



Bushy Tales

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



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

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Classmates Who Have Transferred To The Eternal Duty Station

Our love and prayers go out to the family and friends of our classmates who have gone on before us. We will miss them, yet we can find comfort in knowing that one-day we all will join them for the greatest of all reunions.

Jacqueline Hill (61) - per her brother.

Gary Schuth (62) - per Jim Echols - Auto accident in AZ.

Mini Reunions

From Mariann Walton McCornack (53)
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Class of '53 mini-reunion:

Mariann Walton McCornack and her husband Gene met Susie (Talbot) Cameron, Lois (Fontaine) Pinkney at the Carlton Hotel in London, England on Aug. 21, 2003. Together we walked to Buckingham Palace and went on a tour of the Official residences of the Queen. All the rooms were elegant, but one favorite thing was a close up view of the coronation dress that Susie and Mariann had seen during the parade in '53.



Mariann & Gene left by train to visit friends in Scotland and returned on Sunday evening to find out Lois had had her passport and credit cards stolen when she and Susie were in Harrod's eating. Mariann left her camera on the train. Panic! Sob! But, Monday we all took the train to Teddington to look for our dorm. It had been replaced with a new apartment building, but across the street was the infamous Adelaide Tavern sign that some unnamed girls once gave a moustache.



We had lunch in an outdoor garden at the Adelaide, then walked our legs off through Bushy Park to Hampton Court Palace. We could not find a sign of our school, but did see lots of deer and two plaques. One was to Gen. Eisenhower who used Bushy Park until 1944.

That evening Susie & Lois encouraged Gene & Mariann to ride the "Eye" as they had done when we were gone.

Tuesday Lois was able to get a temporary passport and she and Susie rode the Orient Express to Southampton un-boarding at the QE II. Gene & Mariann joined them by coach for a wonderful six days on the ship. Once we all enjoyed the thalassotherapy pool where jets massage different parts of your body with warm seawater. What a way to relax! Once in New York we went our separate ways home,

but hope to join in the reunion in '04 in the USA.



From Paul Middlebrook (56)
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"Over the Labor Day weekend Lee Gaca and I held a mini-reunion of two in central California. Lee generously took my wife Mim and me out to dinner and we thoroughly enjoyed reminiscing.

Lee and I first met at Bentwaters RAF station as 8th graders in 1951, then spent two years at Bushy Park ('52-'54), and then both departed for the States that summer. Besides our time together at Bushy Park, we spent summer in the same town of Aldeburgh, East Anglia. Fish 'n Chips in newspapers, walking the streets, looking not for trouble but for something to do, playing tennis, even throwing rocks aimlessly into the North Sea...anything to pass time until school started again. Must say we each immediately recognized one another even though it had been 49 years since we'd seen each other. Don't think it's wise to wait that long again! Lee looks great, trim, full head of hair, though the black is starting to turn gray...but lot better than bald! We did truly enjoy seeing each other again after so many years. Hope to see him again before long".

Memories of Bushy

Edwina Edwards Whitehead (61)
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I have so enjoyed reading the recollections of former Bushy students since I was introduced to the Bushy Park website earlier this year. Ever since then, I have been flooded with memories of dear old Bushy and my days in England. That time (1955-58) was special to me, and I have often longed to reconnect with the people and places that meant so much to me during those formative years. I hope that this contribution to Bushy Tales will be as meaningful to everyone as others have been to me.

My mother and I rode the train from Meridian, Mississippi, to New York in April 1955, and sailed on the Buckner to Southampton. My father was stationed at RAF West Drayton, a base situated 2 miles north of Heathrow Airport. A "townie", I was enrolled in the 6th grade at Bushy Park for the last month of school. For the next 3 years, I lived between the two worlds of the English experience and American teenage angst, broadening my horizons while worrying about my appearance and my acceptance in my more than typical American school.

My seventh grade at Bushy was the single most enjoyable year of all my school years. We were studying English history, and the many field trips taken that year brought the subject to life. Mr. Shermer was our teacher, a retired army sergeant who, while brandishing and a pointing stick, regularly whopped Dirk Metzger and Phillip Musgrave on the head to get their attention. Because of Mr. Shermer and the field trips, I bonded to that class like no other. I loved Mr. Shermer, and I wish I knew how all those friends from the 7th grade are doing now. (Actually, I recently learned

that my best friend from that year, Susan Diehl, died about 6 years ago. I tried to find her many times over the years, but failed each time. While I have some closure, it is sad.)

