

Bushy Tales

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



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CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

**1953 – Mariann (Walton)
McCornack (d. 2022)**

1954 – Betsy (Neff) Cote (d. 2024)

1955 – Nancie Anderson (d. 2016)



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



**1957 – William Douglas
rwmdouglas@gmail.com**



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

1959 – John “Mike” Hall (d. 2024)



**1960 – Ren Briggs
rpbjr42@gmail.com**



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



**1962 – Dona (Hale) Ritchie
Dona.Ritchie@att.net**

A little reminder to all –if/when you change your email address, please let Pat Terpening (58) Owen nemoamasa@sbcglobal.net or me know, 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](#)



Letters to the Editor



From: Murray Black (56) Wilson

Bill,

Thank you very much for the references to Bushy Park part in WW2. I looked at each reference that you provided, and one of them specifically says that the buildings were demolished in the 1960's. Another says they were removed by the early 1960's. Consequently, the buildings for the school were there in the time of the SHAEF HQ. So, I wonder what specific building of SHAEF were we occupying? We may never know, but it is interesting to me!

Murray

[Editor's Note: Anyone know the answer to Murray's question?]

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From: Diane Lund (58) McMahan

What a nice issue of Bushy Tales! I want to read another installment by Ellis Young. Did he ever get back to England to marry his lady love??

I'm behind in reading the past few months so excuse my question that I probably don't need to ask... San Antonio in October? What's that about? I live about 60 miles from there and would attend if the date doesn't conflict with a weekend I'm already booked.

I appreciate all the links to resources and history and will check them out. And maybe I'll think of something interesting to share for a future issue.

Thank you both for keeping our connection alive.

Diane (1958)

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From: Jack Fisher (61)

Aloha from Maui:

For many years I have read the adventures of my fellow LCHS classmates. This article is my first written contribution, a small chapter in a lifelong adventure about which I am currently writing. The story begins very shortly following graduation from LCHS in 1961:

After three years in England, the son of a USAF officer, I graduated from London Central High School in June 1961, at the age of 17. June was also my mother's 36th birthday. It was also the month my father retired as a Major following 20+ years as a special investigator in the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

To add context to the adventure: 1961 was a time of turmoil in Europe and in the United States. To escape the communist government of East Germany, 20% of the population defected to West Germany, including engineers, technicians, physicians, teachers, lawyers and skilled workers. In August the German Democratic Republic closed the border with West Germany and installed barbed wire and fences. The first concrete blocks were put in place to create the Berlin Wall. When finished in 1975, a concrete wall 87 miles long separated East and West Germany.

In the United States, John F. Kennedy was sworn in as the 35th President in January. By April, the USSR launched Vostok 1, the first spacecraft, carrying the first man into space: Yuri Gagarin. Four years earlier the Soviets launched Sputnik 2, carrying the first living animal, a dog named Laika. the USSR and America were testing nuclear weapons extensively and building bomb shelters.

Europe was experiencing tension on a level not felt since World War II.

It was a gloriously beautiful summer in England in 1961, perfect for my graduation at age 17 from London Central High School and for my mother's 36th birthday.

As an Air Force Brat, I spent three years at LCHS. June of '61 graduation coincided with my father retiring as a Major following 20+ years as a Special Agent in the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

He had already accepted a similar position as a civilian employee with the U.S. Navy Investigative Service in Naples, Italy. We were moving from London to southern Italy. Napoli, Vesuvius, the Herculeum, Amalfi Way, Pozzuoli, Capri.

Packing up a household once again for a move — this time spanning Europe from Northwest to Southeast. My parents and three brothers moved into temporary housing provided by the military while awaiting travel arrangements.

I spent the two weeks at the home of one of my best friends, Pete Junker. Pete's Hungarian parents immigrated to London in the post-WWII era; they had a very comfortable home furnished in a



baroque Central European style. Pete had just received his very first car from his parents: a 1956 Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire, with a huge Merlin engine and an early version of an automatic gear box.

We cruised all over London, day and night for two weeks, counting down the days to departure. My parents soon called with instructions to meet them in Dover for our family trip to Naples, beginning with a mid-summer ferry crossing of the English Channel from the White Cliffs of Dover to Ostend, Belgium.

Peter Junker and Bob Desloge, ready to drive me from London to Dover in Pete's 1956 Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire.

Of course, Pete, along with other best friend Bob Desloge, insisted on driving me for one last ride to Dover in the Armstrong Siddeley — in opulence. On the way out of London, I had one last request: We must stop at our favorite shop for the very best fish and chips, which I was certain I'd never eat again. As we enjoyed the food, it finally occurred to me that I might not see Pete or Bob again for a long time, if ever. Such is the life of a military dependent.

