

# 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 – Marcia (Craver) Thomas  
[txstarmt@aol.com](mailto:txstarmt@aol.com)

1954 – Betsy (Neff) Cote (d. 2024)

1955 – Nancie Anderson (d. 2016)



1956 – Edie (Williams) Wingate  
[WingW@aol.com](mailto:WingW@aol.com)



1957 – William Douglas  
[rwmdouglas@gmail.com](mailto:rwmdouglas@gmail.com)



1958 – Pat (Terpening) Owen  
[nemoamasa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nemoamasa@sbcglobal.net)

1959 – John “Mike” Hall (d. 2024)



1960 – Ren Briggs  
[rpbjr42@gmail.com](mailto:rpbjr42@gmail.com)



1961 – Betsy (Schley) Slepetz  
[bslepetz@comcast.net](mailto:bslepetz@comcast.net)



1962 – Dona (Hale) Ritchie  
[Dona.Ritchie@att.net](mailto:Dona.Ritchie@att.net)

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**A little reminder to all –if/when you change your email address, please let Pat Terpening (58) Owen [nemoamasa@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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.**

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**Classmates Who  
Have Transferred to  
the Eternal Duty  
Station**



**Keith E. Lamonica (62)  
Died September 26, 2024**

Keith E. Lamonica, a veteran broadcaster and former adjunct professor at New Mexico State University, died Thursday. He was 81.

Keith was born in a suburb of London, England. He was a naturalized U.S. citizen who grew up in England; Fairfield, California; and the Tri-Cities area of central Washington State. He attended Bushy Park High School in London and schools in Fairfield, California. When not enthusiastically involved in science classes, Keith was a member of his high school track team. He was the first person in Fairfield to hear the tones from the Soviet Sputnik satellite on his ham radio and made the front page of his local paper as a teenager for the accomplishment.



A career broadcaster, Lamonica worked at radio and television stations in a number of cities and states, including Tacoma, Washington; Los Angeles; Memphis; Las Vegas, Nevada; Huntsville, Alabama; and Jacksonville, Florida. He began his broadcasting career as a DJ but soon transitioned into news. Lamonica was the recipient of numerous news awards, including a Peabody Award. In his later years, Lamonica hosted two national talk radio shows. When he had free time, Lamonica was an avid amateur radio enthusiast. His call sign was W7DXX. He received the ARRL's Technical Achievement award for establishing the world's first remote base for ham radio, which allowed individuals without access to antennas to work ham radio remotely through a computer.

A resident of New Mexico since 2005, Lamonica served as an adjunct professor at both NMSU and EPCC, teaching broadcasting and public speaking classes.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; three daughters: Angela Walker of Iuka, Miss.; Dana Lamonica of Hollywood, Ala., and Emily Lamonica of Las Cruces, NM; as well as by numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

At his request, no funeral services will be held. A celebration of his life occurred in Huntsville, Alabama, in May 2025, when family gathered.

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**Jerry Lee Ellis (58)**



Mr. Jerry Lee Ellis, 81, of Coffeeville, MS, passed away Monday, June 15, 2020, at the Mississippi State Veterans' Home in Oxford, MS. He was born January 22, 1939, in Columbia County, FL, to J.L. and Avis Dukes Ellis. Jerry had spent most of his working life as a manager in various industries and ultimately retired from Nicholson/Cooper Steel. He was a member of First Baptist Church in Greenville and honorably served our country in the US Air Force, where he was a jet mechanic. An avid motorcycle rider, he was an active member of the CMA (Christian Motorcycle Association) and the Gold Wing Riders Club in Greenville.

A time of remembrance was held on Saturday, June 20, 2020, at McKibben and Guinn Funeral Service. Additional services and burial were in the Elzey Chapel Cemetery in Lake Butler, FL, on June 24, 2020.

Survivors include his wife, Frances Vest Ellis; one daughter, Jacqueline (Jackie) Ellis of Greenville; James Ellis of Columbus(Cecilia); two step-sons, Robert Vest(Missy) of Greenville and Douglas Vest of Oak Grove, LA; one brother, Jerrell Ellis(Clarice) of Lake Butler, FL; five grandchildren, Matthew, Stephanie, Carmen, Ashley and Tiffany; and a host of great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, a daughter, Janice Valencia, and two sisters, Nelda Stewart and Freda King.

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## **Memories of Bushy Park**

**Robert Harrold (60) maintains a Bushy Park website at [BushyPark.org](http://BushyPark.org). Among the things you can see on 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](#)**



**From: Tom Walters (58)**

Hi Bill,

I attended Bushy Park from 1955 to 1957, living in the dorm. Those were three memorable years, spending each week at school and returning home to Fairford every Friday afternoon. I spent the weekends setting pins in the bowling alley, bagging groceries at the commissary, and riding my bike through the Cotswolds. What joyful memories!

