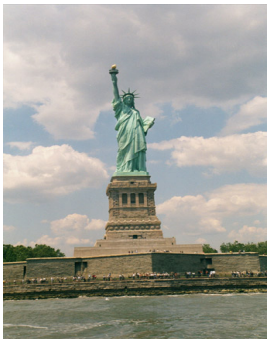
Bushy Tales

Dedicated to all who attended London Central High School at Bushy Park, London England from 1952 to 1962



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Gary Schroeder (55), Editor gschroeder4@comcast.net

Visit the Bushy Park Web Site at http://www.bushypark.org/

Class Representatives

1953 - Jackie (Brown) Kenny
JKYKNY@aol.com

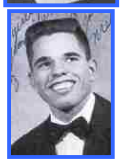
1954 – Betsy (Neff) Cote
betsycote@verizon.net

1955 – Nancie (Anderson) Weber
nancieT@verizon.net

1956 - Edie (Williams) Wingate
WingW@aol.com

1957 –Shirley (Huff) Dulski
shuffy2@msn.com

1958 – Pat (Terpening) Owen
CHS1958@sbcglobal.net



1959 – John "Mike" Hall
MGHall@Q.com

1960 - Ren Briggs
rpbjr@frontiernet.net

1961 - Betsy (Schley) Slepetz
bslepetz@comcast.net

1962 - Dona (Hale) Ritchie
DonaRitchi@aol.com

Pat (Terpening) Owen (58)
CHS1958@sbcglobal.net

NOTE: When you contact a classmate, and this is the first contact with them, please put BUSHY PARK or CHS (or something else to indicate that you're from Bushy) in the SUBJECT line. I've deleted messages myself when I didn't recognize who they were from, especially when the maiden name isn't used. Thanks. Pat

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Roster Changes

New Email address:

Frank Janusz (Faculty)
frankjanusz1@comcast.net

Thyra Caldwell (61)
thyralc@comcast.net

Where Did They Go?

This is a list of our classmates whose email address were rejected when the last issue was sent out. If any of you know of their new email, address please send me an update.

Ruth (Davis) Zabe (53)
sharkpack@netzero.net

John Friswold (57)
paynewaianae@aol.com

Leroy "Doc" Ferguson (58)
elfdocelf@aol.com

Nancy (Hansen) Key (58)
NancyBKey@aol.com

Robert Groundwater (59)
Gwater@visuallink.com

Look Who We Found

Marian (Lane) Bailey (58)
marianbailey@mac.com

Memories of Bushy

Greer (Sells) Conrad (61)
greer.gsc@juno.com

Gary this is me Greer Sells Conrad and Mr. and Mrs Frank Janus at graduation in 1961. This was forever ago.

This is the only other photo I have and I don't know who any of these folks are.

Mini Reunions

Roberta Sharpe-Martin (56)
Rsybl@aol.com

My long awaited visit from Judy Bourgeois Jensen (56) finally came on Monday 13 September. Our last time together was at the October 1999 Bushy Reunion at the Golden Nugget in Las Vegas.

Judy came out to California the day before to visit with her old time friend, Tori Daly, in Newport Beach. They drove down to my house in Rancho Bernardo before checking into the Paradise Point Resort in Mission Bay. We were able to have some time at my home and they were able to meet my significant other Rudy Fanari. Rudy and I have known each other since 1961 when we were each living in Washington, DC.

After having time at my home and catching up on news, Rudy and I took the girls to our wonderful Rancho Bernardo Inn for lunch at the Veranda restaurant. We always like to show off the Inn when people come from out of town and it is worth looking up on the Inter net to see the charm of the place.

We have a long pleasant lunch time and gave them a brief tour of our of our Oaks North Community before we parted and the afternoon rush hour started on the freeway for Judy and Tori to drive to their hotel.

On Tuesday I drove to Mission Bay and saw the lovely Resort that Judy and Tori were staying at and then we headed for Coronado and lunch at the Hotel Del Coronado as Judy's guests.

We had a wonderful time in the town of Coronado with its old world charm. While still at the Hotel Del we were able to observe the new Navy Seals in training on the Silver Strand. It was very interesting to see that these brave young men have to go through in their training to become a Seal.
Tori had us make a pact that the next time Judy comes out to California we will spend one night together at the Hotel Del. Judy would like to stay up in a room with one of those wonderful windows high up near the roof top.