The next year at Bushy, our class was split, and we changed rooms for each subject. My circle of friends expanded, and I was made head cheerleader. Jill Grable, Ronnelle Garland, Sheila Rowden and Olive Ann Musgrave became my closest friends.

Miss Kelly was our sponsor, and I remember her encouragement of my interest in ballet.

My last year at Bushy (1957-58), I made it for varsity cheerleader. I was the only freshman and the only town student. Boy, oh, boy, was I insecure! But Judy Garrison was so supportive, as was Karin Kurtz and Lois Thomas. Lois was my closest friend that year, and I will never forget her kindness to me. She was a Kim Novak look-alike, and I enjoyed standing in her shadow.

The trip to Frankfurt for the basketball tournament was the highlight of that year. But I am reminded by notes in my annual that I didn't get my "dream guy," Mike Hall. We kind of paired-up on the trip, but he ignored me when we got back to school. Oh, well, such is love.

My biggest embarrassment that year was while cheerleading at a basketball game at South Ruislip. We were doing the "line-up" cheer for the first time that season and I was assigned the name Lindsey Erving. I was told, "you do "Lindsey." Each cheerleader tolled off, "Dilley, Dilley he's our man, if he can't do it, Ruffin can," and so on down the line. It was my turn, and I belted out "Lindsey can." Your see, I was so dumb, or nervous, that I didn't know whether Lindsey or Erving was the last name. I just did what I was told!

I have made contact with only two or three Bushy friends over the last 45 years. But thanks to your dogged determination to find us all, I have been blessed with knowing the whereabouts of many others. Sadly, some are departed. But from the notes I read on the web site, in the newsletter and from emails I have received, the Bushy Park experience is very dear to all our hearts. As American children living in a foreign land, we share a unique bond.

This and That

From Rev. Aaron Peters, O.S.B. (56)
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I just finished reading the recently published book, My, My, Myra, by our own Joyce (Knapp) Holland (58). It's available on amazon.com. Joyce is really a good writer. She keeps your interest quite well. This is her third mystery and she has a few published short stories, too. This book is based on a true crime of murder, sex, and intrigue in Florida about a decade ago. The story of Myra's bold murder of her husband Robert Vaivada. Their relationship was indeed Bizarre and got national coverage then. Joyce has done a fantastic job of covering all the bases.

From Bob Burdick (60)

I have just finished reading your October Newsletter that I have enjoyed very much. I wish I could attend the upcoming reunion in San Diego but have a scheduling conflict that ironically deals with England. In March 2002 my wife and I traveled to France and England and I looked up an English friend in Ampthill, Beds where we lived from 1958 to 1960. I had not seen nor heard from Don for 42 years and what a surprise it was to find him and meet his family. Don and his wife are coming to the states (first time for them) and will be visiting with us the end of October. We are looking

forward to their visit but will not be able to make the reunion in San Diego. Are there plans for another reunion and if so where?

From Geneva Dennard Miller (60)

Temporary e-mail address:

royvick@juno.com

I am roaming the nation again and spending most of my time in Colorado, so you can mail me at this address until I decide to go home permanently. I will be attending the reunion in San Diego, along with my sister, brother and his wife. Should be a fun time. I will then return to Colorado Springs for the rest of the winter. (I think I have things confused. I should be going to Florida for the winter). This is my daughter's address so feel free to send the Bushy Tales and any info you may have. Hope to see you in San Diego.

Harlan Frymire (60)

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My Dad worked for the International Harvester Company in 1957 when he was transferred from Stockton, California to the London office. I thought my world had ended. Little did I know what lay in store for us as a family. We sailed over on the Queen Elizabeth and, before we were through with our stay over there, experienced the SS United States (twice) and the Bremen, a Norwegian vessel I think. It's hard to explain such a life style to people today.

We started our life in London at a fine downtown hotel and I remember having tea and some sorry little sandwiches with my mother in the late afternoons. My brother and I quickly discovered the service elevator. It was an open cage affair with a manual control that allowed us to stop and start the darned thing until, I'm sure the hotel workers grew weary of our behavior. We finally rented a flat in Putney and I rode the buses into

Bushy from there. After a few months we bought in New Malden, Surrey, and my Bushy life continued.

Fog days were too good to be true. I was never academically oriented so lived for things like fog days and field trips. I tried baseball, basketball and cross country but could never get sufficiently motivated to hang with the team until the end so never made picture day in any of those activities. My strongest interest was in the fact that I could get served in pubs wherever I went. The London TAC, and The Swan were my regular weekend destination on the tube/train and I was always on the last train into New Malden on those Sunday mornings. Good training for a debauchery filled four years of college soon thereafter.