Bushy Park gave me a nice foundation for the future. The teachers were great, dorm life proved to be wonderful, and I surprised myself and eventually matured. After finishing studies at several universities, I had a career in education as a teacher, administrator, and head of school. Eventually, my wife Joanne and I couldn't resist the bug to go overseas, so I ended up working at international schools in Denmark, Japan, Zambia, and Belgium.

These days, I am retired and living with Joanne in Carmel, California. I've left my career in the rearview mirror and now write western novels. "Ya gotta ride tall in the saddle and git your horse galloping down the trail. Life's too short to stop!"

I remember many of my teachers, classmates, and friends at Bushy Park. Bill, many thanks to you for keeping the "Bushy Tales" alive.

Wishing all of my classmates well!

Tom Walters  
Class of 1958

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Hi, Tom,

Thank you for your very kind words. We appreciate them. Your classmate, Pat Terpening Owen, has been a big part of "Bushy Tales" since it began in 2000. She is the reason I am the editor. She asked me to fill in for Gary when he first became ill, and then to take over as editor after Gary passed in 2016. It has been a fascinating experience. I have never been able to know what exactly led Pat to ask me the first time!

Your time at Bushy Park sounds excellent. Your education and post-college teaching career sound like an even more amazing experience for you. I would love to hear more about your career. I'm sure our readers would also be interested.

I appreciate your taking the time to write this piece. We need a steady stream of such life stories to keep the newsletter alive.

Kind regards,  
Bill

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**From: Sherry Konjura (formerly known as Cheryl Burritt, class of 1957).**

Hi Bill, I am so glad to hear that you are doing so much better...may you soon be 100%!!

I finally sat down and wrote out my own memories for Bushy Tales...I hope it's not too long...:

I became a student at Bushy Park in the Spring of 1955. Fortunately, I was already acquainted with Bob and Nancy Rumph as we had traveled to England on the same ship. My Dad was initially based way North of London, so my parents sent me to a local school rather than have me live in a dorm and only come home on the weekends. I was so happy when Dad was moved to West Drayton, and I could go to Bushy.

Bob and I liked one another, and he took me to the Spring Formal. We dated throughout the summer but broke up in the fall. Nancy and I continued to be "besties" until she had to go back to the States. We maintained that friendship over the many years until just recently, when she was moved North to be near her son. According to her daughter-in-law, she was "fading" and, sadly, I haven't heard from her since. I understand that Bob passed away a few months ago.

I did go to the teen club down in London, mostly with my good friend, Judy Icke, when I would spend the weekend at her house. I did get to know quite a few of the students who went to the teen club on a regular basis, however...I was pretty much a "nobody" at school. Being a day student, I didn't really get to do a lot of the activities that the dorm students were taking part in. That is...until

my Senior year when my English Teacher, Miss Norma Parrish, more or less “tricked” me into auditioning for the Senior Class Play, which she would be directing. My friend Carolyn Towner was in the same English Class and wanted to audition for the play. She and Miss Parrish asked me to do a scene from THE CURIOUS SAVAGE with Carolyn. The next thing I knew, I was cast in the play as “Fairy May”. Fortunately, my parents were quite agreeable to my taking public transit home after rehearsals, so I was able to accept the role. From that point on, I became closely acquainted not only with the other cast members but also with all of the students on the various committees. I not only became acquainted with many of them, but I have also had lasting friendships with many of them. Bill Cooper was one of them.

Because I had become friends with so many of my classmates during the run of the play, The Senior Class trip to Paris was even more enjoyable than it might have been for me. Sadly, after graduation, we all went our separate ways, many of us not thinking of providing a way to stay in touch.

Thank Heavens for the Internet! Pete Peters managed to find me, and we became re-acquainted and still contact one another from time to time. His friendship is so special to me. From that point on, I was able to find so many of my old friends. Bill Cooper was one of the most constant in keeping in touch. It was a sad day when he passed away...I still miss him sending me one of his poems.

Being in the Senior Play reawakened my desire to act. As a result, most of my adult life has been spent onstage. I did teach Speech and Theatre at a University while my sons were growing up, only acting in local productions. However, once the youngest “flew the coop”, I moved up to Professional Theatre (mostly Dinner Theatre) and worked almost all the time. I was fortunate enough to play many top-notch roles. To name a few: “Alice” in ALICE IN WONDERLAND, “Elvira” in BLITHE SPIRIT, “Edith” in NEVER TOO LATE, “Helen Keller” in THE MIRACLE WORKER, and years later “Kate Keller” ...Helen’s Mother, “Ann Stanley” in FORTY CARATS, “Electra” in GYPSY, “Mrs. Higgins” in MY FAIR LADY, “Kate” in BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS, “Jill Tanner” in BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE. “Dora Bailey” in SINGIN’ IN THE RAIN, “Laura” in TEA AND SYMPATHY, “Agnes” in THE FOUR POSTER, “Edna” in THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE, “Abby Brewster” in ARSENIC AND OLD LACE...and later “Martha Brewster” in ARSENIC AND OLD LACE, M’Lynn in STEEL MAGNOLIAS, “Mary” in VANITIES, “Blanche DuBois” in A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, “Elaine Wheeler” in NIGHT WATCH, “Nurse Ratched” in ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO’S NEST, & “Sister Sophia” in THE SOUND OF MUSIC. Several of these mentioned were performed again at other times in my career. When I was taking note of the number of productions I was fortunate enough to be a part of, the total came to 170 different productions!