After returning to Mission Bay we were able to have more time along side the Bay at a Cafe on the property and chat some more before parting.
Judy looked wonderful and had news of all her travels this year and last. The last was a cruise on the Holland America Ryndam to Alaska with her brother and his family and cousins. I have traveled on the Ryndam and found it to be a nice size ship.
A special note very well worth mentioning at this time is that Judy's father Rear Admiral Aubrey Bourgeois, Ret., who lives in Florida will be 103 years of age this December.

Wish I could include the only two photos from my new camera, but they were not worthy of submission. Just know that we all looked great for our age!!

Having met Judy's long time friend Tori was indeed a very fortunate meeting, as I think we shall be able to see each other in the near future. There are not as many miles between us as there is with Judy, who lives in Atlanta.

When asked by a friend at a luncheon at my Rector's home on the 12th about my forthcoming meeting with Judy. I told the person that when I met Judy in my Senior Year at Bushy it was then my favorite time at school. Over the years wherever our travels and homes have been we are still able to pick up where we left off. We had the chance to have a few years living in Washington, DC when Judy came to be the Librarian at the Brooking's Institution and I was with the RAND Corporation and then with Garfinkel's before she and I left the area more or less within a year of each other. Judy became a bride and left for Atlanta and I for San Diego. Hope that I shall be able to write once more about a future meeting with Judy.

Mike Murphy (58)
oldsalt1223@aol.com

Judy and I just returned from Destin, Florida. While we were there we visited with Barbara Board, class of 1960. She and her husband Harvey live in Navvarre Beach, Florida. We had a nice visit. Upon return I had arthroscopic

surgery on my right knee. It was not too bad and I am recovering nicely. In reference to Connie Drennans comment on the Bushy Park bases, I had done a detailed map with the bases for the reunion in Dallas. I may still have the map. Our next trip will be to Canton, Texas for the trade days and then to the Texas State Fair.

Renold Briggs (60)
rpbjr@frontiernet.net

In September Pat and I were in the Pismo Beach area of California. We took a drive to Cambria, CA about 45 miles up the coast. I remembered that Melanee (Wright) Sylvester (Class of 60) had a art gallery there. Well, we found the gallery. It is called Melanee Sylvester Gallery right on Main St. I had not seen her for 50 years. We went in and introduced ourselves. She remembered me and we spent the next hour talking about old times and reviewing her gallery. We also got to meet her daughter Tracy who is also an artist and has her work on display. Melanee has had her gallery in Cambria for 27 years. The town is a great place to spend time and your money. We had a wonderful lunch and then headed home. Tracy took the photo of the three of us. Should you be in the area stop in and introduce yourself. You may also see a painting that you must have. There are many wonderful paintings.

What are we doing now?

Henry "Hank"Williamson, Jr. (60)
hank.williamson@shelbyvilletn.org

I attended Central my senior year and barely graduated in 1960. I started receiving the newsletter about a year ago and thoroughly enjoy reading and reminiscing. While I didn't make the reunion in Las Vegas, I have contacted a few folks that I remembered from my Bushy Park days. I hope to continue corresponding with those I've contacted and thought I'd send my e-mail address in the event anyone else remembers me. I don't think I left owing anyone any money, but you never know. After BP I attended Auburn for 5.8 years then spent 26 years as an Air Force pilot. After retirement in 1991 "I bought the farm" I currently own in Bell Buckle, TN. Right now I manage the Shelbyville Airport and thought some of you might enjoy the video we just produced for You Tube. Search for Shelbyville Airport Info. I've agreed to stay until I'm seventy, health permitting--so far, so good. I'm still having more fun than should be allowed, and hope everyone else is too. Home e-mail: hankwilliamson@hughes.net Work e-mail: Hank.Williamson@ShelbyvilleTN.Org.

Karl Rubinstein (61)
karl.rubinstein@gmail.com

Karl Rubinstein's post-Bushy Bio
I appreciated the nice comments about my Yevette story which fairly well encapsulates my High School days at Bushy. Though I don't really know what happened to Yevette and Pierre, I'm emotionally certain (read, "making this up") that after their return to Paris, Yevette saw the light and they married at twenty-

six and a half, both becoming brain surgeons. My sugar-plum visions show them living a wonderful retired life in the French Alps where their six children and twenty-five grandchildren visit them often, bringing small, yet precious, gifts. In retirement, Pierre has become a famous yodeler, often performing on mountain peaks, while Yevette lovingly accompanies him on her antique zither.

