Bushy Tales

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

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

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

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

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

1955 – Volunteer Requested

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

1957 – Shirley (Huff) Dulski
sedulski@gmail.com

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

1959 – John "Mike" Hall
MGHall@Q.com

1960 – Ren Briggs
rpbjr@frontier.net

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

1962 – Dona (Hale) Ritchie
DonaRitchie@aol.com

A little reminder to all –if/when you change your email address, please let Pat Terpening (58) Owen nemoamasa@sbcglobal.net or me know BushyTales1@verizon.net , if you want to continue to receive the newsletter. Too many times we only find out when you send us an email saying you haven't received the newsletter in few months. Thanks, guys.

Memories of Bushy Park

Robert Harrold (60) maintains a Bushy Park website at BushyPark.org Among the things you can see at this website is a "Guestbook", in which many website visitors have left comments. There are many entries, dating back to April 2007.
Here is a direct link: Bushy Park Guest Book

Mr. Tondre Wernette

An early 2017 "Bushy Tales" edition explained how some of my teachers now have streets named after them. The streets are in a housing area on what was once High Wycombe. Wernette Street triggered a sharp recollection of my senior year English teacher, Jack Wernette.

My recollection is due to two seminal moments. The first occurred in May 1961 at the end of my very last English class with him. During that hour, he returned graded papers to all but one student. The papers were short stories. They represented two semesters of research and writing. A passing grade meant graduation; a failing grade meant not graduating.

My paper was not returned. I was not alarmed. Nor was I concerned when Mr. Wernette asked me to stay after class. I was secretly gratified. I was confident he wanted to compliment me. Perhaps he would ask about my well-paced story construction; mature word use and the technical knowledge I used to craft my tale of a hapless pilot who survived an inflight engine failure by parachuting from his crippled airplane into the Pacific Ocean.

I was positive too that he would like my ending. It featured a bright yellow, small rubber raft that gave the pilot refuge while it floated into the Bikini Atoll just before the last atomic bomb test there occurred. It was a good short story with a surprising ending. Jack, however, didn't like it one bit

Once we were alone, with me sitting in a chair next to his desk, I soon learned why. He told me that he was sorry; he had to fail me. He simply would not tolerate plagiarism. He said more, but the only part I remember was his serious, I'm-not-kidding look while accusing me of copying my short story verbatim from an adventure magazine.

I was shocked and crestfallen. My world went topsy-turvy; plans unraveling, ignominy and embarrassment arising. When I found my mental footing, I explained over a tortuous

thirty or forty minutes that the story was my work, and mine alone. My explanation persuaded him, if minimally. He let me graduate but without grading my paper.

Soon afterwards, my family returned to the US. I am now in San Antonio, Texas, our family seat. My 1961 summer consisted of dutifully accompanying my parents as they visit relatives; buying provisions for me to take to college and complaining about the heat and humidity of south Texas.

The second seminal moment took place in August 1961. It would etch Jack Wernette ever deeper in my life. This moment took place along the shaded banks of the Medina River in Castroville Texas -- a circa 1845 German-speaking Alsatian community west of San Antonio.

The occasion that August was the annual St Louis Festival, the patron saint of Castroville. My parents, eager to renew friendships and to reconnect with distant relatives, dragged me along. While they were having a ball, I was experiencing what it felt like to be a square peg in a round hole.

I had never been to Castroville; I knew no one there. But all that changed when, barely ten yards away, looking at me as an interloper, was Jack Wernette. Of all the people on the planet, the only person I knew at this lively festival of beer, wurst and Oompa music was Jack Wernette, my doubter.

I don't recall what we said, but I do recall Jack being thoroughly perplexed why I was attending his community festival. His bafflement dissipated during our ensuing amical conversation in which we discovered, to our mutual shock, that our respective families were among the original settlers of Castroville arriving when Texas was a republic.

The last time I saw Jack was at an All Class Bushy Park Reunion in Atlanta in the late 1990's. He looked great; remarked his Mother was still living in Castroville; told me that his daughter was attending school in Washington state, and that he was doing story research in London libraries.

We also spoke about our mutual love of England and discussed Castroville fondly, but neither said a peep about my Bikini Atoll story. Had we cleared the air then, or better yet when we bonded along the shaded banks of the Medina River, I can't help but wonder -- with his encouragement -- what different roads I might have traveled.