The point of all this is that Bushy Park High School was one of the best things that ever happened to me. I talk to people about my High School friends, and so many of them are amazed and tell me that they barely remember anyone they went to High School with. I do remember those I went to High School with, and am delighted when I see one of them pop up with some memory here on our website.

Yes, I went on to College, graduated Cum Laude, and still am in contact with many of my fellow friends from there...but my Bushy friends and experiences top the list!

Respectfully, Sherry Konjura (formerly known as Cheryl Burritt, class of 1957).

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Cheryl,

Thank you for your delightful story about your time at Bushy Park and beyond. It is not too long!



So many of us who had the good fortune to attend Bushy Park, recall the same closeness with their friends and acquaintances of the time. I feel that it was a unique experience, a small sized school providing the opportunity to get to know each other more easily.

Through my efforts as editor of our newsletter, I have met a guy from Class '64, Ron Crowe. He has tried for many years to establish a similar newsletter program for attendees and graduates of the later years of the different and much larger schools that were London Central High School, named Bushy, then Bushey, Park. Ron has been deeply disappointed by the total lack of interest in such a project by these former students. Sad, but different times and very different experiences.

During my short 18-month time at Bushy Park, also as a commuting student, I made some friends and one loved girlfriend. Our abrupt departure, my young, immature 15-year age, and the lack of easy communication, I left without any contact with anyone, except by mail with my girlfriend. My immature nature led me to give up on her and pursue local girls where I lived. This immaturity led me to my first marriage and subsequently to her leaving me after 20 years. Three years later, I began seeing my new love, who has been my wife now for over 35 years. The most loving and shared life experience of my life.

I apologize. My response has become nearly as long as your lovely life story.

Kind regards,  
Bill

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Bill...don't apologize for your email...I am so sorry that you ended up with unpleasant memories of your time at Bushy...then going into a marriage that didn't last ( I can relate to that in spades!) SO glad to hear that you now have the relationship you should always have had...I can say the same about my sweet husband...Our spouses really make up for all the unhappy times...giving us love and joy. It occurred to me that I should have included my class photo from 1957, so I am attaching it here.

Cheryl Burritt -SR class Photo 1957

Continue to get totally well...you are in my prayers...  
Blessings,  
Sherry

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Sherry,

Actually, my memories of my time at Bushy Park are very heartwarming. Being constantly moving every three or so years, I never retained long-term friendships. This doesn't mean I didn't make friends at each location.

Going to Bushy Park, we started at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, CA. We had been there for 3 years. We left in February to drive across the country to Philadelphia. We stayed with our grandmother for three months, and we each were enrolled in a different school: year older brother in a senior high school, my younger brother in an elementary school, and I in a junior high school, where 9th grade was "senior" year. It was the second of three schools I attended in my 9th grade. The third was Bushy Park. We arrived in mid-May 1954.

I made friends with Chuck Stuart (58), with whom I sat on the bus we rode every day from London to BP and back in the late afternoon. I made a friend in a few of the same classes who was also from California, Byron "Reb" Williams. In study hall, I became friendly with a guy, Alan Phillips, who was in my brother's class '55. He may also have been on the same bus with me.

In the fall of 1954, a new girl arrived in a few of my classes. I thought that she was beautiful. I had not been on any real dates up to that point in my life. Her name is shown in the 1955 yearbook as Marilyn Cram. She went by the name of Janie. I asked her out and we then dated nearly every

Saturday until October 1955. First, my dad received unexpected orders to return to the US after only 18 months in England. Janie and I were crushed. Then a while later, Janie's father received orders to Paris. Now we were even more confused and saddened. As it turned out, Janie and her family left England shortly before we did. Janie wrote to me regularly describing her activities in Paris with her new friends. I wrote back with not much to say in reply. We lived on the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. I had no relations with classmates or many friends on the base. I got a part-time job on the base after school for 3 hours every day. Finally, my 16-year-old self began missing the closer friendship I had with Janie. I began dating a girl who lived at the opposite end of our row of quarters. I also stopped writing to Janie. I just couldn't tell her about this. We will never know what might have happened. All the plans we had discussed would not occur.

I very much enjoyed my 18 months stay at Bushy Park, more than any other school I attended.

Blessings,  
Bill

**--FINIS--**