The family spent several days in Dover, waiting for clear weather for a safe channel crossing. With my brothers we explored the White Cliffs of Dover, towering monoliths of chalk growing directly out of the sea. The cliffs were honeycombed with WWII British gun emplacements for artillery and anti-aircraft guns, long-since vacant yet populated by rusting armor and trolley tracks for moving ammunition and supplies.

We re-packed the car — a miniature four-door 1956 Hillman Minx — to accommodate a family of six: three older brothers in the tiny back seat, youngest brother squeezed between my parents up front, with a half-dozen suitcases on the roof-rack. This was to be a drive through a Europe at



the beginning of the Cold War, passing through Belgium, France, Germany and Austria and into Northern Italy via the Brenner Pass through the Austrian and Italian Alps. On the Autobahn we drove in the "slow" lane while Porsches, Mercedes, Alfas and the like cruised past at high speed. Given the massive backups at each heavily guarded border crossing the trip lasted several days.

1956 Hillman Minx — a family of six, plus baggage, driving from London to Naples at the very start of the cold war in Europe

The Brenner Pass, an important trade route, dating back to Roman times, is open all year-round. It is the principal road between the Eastern Alps in Germany and the Po River valley of Italy.

We followed the Po River down the mountains to the western Mediterranean coast, and then drove all the way south to Naples, with a day-long stop in Rome. We stopped at rustic sea-side restaurants and lodgings on the trip south. My first taste of true Italian cooking (North to South) was an experience unto itself.

Naval Support Activity Naples tended the needs of ships in the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. It was also part of NATO operations, and it was quite common to see military uniforms from many different member nations. We were accommodated at very nice guest quarters while my parents looked for properties to rent.

Eventually we moved into an area north of Naples called Posillipo. A new high-rise apartment in an upscale neighborhood. Elevated in the hills above Naples, we had a panoramic view of the city, the huge harbor including commercial shipping and a multi-national assortment of military and commercial vessels.

A short walk down a winding road led to a stand-alone building built to house the entry to a private elevator, which descended to the avenue below directly across from the rocky ocean shore. For the trip down, one had to insert a 10 lira (a little smaller than a dime) into what we commonly called a "dieci box." A short walk to the south along the avenue lead to Mergellina pier, where the fishing fleet tied up. There were many other private sea-craft as well, and this is where I encountered two sailors whose only job was tending to the 45-foot "Admiral's Barge" which had its own slip. It was their job to make sure the motor yacht was ship-shape and ready for service at all times. Various senior Navy officials used it to be ferried to ships in the harbor for face-to-face meetings. These two "crew members" piloted the boat and did all the maintenance chores necessary as well as keeping the entire boat squeaky clean and polished.

I spent most of my days alone, as my parents were occupied with the new home and three brothers in school, beginning another new job in another new place, military protocol "meet and greet" events. My younger brothers were already in school, making new friends and learning new ways from the other kids and acclimating to the Neapolitan version of Italian. I was out of school, wondering what I should do, living in a new place where the predominant language was not English. I ended up spending a lot of time onboard the Admiral's Barge, talking with the two sailors as they worked.

My father provided little support or advice, as had been the case for many years. The only time we spoke about my future was when he offhandedly commented, "You don't want to go the University of Maryland in Munich...do you?" I really didn't think about it, as I had no idea it was a possibility. I was still traumatized by being yanked out of one movie where I had a leading role, knew the script and was comfortable on location with the other actors, and then being dropped onto a completely different movie set with actors I didn't know and a script I had never seen.

I drifted through the days, but the sunsets were spectacular from the family cliffside apartment. All of the city spread out under Vesuvius, with magnificent views of Amalfi, the bustling Bay of Naples, the islands of Capri and Ischia. And the clear blue of the Mediterranean. On Italian TV, I watched John Wayne movies overdubbed in German with Italian subtitles. John Wayne rides up to the Indian chief and his warriors, raises his hand and says "Wie Gets!" and the Italian subtitle reads "Come?"

My biggest adventure (I had very little money) was a solo overnight trip on the Aliscafi (hydrofoil) to the island of Capri. In advance, I bought a loaf of sturdy Italian bread, a salami and two bottles of fizzy lemonade. I walked all over the island during the day, spent the night in a pensione on

Capri, returning to Naples the following afternoon. Total cost: about \$8.00 (the official exchange rate on the dollar was 610 lira).