Responding to the appeal for post-Bushy-life stories, I'm admitting in that in real life, I moved to Texas, graduated from Texas A& M, then St. Mary's School of Law (San Antonio). I served as a Captain in the USAF JAG, from 1968 to 1973, then went into private practice in Dallas, eventually forming my own firm with offices in Texas and California. I'm admitted to practice in both states. I've got three kids (two sons and a daughter) and two grandkids (a boy and a girl). Being a grandparent is the best deal there is.

I retired several years ago and eventually began writing, then got a Masters of Fine Arts (creative writing). I write fiction as Jackson Bass (an amalgam of my wife's maiden name and the fish I like to catch). I've published poetry, various legal articles, and two novels. The novels are featured on www.jacksonbass.net. I'm now trying to flog a screenplay.

I split my time between my home on North Padre Island (Corpus Christi, TX) and my cabin in the Wisconsin Northwoods. At this very second, I'm hunched over my keyboard in the cabin, surrounded by various furry and not overly friendly animals.

My primary problem of the moment is a mouse that has taken up residence somewhere in the frame of my white, Ford F150 pickup. There may be two. Anyway he, she, or they sneak out of hiding to chew on things left in the truck bed with its locked top. The latest casualty is my rain jacket, now rendered useless by two half-dollar sized holes. The mice have designs on my golf bag as evidenced by the fact they've chewed up the towel, an Aggie towel at that. I hate to "trap" them, but one's golf bag is a sacred thing, after all.

I enjoy reading Bushy Tales and hope this contribution helps keep it going. I've seen a few of the Bushy kids since England. Jim Roberts and I ended up as roommates at Texas A&M (neither having known the other would be there) and we went through four years in the Cadet Corps after which we were commissioned Second Lts. in the USAF. Jim flew planes in Vietnam and became a much decorated pilot, then later a successful businessman.

I saw Bob Overton twice. Once when Jim and I went up to TCU to see him and, next; just a few weeks before his death when he came over to my home in Corpus for a drink. He'd been living in Corpus for some time and happened upon my name while looking up someone else's phone number. He contacted me and we spent a nice few hours reminiscing about Bushy. I made him tell me about his experience in the movie "Lolita," where he played the role of Sue Lyon's date at a high school dance where several of you boogied in the background. I missed the gig because I'd already returned to the States.

Bob told me how a limo would pick the two of them up every morning before shooting, the idea was that Bob and Sue ought to have some level of bonding. Nice. Bob and I made plans to go fishing, but his death intervened.

I still have the three editions of "Vapor Trails" received while at Bushy. Every few years, I page through them, remembering the kids I once knew. Bob's death, and others recorded in Bushy Tales, evokes the image of us all—way up there in the sky, vapor trails after all.

Gary Brown (62)
jangary@turbonet.com

Here's a synopsis of what happened after we left England (and how we got there in the first place).

My dad joined the Army-Air corps in 1942. After my sister Vicki was born in '43, he received training in Arizona and left for Italy and WWII, where he was when I was born in '44.

Upon returning, he joined SAC and we were stationed at Omaha, NE; Riverside, CA; Mountain Home, ID; and South Ruislip, where I attended 8th and 9th grades at Bushy Hall and only half of the 10th at Bushy Park, which is why I have trouble putting names to faces. We left England in the winter of '59/'60 for Carswell in Fort worth, TX.

I finished high school and college in Fort Worth, and was offered a job with Boeing as a Tooling Engineer in Seattle Washington which I accepted.

After graduation, I married my sweetheart whom I met and had dated for four years and we hit the road for Seattle. The job turned out to be a great opportunity and we raised a wonderful family of two daughters (and too many dogs to count). After a 35 year career in the Seattle area, we retired from Boeing in 2001 and moved to north central Idaho amongst the deer, elk and moose, a real change from the metropolis of Puget Sound and Western Washington. We are happy as can be and finally enjoying the fruits of our long and sometimes trying careers.

We returned to London and Paris last year and had a wonderful time reliving old memories and seeing how things have changed, and yes, how many things have stayed the same. If you haven't been back, do so!