Jim Roberts, CHS '61
Alexandria VA

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When I went to Bushy Park it was one of the four high schools I attended in so many years! Our family arrived in London after two years in Charleston, SC, where I had acquired a lovely southern accent. I had never been south of the Mason Dixon Line before that! The first day at school in Charleston a boy called me a Damn Yankee and threaten to beat me up. I was horrified. A senior heard the threat and said," If you save me a seat on the school bus every day I will protect you". I said, "it is a deal." He did and I did. The rest of life in South Carolina was great!

The next year instead of Norfolk, Virginia, my dad was sent to London, England, as Assistant Naval Attaché. He worked in Grosvenor Square with a bombed out building at each corner of the square. That was 1953 and England did not look much like it had won

the war. My dad was to train British and European Naval officers in some of our Naval technology. He inherited his predecessor's house with central heat for our family and for entertaining guests who were his clients. He loved the job.

Several blocks away was a nice old British Girls School which my sister and I walked to each day. I would have been a sophomore in an American school but here I was in an upper form in which the intent was to get ready for exams to see who would qualify for university.

With a Southern accent my language skills were a problem for some. In English literature the teacher was Welsh. We each needed someone to translate the other's speech. Our text was "The Count of Monte Cristo". The teacher decided I could read daily so others could hear my southern accent. She did not discuss this with me and after three days of reading I closed the book and said, "No more." I discovered I had a little power. I was the only American in the school.

I found my classes interesting! I took biology where we tiptoed into ponds and skimmed the surface scum to examine under microscopes, studied the Napoleonic time period, Art, Old Testament-Bible, the maths (arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry, geometry, and math tables), British geography and history and Latin. The students studied tennis and French. I was included in gymnastics etc.

Yes, I wore a dumpy uniform and it was always a cold 65 degrees! We walked down the hill to lunch in formation. Once seated the students ate and then slid their plates all around the table until all the food was eaten before we could stand to be excused. (They finished what I did not like.)

The school was a great experience! In hindsight, I would not have missed it for the world. I made some lovely friends and even acquired an English accent.

My reprieve came when my father was told I would not graduate from high school on time if I did not go to Bushy Park. So, I became a day student and found other teenagers in the neighborhood who were going to Bushy Park as well. My life totally changed almost overnight,

Mr. Terrio kept me from drowning in Algebra II. One day a week of algebra does not a year of algebra make. Jamie was my buddy there. We suffered side by side and could smile about it. That was because of Mr. Terrio. He was very kind and willing to help. Mr Francis was my favorite teacher. He taught so well that I wanted to be a history teacher when I left London. I also took French and worked my way through it. I loved our English class. Mr Dickinson was great and all British!

I had friends in the classes, on the bus, in our neighborhood and at the teen center in London at the Barbara Hutton Estate. I really was an American and proud of it! At Bushy Park, I felt I got back to being me and enjoying myself. I was no longer a foreigner.

In 1955 my family boarded a ship and headed back to the good old USA. There were enough teenagers on board that we danced the polka every night until our feet fell off! It was sad to part in New York.

Our family trip took us to Annapolis, Maryland, to visit relatives while dad was debriefed at Beau/ships. Then it was on to Long Beach, California.

Originally, we moved into a lovely beach house while waiting for our house to be ready. That was great!

In September, the Long Beach high school it was a different kind of cultural shock. I was one of over four hundred new students and 965 Graduating seniors that year. I learned two

rules: 1. never use the restrooms and 2. always eat outside on the benches. Yes, though it was a good school there were fights.

In time, I found good friends among the four hundred new students that year. I also was recognized as the senior having the highest total score in English. I own that to my time in London! You too may realize how precious my time at Bushy Park was to me.

Nancy Reed (56) Robinson Gesswein

####

Letters to the Editor

----- Forwarded Message -----
From: Sally Lamar Robitaille
To: Ken Nicoles (60)
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2017 12:06 PM
Subject: TAC - Please Clarify

Ken,
I hope you can help me, because I'm confused. When I was at Bushy Park (1955-57), the Teen Agers Club (TAC) was in the basement of the Columbia Club. I noticed in the September issue of "Bushy Tales" that Sherry is at the Lancaster Gate Hotel, and the entrance is in the front! It doesn't look the same.