Having spent most of the summer hanging out on the Admiral's Barge, and with no parental guidance, I decided I wanted to join the Navy. Now, having made the decision, my parents got actively involved — trying to talk me out of it, but with no further alternatives offered.

Nevertheless, my mother eventually accompanied me to the Personnel Office at Naval Support Activity Naples. This office had never overseen induction of a civilian into the Navy and had to get permission and instruction from the Naval Bureau of Personnel in Washington, DC. They started the paperwork to enlist me. I found out that because I had graduated from LCHS I was guaranteed a Navy Service School of my choice after completion of Basic Training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, just north of Chicago.

I had to await the formalities until my 18th birthday three months later in October 1961.

Next came a marathon series of flights — an amazing experience for someone only a few days into age 18, flying alone in the care of the military.

I spent a night in the Navy barracks and was awakened at 4:00 AM for a trip to Capodichino airfield. My mother had given me a new winter jacket, as the US was heavily into snow and freezing weather. We took off in a two-engine R4D (Navy name for a DC-3), with the first stop being in Sigonella, Sicily. In military planes, passenger seats faced the rear of the plane in case of an accident. While on the ground, unloading mail and cargo and passengers, we were greeted by local vendors with amazing rustic Italian sandwiches and lemonade.

Next stop on the "milk run" was across the Mediterranean to Port Lyautey on the Atlantic coast of what was French Morocco. Following a two-hour layover, we took off for the Azores, where I was transferred to a gigantic four-engine C-135 Starlifter for the long flight across the Atlantic. I was the single passenger — the rest were crew members. This was at a time when jets were just making an appearance. The shortest distance for the crossing for prop-driven aircraft — and the next stop — was Keflavik, Iceland, St. Johns, Newfoundland, and then on to Coos Bay, Labrador. The final leg followed the East Coast down to Norfolk Naval Air Station, VA.

After a weekend in what were brand new facilities (so different from London (where everything was old, worn and antique). I was routed on yet another milk-run — this time from Norfolk to Columbia SC, Columbus GA, Indianapolis, IN, and finally landing at Chicago's O'Hare airport late at night. The last bus had long departed for the 30 mile trip north to Great Lakes Naval Training Center, and I was alone at the curb in a strange place at 11:00 at night in the freezing cold with no support available. However, having grown up in the military, I watched a Navy Commander in dress blue uniform exit the building and head for a Navy grey sedan with a sailor behind the wheel. As he opened the rear door, I approached and told him of my predicament and where I had just come from. Luckily, his destination was the same as mine, and I rode with him in the back seat, checking in at Great Lakes just after midnight.

Thus began my Navy service.

[Editor's Note: Jack, I am looking forward to your next installment!]

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“Fate of SS United States is uncertain after owners say landlord blocked sale of ship

by: Alyssa Cristelli Posted: Sep 13, 2024 / 09:07 AM EDT Updated: Sep 13, 2024 / 09:12 AM EDT



Chuck Homler d/b/a FocusOnWildlife, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

The future of the historic SS United States is unclear after its court-ordered eviction deadline to leave its pier came and went. The ocean liner is still sitting at its port, Pier 82, in South Philadelphia. A hearing is scheduled for Friday after the SS United States Conservancy filed a motion to move the September 12 deadline date to December 5.

For years the ship has faced an unknown future

as the landlord and ship owners have been entwined in a legal battle. Most recently, a federal judge sided with the landlord, Penn Warehousing, and ordered that the ship must leave its berth on the Delaware River by September 12 after missed rent payments.

The ship has loomed for decades on south Philadelphia’s Delaware waterfront. This comes after the conservancy entered into a temporary agreement with Okaloosa County to bring the ship to Florida and sink it, creating the largest artificial reef in the United States. Now the plans are on hold after the ship owners say Penn Warehousing stopped them from complying with the court order. Court documents claim that Penn Warehousing demanded \$3 million from the owners and the county and blocked the sale of the ship. According to the documents, the owners say Penn Warehousing tried to negotiate their own sale of the ship even though they don’t own it. “We’ve been dealing with the impacts of Penn Warehousing’s underhanded tactics for some time, but the revelation that they attempted to negotiate the sale of the ship without our knowledge or authorization is upsetting. It is more proof that Penn Warehousing has engaged in a deliberate pattern of behavior intended to force the Conservancy’s default, and seize the SS United States, so that they can sell the historic ship for their own financial gain,” the Conservancy wrote in a statement on Thursday.