Sue (McDonald) Henriott (62)
dmhenriott@centurylink.net

After graduating in '62, I attended University of Maryland classes on base and volunteered in the base hospital. When I left England in 1964, I came to the States to live for the very first time - big culture shock since I was born in Alaska and moved to Europe without ever living here. I visited relatives in New England then came to Central Florida to visit an Air Force nurse stationed at the now-closed Orlando Air Force Base. My parents were transferred to Langley, VA in 1965. My older brother made his home in Massachusetts; my younger brother made his home in Virginia.

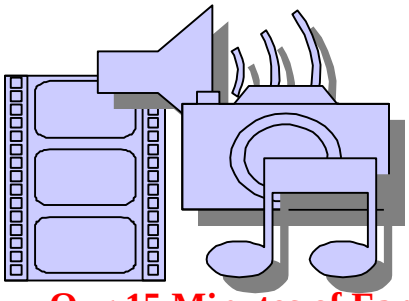
I met my husband, James, here and stayed. Our four children were born here; there are ten grandchildren and one great-grandchild, so far.

James had been in the US Air Force and retired from the US Army Reserve in 1990. We owned a machine shop (I was the bookkeeper) and, on our five acres, we constructed our home (I was the go-fetch-it and clean up crew) and greenhouses and operated them until 2006 (I was still the bookkeeper and general nursery grunt). James had been ill for the last several years and passed away in January 2010. He was laid to rest in the Florida National Cemetery; The Honor Guard Ceremony was a touching tribute to the Fallen Soldier.

Over the years I worked in a restaurant, offices, a hospital ER, on Main Street at Walt Disney World, and as a stay-at-home mom. I retired after 30 years with the local school system where I was involved with information technology and training teachers to use technology, maintaining permanent records, and creating graphic arts and web sites.

Lately I have returned to reading, crocheting afghans for retirement/nursing home residents, mowing and yard upkeep, and planting fruit and ornamental trees. I can keep big things growing outside, but houseplants always die on me. I still mess around with computers and try to keep up with the changes in technology. I joined two chapters of the Red Hat Society in order to dress funny (I make/decorate my own hats and some costumes) and go out with the ladies. Anyone interested can see my creations on Face Book. I also learned how to properly groom Smokey, my shih-tzu - he looks pretty good, even if I do say so myself!

I'd love to hear what others have been doing in these Our Golden Years.



Our 15 Minutes of Fame

Are there any other classmates who've been on national TV, on the radio or in the movies? Let us hear from you.

Pat (Terpening) Owen (58)
nemoamasa@sbcglobal.net

I was living in Southern California and my husband, John was at a remote radar site in Alaska. I received a letter from the Air Force liaison in Southern California who said they were going to tape a show to be shown to servicemen in Alaska and was I interested in participating. I said sure.

Arrangements were made, and when we went to tape the show they told us that Curt Massey (a bandleader from that time) was rehearsing in the studio we were going to use at NBC, and would we like to watch a show being taped until they were through. We said yes, of course. The show being taped was TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES' with Bob Barker. After they did the preliminary jokes, etc.., they asked if anyone would like to be on the show and the Air Force Sergeant with us told us to raise our hands and I got picked, and sent to a 'green room'.

Finally, we came out on stage where there were two men with a sheet between each of them (so you could only see the man you were working on) and we were supposed to dress them as Santa and the one who did the best Santa won.

The other girl won as her Santa looked more like a Santa - my person kept putting his mustache up over his nose. LOL. When Bob Barker started to peel the beard off the other person, I said to myself, "I know him from somewhere." and it turned out to be John.

He was home for two weeks before he had to go back to Alaska, and as it turned out he wound up in Anchorage for another week because of weather before he could get back to the radar site.

The other couple were an Army couple and her husband was stationed in Panama.

Joyce Knapp Holland (58)
Boatdolly@aol.com

I was a featured guest on ***A&E's City Confidential*** because at the time I had an exclusive with the Dr. Sybers and his wife Judy to write a book detailing the events that surrounded his first wife's death, and his conviction (later overturned-sort of) for her murder. The name of the episode was ***Autopsy of a Marriage.*** It still airs as a re-run from time to time, and in fact, was on again just last month. The other reason I was invited to participate is because the producer had read another true crime I had written and called me about doing an episode on the case. When he heard I had the exclusive with the Sybers, he asked me to do that one first.

