheryl Jeffries** took a two week trip down the Danube with 19 other West Point alumni to visit Budapest, Hungary, Slovakia, Austria, and Germany to attend the Oberammergau Passion Play. *On Brave Old Army Team* frequently echoed off the lazy river, the walls of 11 levees, and the restored ruins of several small towns. After some fine Hungarian, Slovakian, Austrian, and German wine, the Army alums tried to teach the song to alumni from North Carolina State, Universities of Tennessee, Texas, Florida, Virginia, and North Carolina. Bill urges that, if anyone hasn't attended this historic performance to be sure and put it on your bucket list for 2030. Even our current AOG President joined in on the cruise and event. After the play Bill & Cheryl opted for an excursion to Berlin where he had the chance to see Check Point Charlie from a different perspective than the last time he saw it in the 70s.



[Photo #10 – “AOG Pres Todd Brown ('85) and his bride, Bill & Cheryl Jeffries and other alumni who participated on the Danube Cruise and Passion Play”]



[Photo #11 – “Bill Jeffries at current day Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin being over watched by a McDonalds”]

Elwood Cobey Shares a Bucket List Experience

Elwood Cobey’s travel adventures always include two criteria – a spectacular spot and family. After the Remembrance Weekend, Elwood’s brother, a member of The Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews invited him to attend – which included a formal dinner prior to kick off festivities – as his guest at The Open. The Open was the 150th playing of the championship and the 30th time that St Andrews has hosted the world’s biggest and most popular golf event. To ensure that this was going to be a once in a lifetime event for Elwood, he worked to give other golf courses a chance to be most popular by continuing to yell, “Get in the hole,” while each golfer would take a swing.



[Photo #12 – “Elwood Cobey and his brother in front of The Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews prior to the formal supper to kick off the championship event”]



[Photo #13 – “Elwood Cobey at the 17th hole at The Old Course in St Andrews in July 2022”]

Jack & Meg Miller are Back in the Travel Saddle

After bidding farewell to the A-2 gang and getting some timely tips regarding Viking ship travel from **Andy Shaffer** at the Remembrance Weekend, **Jack & Meg Miller** finally resumed their cruising lifestyle by setting off for Alaska and the Inside Passage after two previous tries. Their first stop in this vast wilderness was the Hubbard Glacier that is six miles wide where it meets the ocean. They couldn't get too close to the glacier due to icebergs. Jack indicated that, although during the cruise there were numerous majestic scenes no matter where one looked, the highlight for him and Meg was the zip line ride down Hoonah Mountain – a descent of 1300 feet in 90 seconds with speeds of 60 mph – without having to do push-ups with his feet on a big red rock. He also added that a close 2nd was the visit to an Iditarod dog summer camp in Seward and their 1.5 mile ride in a modified “sled” pulled by a team of 14 dogs. Jack reported that their next cruise will be a little more sedate and closer to home – a trip down the mighty Mississippi on the new Viking Mississippi. Good for them! Especially after COVID, they gotta travel while they still can.....



[Photo #14 Meg & Jack Miller with the Hubbard Glacier in the background”]

Tillerys Take a Break

After our Remembrance Weekend, **Gordon & Elsie Tillery** attempted to recover from Gordie's long periods of pre-occupation and distraction with a well-deserved week with family on Lake Namakagon, in the north woods of Wisconsin.



[Photo #15 – “Gordon & Elsie Tillery during a day trip to Copper Falls State Park in Wisconsin”]

Other Steps to Wrap Up Remembrance Weekend

In accordance with the Class Standing Committee approval, and since the Class was not able to identify a next of kin for **Ace Reichert**, **Dutch Hostler** presented the 20th copy of **John Hedley's** *From the Shadows* purchased by the Class for next of kin to the USMA library for its special collections. Our Class' contributions to the USMA library special collections now include

all three volumes of *Both Sides of the Wall* and our 50 Year Affiliation book - as well as the book Dutch donated while participating in the Annual AOG Leaders' Conference that coincided with the March back. Dutch presented the book to Christopher Barth, the USMA Librarian, who informed Dutch that USMA's special collections will ultimately be housed in Cullum Hall, which is currently undergoing extensive renovations.



[Photo #16 – “USMA Librarian, Christopher Barth and Class President Dutch Hostler at NOK presentation event”]



[Photo #17 – “As part of the same book NOK presentation event on behalf of our Class, **Vic Farrugia** presented a copy of *From the Shadows* to Danny Johnson, **Denny Johnson**'s brother in Louisiana”]