Attached is the picture taken in 1997, when visiting the Columbia Club. I'm standing at the entrance of the TAC - in the back of the hotel. (Lamar Parish 1960)

Maybe Bill Rumble can help. He was the same class as Sherry.

This is what Sherry (Cheryl Burritt) (57) Konjura had in the Sept. issue, and I don't think it's correct - unless they changed the location!

Lamar Parish (60) Robitaille

On Tue, Oct 3, Sally Lamar Parish (60) Robitaille wrote:

I sent this request a month ago and haven't received an answer.
Please forward my email to the proper person.
Lamar Parish (60) Robitaille

November 1, 2017:

Sally - Haven't seen this before so presume that you sent it to Ken and he hasn't responded. I'll send it on to Bill and maybe someone will remember. When I was there (56-59), the TAC was at the Columbia Club (Officer's Club in downtown London). The Douglas House was the NCO Club in downtown London, when I was there. We'll see what we can find out.

Thanks,
Pat Terpening (58) Owen

####

Aloha:

Robert Desloge

I travelled to the Holden Beach area of North Carolina to reunite with my BFF Bob Desloge. We graduated together, class of '61. Long story short: I found Bob via the Internet in 2002, long before social media. We have been in contact ever since. I spent several days at his home, and we did very little but talk, talk, talk, reminiscing about our special days together during a tumultuous time in World History. I combined this trip with a visit to my two brothers in Fairhope, AL, to play music with them for the first time in 12 years. I shipped my bass to them in advance so that, when I arrived, we could get down to our favorite mode of communication, playing music together. here are a few photos:

Jack Fisher and Bob Desloge (class of '61) at Bob & Deb Desloge's beautiful home in Winding River Plantation, NC, about 25 minutes from Holden Beach. First time we've been together since 1968!

Jack (l.) playing bass in Fairhope AL with brother Gene (c.) on guitar and brother Jerome (r.) on keyboards. Such a refined method of communicating and re-uniting! Not to mention fun, fun, fun!

We went on a day trip to Naval Air Station Pensacola FL to see The Blue Angels practicing for their next appearance. Also spent three hours in the Naval Air Museum. Brother Jerome, myself, brother Gene. A truly amazing day! Where I live — on Maui — we are truly remote from such activities, and I truly had a fantastic time with my brothers.

Jack S. Fisher (61)

####

Hi Pat!!!

I read in the Nov. issue of "Bushy Tales" that a Brent B. wanted some info regarding a youth camp in England. There was a camp, Camp Mohawk, that was located, I believe, SW of London. I believe that it was in by the Air Force.

I was a camp counselor there the summer of '60. The arts and crafts director was a British teacher by the name of Bill Treharne. He was a teacher at an all-boys school in Twickenham, Eng. Bill contacted me several years later and said that there had been a young British lad there whom he had had to discipline for not taking his duties seriously.....his name?? Mick Jagger!!!! (He must have been the skinny kid with the stringy hair!!)

Hope this helps!! Cheers to all.
Winona (Noni) Hoagland (61) Kripal

####

Hi, Pat...

I read the email from Bushy Park last night, rather late, I must say. A fellow that I, of course, did not know, was wondering about the Boy Scout (or Girl Scout) camp that our American dependents went to. I was a counselor down there & last evening I could not remember the name of it, nor the whole basic location. It floated up to my elderly brain

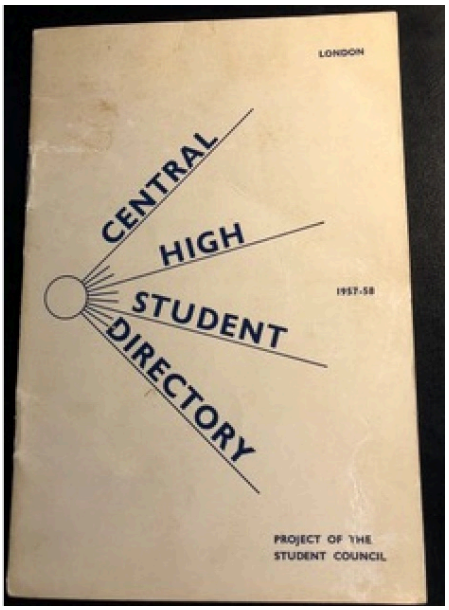
today: The name, I believe, of the camp was Camp Mohawk, and it was located at Font Hill Abbey, & near to Salisbury, & also Winchester. Our Girl Scouts came down from Bentwaters, & so did I, with another friend, Jan Nelson, she was also a counselor. (she is not someone who went to Bushy)