When Bill Sybers was released from prison, he and his wife, Judy, (his mistress at the time of his first wife's death) came and lived with us for a while. Almost instantly, we were fast friends and it became apparent to me that I would never get to finish the book. Judy was far too fragile when it came to discussing the events leading up to Bill's incarceration. They have now settled in the Carolinas and we visit with them occasionally. Judy and I talk, either on line or on the phone, once or twice a month.

I recently became a literary agent with D4EO Literary Agency. You can find out more about it at www.d4eo.com I also maintain a once a month blog on a site called www.WriteOnTheWater.com On the 25th of this month, I will be the keynote speaker in Jacksonville, Florida for a group called Ancient Cities Romance Writers. They are a branch of the national organization: Romance Writers of America.

William "Mike" Perkins (59)
mike_perkins@comcast.net

(Received from Pat Owen 58) The History Channel had a piece on SNIPERS and Mike Perkins (59) was on the show narrating part of his story and he added the following.

Well, the program failed to show that cobra gunships were supporting us and when they ran out of ammo--landed under fire and took out as many as they could. The men had to hang on to the stubby winglets of the gunships (3 feet long) and had they tried to take me--I would have fallen off. I told them to take everyone else. When the 2d (and last) cobra was loaded, Ed jumped down and told the pilot he wouldn't let me die alone. It took off and Ed killed 2 that were creeping on us. Eventually—another, a Huey landed under fire and got us. Ed was 19 and his courage saved us all. He got no award for his courage.

There was no medevac--it was a hasty evacuation by cobra gunships.

Ed and I see each other frequently. Was with him in St Louis last weekend at the reunion of our Vietnam rifle company. Ed lives in Oregon by Columbia River.

Harlan Frymire (60)
hd@hdfnet.com

Hi Pat,

The incident you're inquiring about goes back to about 2002 when I was contacted by New Dominion Pictures, the producers of "The FBI Files", a show featured on The Discovery Channel. They feature noteworthy cases from FBI historical files. Way back in about 1981, when I was an FBI agent in Monterey, California, I had a Top Ten Fugitive case in the name of Terry Lee Connor. The producers wanted to do a show featuring my role in Connor's apprehension. Consequently, they sent a crew out to my house in Tyler, Texas. I played myself and I had some friends and family members playing other roles. It was tons of fun. We located some old cars to simulate conditions back in the day.

Connor was a big time bank robber who used kidnapping and general terror tactics to get his way with bank victims. He would typically follow the manager home at night and keep he and his family terrorized all night long until the bank opened in the morning. He robbed banks all over the country but had a girlfriend in my territory. Extensive low level surveillances over many months resulted in his apprehension without incident. It was a great case to work, with a great result. The television show still airs from time to time as I will occasionally hear from someone who has seen a recent airing.

That was my 15 minutes of fame. It came without pay and without any fanfare. New Dominion gave me a VCR copy of the show. We can no longer even find that gem. So much for fame.

This and That

Leola (Sickler) Heslin (55)
l-j-hwh2736@hotmail.com

I got a note back from Pat Owen about Pres. H S. Truman and it reminded me of what happened with my dad in the 50's when he was serving on the President's airplane.. I thought some of you might enjoy the story.

One morning My Dad left for the airport in VA. whereTruman's plan was keep. It was an early unplanned flight. Dad was the navigator so he was very busy until the orders were given and the flight was on it way out. He hadn't had breakfast so he went into the galley and started fixing himself some eggs, bacon and toast. The coffee was perking and the odor went thought the plane. President Truman couldn't stand it. He had also left without breakfast. He came in the galley and said, "Hey! Sarge, how about fixing me some of that chow." Dad was taken aback but he kept his composure and said, "You can have these Mr. President." But Harry would have

none of that. He said, "OH NO! Sarge those are yours. I can wait. You have worked hard this morning. Eat your breakfast and then make mine." Then the President sat down at the table and had a cup of coffee with my Dad. I don't thing this would happen in the day and age..

Edie (Williams) Wingate (56)
WingW@aol.com

In the September issue, Connie Drennon (60) wondered about what civilian businesses were represented by Bushy types.

My father was with the Coca Cola Export Corporation. His office was in London, but because there were 4 children, my parents did not want to live in town. They were fortunate to find a house in Northwood, Middlesex which was several stops beyond Harrow on the London Underground. At that time, civilian children could attend the DOD schools, but had to pay tuition. Best of all, bus service was provided. If not for that service we probably would have attended the American School in London.