Earlier in September, the Okaloosa County Board of Commissioners postponed a vote on whether or not to sink the former luxury cruise liner there. Officials said the county “hit a wrinkle with the pier operators” and asked that the vote be pushed back two weeks. Moving the ship is no easy task due to its size.

The conservancy has launched a fundraising campaign to try and save the vessel by raising \$500,000 to offset the costs of the ship’s potential relocation and other critical expenses. An attorney for Penn Warehousing, Craig Mills, said both parties spoke at the end of August and discussed short-term leasing options until the county could move the ship, according to the Inquirer. Mills said his client, the landlord, has been left in the dark about the conservancy’s plans to meet the deadline. “Penn Warehousing remains perplexed and frustrated at the Conservancy’s

apparent refusal to comply with the Court's directive, which is depriving it of the opportunity to open Pier 82 to a commercial customer that will bring good-paying union jobs and considerable tax revenues to the City and the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority," said Mills in a statement, according to the Inquirer. Mills said Penn Warehousing will seek relief from the court if the vessel continues to remain at Pier 82.

Christened in 1952, the SS United States was once considered a beacon of American engineering, doubling as a military vessel that could carry thousands of troops. On its maiden voyage in 1952, it shattered the transatlantic speed record in both directions, which it still holds, when it reached an average speed of 36 knots, or just over 41 mph (66 kph), The Associated Press reported from aboard the ship. On that voyage, the 1,000-foot ocean liner crossed the Atlantic in three days, 10 hours, and 40 minutes, besting the RMS Queen Mary's time by 10 hours. To this day, the SS United States holds the transatlantic speed record for an ocean liner. It became a reserve ship in 1969 and later bounced to various private owners who hoped to redevelop it but eventually found their plans to be too expensive or poorly timed.

If the conservancy cannot strike another deal and find a home for the ship it could open the door once again for the ship to be scrapped."

More on this very sad journey for SS United States:

<https://www.getthecoast.com/okaloosa-county-to-acquire-ss-united-states-for-worlds-largest-artificial-reef-off-destin-fort-walton-beach/>

<http://www.northescambia.com/2024/08/escambia-county-misses-chance-to-sink-ss-united-states-for-a-reef>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mUElhntVUc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nm-SeQcOOng>

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From: Ron Crowe (64)

Remember The Alamo ... Better Yet ... Remember The Bobcats!!

Join former classmates and friends in **San Antonio, Texas, October 3-6** for the 60th anniversary graduation reunion at the infamous **Menger Hotel** where Teddy Roosevelt formed the "Rough Riders." If you haven't booked already, you will get a special hotel rate of \$169 per night, just say you are part of the London Central High School 60th Anniversary Reunion. From check-in to check-out, you'll enjoy the best of what the seventh most populous city in the United, States has to offer!

To make reservations, go to this link:

<https://res.windsurfercrs.com/ibe/details.aspx?propertyid=16589&nights=7&checkin=10/2/2024&group=100224LONDONC&lang=en-us>

Thursday 10/3 check into the hotel then pick up your personalized name badges in the hotel lobby or in the hospitality suite, **Room #4126**, after 5pm then meet the gang in the hotel bar. Food is available but as Wouter DeNie, class of '64, used to say, "To imbibe is our heritage."

Friday 10/4 grab breakfast at the hotel restaurant and then head across the street to the **Alamo** for a tour - yes, it's that close! And steps away is the "**River Walk**" and "**GoRio River Cruises**" on the San Antonio River. Or you can get to know the city by boarding the "**Old Town Trolley**" right there at Alamo Plaza. Hop on or hop off at any one of 12 stops along a 15-mile loop. Plus get a taste of "**Pinkerton's**" award winning Texas Barbecue a mile from the hotel - YUM!! Then it's back to the Menger and the hospitality suite, **Room**

#4126, to reminisce about days at Central.

Saturday 10/5 meet at the hotel valet entrance for a **private bus tour to three of the San Antonio missions - Espada, San Jose, Concepcion**. Only room for 20 people so sign up right away via email to **Kathie Faulkner Jones** katfjones@att.net and reserve your seat. The cost is \$38 per person so mail your check to Kathie F. Jones at 322 Miramar Dr, Martinez, Georgia 30907. And you can't come to San Antonio without chowing down on world renown Mexican food at "**Mi Tierra Cafe**" serving thousands for over 80 years. And close out the night and the reunion with classmates in the hospitality suite, **Room #4126**,

Ron Crowe
Relaxed & Retired
818.421.3046

--FINIS--