During that time, I remember sleeping in a tent in a musty sleeping bag, on a creosoted wooden floor. Not sure now IF we had beds. There were some GI's working there as cooks, and/or craft people. I remember playing ping pong with some of them, at a large barn. There was a nurse there who, of course, aided some of us with minor ailments. Just to remind folks, though, I only attended Bushy Park from about March 15th, 1958, to graduation day. One of my best friends there was Judy Szailai, who lived next door. Sad to say, Judy died in about 1995. Some of those same Girl Scouts who came from our Bentwaters base, formed a troop, & again I helped the leaders with the troop. I was actually in GS for about 16 or 17 years, & later had a Brownie Girl Scout troop in Brookville, Indiana, where I used to live. I guess that's it for now. Joan Heck Morris (I am Jim Heck's older sister.)

Joan Heck (58) Morris (No picture available)

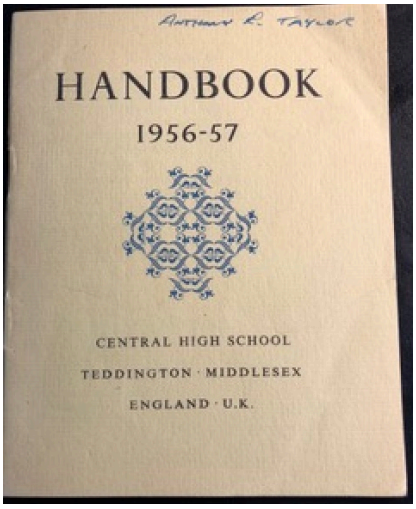
####

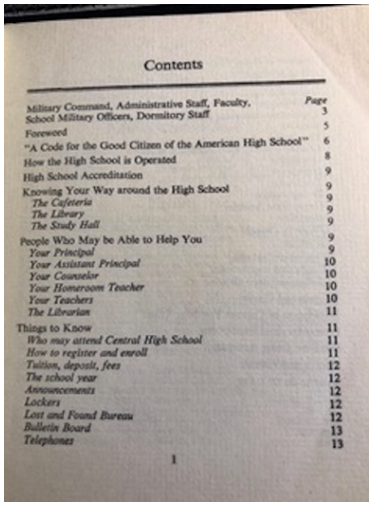
I have copies of both the 1957 and the 1958 (my graduating class) "Vapor Trails" yearbooks that a I am willing to donate to any interested alumni of Central High School (Bushy Park). Both yearbooks were my personal copies, so they do have signatures and personal notes as written by friends and classmates, but I am no willing to pass them along to anyone who may have lost or misplaced their own copies.



I also have two other documents of interest that are available; the first is a copy of the Central High School Directory (1957-58) that includes the names of all students within each grade who were at Bushy Park during the '57-'58 school year. The booklet has some personal annotations, but is fairly complete, especially with the names of those seniors who were present for graduating with the Class of '58 (about 54 graduating seniors) as well as the names of some seniors who had left prior to graduation (about 21 seniors not present at graduation). If all of us who had been at Bushy Park sometime during our graduating year, the class would have graduated about 75 students in '58.

The second document that I am willing to share is the Central High School Handbook 1956-57. This interesting booklet includes all of the course requirements a student needed in order to get their diploma; a list of all of the subjects available, as well as the credits; and in which grades they were taught. If there is a general interest for alumni to have this booklet, it might be best for me to email photos of each page to those interested.

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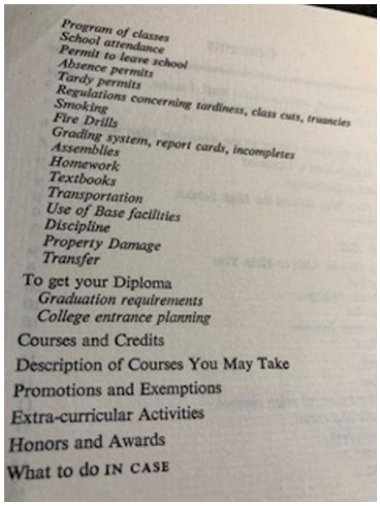
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Tony Taylor (58)
Redmond, WA

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