As a result, the following Williams attended Bushy: Edie (56), Julie (59), and Syd (65). Alas, Jim (69) started in the DOD schools, but at some point there were too many military dependants so civilian children could no longer attend. As a result he was enrolled in English schools from about 3rd or 4th grade on until he graduated.

I noticed Sherry Konjura's (57) article where she mentioned Nancy Rumph (58). If Nancy's brother was Bob, they rode our bus. I'm not sure where the Rumphs lived. Must admit--it was a long bus ride!! But what fun!

Had never thought about when the school opened. Is there a 2 or 3 paragraph history of the school available?

Charlie Besancon (59)
charlieandsue7@hotmail.com

While waiting to see if Hurricane Earl is going to give us any trouble here in the Southport-Oak Island area of North Carolina I opened my my e-mail and found the September Bushy Park Newsletter. The Newsletter is always a welcome e-mail and I look forward to reading it cover-to-cover. Thank you for all you do!

I very rarely have a contribution to make but this time I have a question to ask.

Back in July we attended the wedding of Sue's nephew in Keystone. Colorado. After the wedding I struck up a conversation with an uncle of the Bride and it turned out that he graduated from the American high school in England in 1965. We were both suffering from too much wedding cake and champagne toasts so my memory of our conversation is a bit muddled. He said he didn't graduate from the Lakenheath High School. Was there another American High School? Can anyone shed light on this?

By the way, the wedding was quite an affair. The bride and groom are in their late thirties and it is the first marriage for each. The bride is the daughter of a 60's era hippie couple so the ceremony was laid back. When it came time for the rings, their dog Lucy came forward with the rings attached to her collar, a perfect touch to a wonderful event! Attending a wedding at 8000 ft in the Colorado mountains on a perfect July evening is hard to beat.

Anyway, if anyone can shed light on the various American high schools in England I would appreciate the information.

PS- I think we dodged a bullet with the hurricane. It looks like it will pass us with little rain and light winds in our area. We were ready; cars full of gas, extra gas for the generator, charcoal for the grill and two bottles of tequila. Our limes supply is kind of short but we would have gotten by!

Toni Cooney (62)
toniclem@suddenlink.net

The Year After London/1960-61

Where did I leave off in my last article? In mud at Camp Mohawk?

We left London and Bushy Park in the summer of 1960. We somehow always drew sea travel. Alaska

was Seattle to Anchorage, back to San Francisco. Morocco was New York to Casablanca, driving move to London, then back from Southampton to New York. We viewed all those trips as 'a vacation cruise' and the Navy did everything they could to encourage that, with games, theme nights, activities for kids and separate ones for adults. The menus were above average and our cabin steward was always attentive and affable. Our car rode with us and we disembarked in New York, drove down the coast to visit with Mother's family scattered all over South Carolina and then to New Mexico to see Dad's.

We ended up in Montgomery, Alabama, where my father was assigned to the Air War College. I was turned loose to do junior year at Sidney Lanier High School. We lived in a quiet suburb not far from the school and close to a Methodist Church that mother decided would be a 'good thing' for us to attend. Her little incursions into religion never lasted that long, but there was always some minor disaster associated with it and they usually ended up being mine.

This time mother ran over and registered me to attend some youth camp that was leaving in a few days for the Alabama shore. I hadn't unpacked. I knew no one. I was sixteen. I hated her. I went and promptly got such a bad case of hives from a 'red tide' that rolled in, they had to call mother to pick me up. Great. I started school with my whole body and face red and swollen like a blowfish -just the impression I wanted to make in a new school. The doctor at the base clinic told mother to make me take three baths a day for a week–in oatmeal. Did it work? Who knows...hives disappear after you remove the source anyway. But my brother would bang on the bathroom door with a spoon in his hand.

I really loved my year at Lanier. In fact, it turned out to be my favorite high school year. Lanier offered classes like Latin, Greek, and English history, which was so fresh in my mind I soaked it up. The cafeteria had the best food of any restaurant in town. It was run by Southern cooks who knew that you fried chicken in bacon grease and used the drippings to make gravy. And huge yeast rolls were put together early so you could smell them rising on the third floor. No one ever missed an invitation to lunch. And that was back when lunch was 35 cents.

Montgomery had one serious drawback. It was a Klan town at the time and Klansmen rode down the main street at least once a month with electric crosses held up on the back of their convertibles. It was the beginning of the Freedom Riders who rode buses into the South to test the Supreme Court's Boynton vs Virginia decision outlawing segregation in restaurants and travel across state lines in buses.

I was downtown May 20, 1961, when I noticed a crowd gathered at the bus station and remembered they were supposed to be coming through. I parked and walked over to witness a slice of history. It wasn't pretty. The state trooper escort had abandoned the bus at the city limits and the crowd, including police, pulled people, black and white, off the bus and started beating them. I was so sickened I ran to the car and sped home. I felt awful about it...guilty because of my cowardice. My parents tried to convince me that I was mistaking cowardice for helplessness. But it didn't feel that way. And I've never forgotten it. With little encouragement, a crowd can get ugly really fast. Unfortunately, we're still seeing that.

I'm convinced the detective who lived next door to us was a Klan member. When the film "Fried Green Tomatoes" was made decades later, my sisters and I agreed that the man who married Mary-Louise Parker's character reminded us of our neighbor. He was a terrible racist and was always coming through our back door after work just wearing his bathing suit and a beer in his hand. He would stand in the kitchen and mistakenly believe he was entertaining us with stories about harassing Montgomery's black population. His kids were scared of him. We woke one weekend morning to find Klan recruitment posters on every telephone pole in town. I took one off the pole out in front of our house and his son told me that I would get in trouble for that. Mother started locking our door. I still have the poster.
I had a great group of friends in Montgomery, some of them Air Force brats, some townies. I dated a guy named Sonny who was the youngest of nine kids and he was the only boy. Spoiled would be an understatement. But Sonny was great fun. In those days, everyone took their spare tire out of the trunk,

lined it with ice and beer and went to the drive-in movies on weekends. I learned to drink with gin and orange in London pubs. Beer was a real adjustment.

One of my favorite memories of that year came in the middle of the spring term. Our chemistry teacher, Echo Puckett (don't you love that name) ran off with one of the coaches at Christmas, and the administration brought in some old guy named Mr. Green to finish out the year. Mr. Green had to be ninety if he was a day. But you could tell he had taught chemistry in the past and was familiar with the lab. He just kept forgetting which hand held what.

One day he was attempting to show us the volatile properties of sodium at his desk, which was in the middle of the classroom. (As you walked in, student desks were to the left, his desk in the middle and the lab tables parallel to each other on the right.) I was in the back row, hiding behind my algebra book, doing my homework as usual-- which turned out to be fortunate. Mr. Green dropped the large piece of sodium, not the little chip, into the beaker of water and it blew up. Glass and papers blew everywhere. It threw him up against the back wall, scattered glass all over the first two rows and took out three or four windows. I always wondered if Echo ever heard about that. It would have made her laugh. It was kind of a disaster then, but it makes a great story. Like a friend of mine who writes a travel column says, "Never waste energy worrying about travel disasters. They often make the best stories." God knows that's something we all learned as military brats**.**

Letters to the Editor

Dave McManigal (56)
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I found your note about wasp spray very interesting. We've had it in the house for decades, but never thought of the application you suggest. My younger son is a cop – actually, he supervises the crime scene unit in Charleston County, SC – so I've informed him of your tip. I'm sure he will pass it along, so be assured that you've been heard.

Susan (Miller) Dalberg (62)
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Couple PS on the last newsletter. As usual, a good job, Gary!! What would we do without you and Pat?

I liked the idea of the map of where all of us came from. Several in my group came from High Wycomb. And, I always thought most of us were military. Course, I was a townie, so that may have made a difference. The dormies were sort of a group unto themselves and we didn't get much time to socialize with them due to our (groan) 2+ hour rides home.

As to the wasp spray for self defense, my sister also uses that on her walks with her dogs. She lives in a country area and a lot of the dogs unfortunately aren't on leashes like they should be, so she has a water bottle clip on her belt, slides in the can of wasp spray and off she goes. At 71, she realizes she and her 12 year old Rottie can't outrun them, but she can stop them in their tracks. Thanks for bringing up that tip!

P.S. Let us know how many of you are on Facebook so we can connect that way, see your current photos, and photos of your grandkids?"

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