I played some piano and, for a short time, experimented with lending my mediocre talents to a group of musicians that played contemporary music of the 50's. My music "talent" also found me playing French horn in the school band for my entire time at Bushy.

Oh, of course I remember the senior class trip to Rome in 1960 but few details of that no doubt wonderful experience. I do remember that we hoisted wine up to our room from street vendors by lowering a basket contraption from the room window. I likewise remember the fine senior prom in 1960. Well, that is to say I remember the open bar we all enjoyed. Randy Crane's note in the October newsletter reminded me of the many clubs we haunted in London, Soho, etc. Not the names of course - just the fact that we did a lot of clubbing and drinking. I also spent lots of idle time in Picadilly Circus playing pinball machines at six pence a game. I clearly recall the newspaper vendor who greeted departing tube passengers at the Picadilly Circus exit - he had no nose.

I love the reflections of those of you who contribute here and enjoy reading recollections from each of you. Also, lest you jump to any unwarranted conclusions, I've never had a good memory. Just ask my teachers. We made the reunion in Bossier City but fear the next one won't be possible. Maybe I'll see you at the reunion after Southern California.

From Judy Ketchu Vincent (62)

jmvincent@netzon.net

I live in Hemet, California in between Palm Springs and Riverside, so San Diego is a possibility for me, absolutely. I have corresponded with Bill Ballinger a couple of times and was surprised to see he was in Santee. Becky Olmsted was from Norway and Betsy Schley also, I think. There is a possible reunion of students from Norway scheduled for the spring/summer of 2005 in Oslo, so I am saving all my money to go to that. I went to Bushy Park in my freshman year, but lived in Norway for 4 years. I only know a handful of people from Bushy Park, but stayed in the girls dorm most of the school year.

Comments From You Our Readers

Nancy Hansen Keys (58)

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I am the Nancy Hansen who attended Busy Park from 1954-1956 and would have been in the class of 1958 but by father was transferred to California. I am amazed that you (Pat Owen) tracked me down. Your letter was a delightful surprise. It took me a few moments to comprehend what it was. Living in England was wonderful experience and attending Bushy Park was part of it. I have a yearbook I need to find to refresh my memory.

From Robert Lyle (54)

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Still very much enjoying the Bushy Tales - thanks for your great work.

The other day I ran into someone who knew of a family that just moved to London and their kids are attending the American High School. They did not know where the school is located, nor do I. Do you know where it is or know of someone who could tell me?

This raises a point. I'm thinking it would be interesting if you could feature an article in Bushy Tales about the history of the school and what has happened since we were there. Just a suggestion, and I have no idea who would have this kind of information.

By the way, the Baldwins and Mayos will be visiting us in Connecticut later this month - I'll plan to give you an "after action" report.

From Wanda Castor DeVary (60)

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As some of you may have noticed, the Guest Book at the website has been deleted. Unfortunately, they are starting to charge a fee, which at the present time is small, but it will go higher and higher and I just can't handle it. I'm trying to get a discussion board up there, but you will have to bear with me as I'm not a pro at this web stuff. If anyone else wants a shot at it I will be happy to let them take over for me. I work so much overtime that I really don't have the time to spend on the site as I would like.

If anyone would like to help Wanda out, please e-mail her at the address above.

From Betsy Neff Cote (54)

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I thought if you needed a filler sometime that you might like to put this.

Every ten years, as summertime nears,
An announcement arrives in the mail,
"A reunion is planned; it'll be really grand;
Make plans to attend without fail."

I'll never forget the first time we met;
We tried so hard to impress.
We drove fancy cars, smoked big cigars,
And wore our most elegant dress.

It was quite an affair; the whole class was
there.
It was held at a fancy hotel.
We wined and we dined and we acted refined,
And everyone thought it was swell.

The men all conversed about who had been
first To achieve great fortune and fame.
Meanwhile, their spouses described their fine
houses And how beautiful their children
became.

The homecoming queen, who once had been
lean, Now weighed in at one-ninety-six.
The jocks who were there had all lost their
hair, And the cheerleaders could no more do
kicks.

No one had heard about the class nerd
Who'd guided a spacecraft to the moon;
Or poor little Jane, who'd always been plain;
She married a shipping tycoon.

The boy we'd decreed "most apt to succeed"
Was serving ten years in the pen,
While the one voted "least" now was a priest;
Shows you can be wrong now and then.

They awarded a prize to one of the guys
Who seemed to have aged the least.
Another was given to the grad who had driven
The farthest to attend the feast.

They took a class picture, a curious mixture
Of beehives, crew cuts and wide ties.
Tall, short or skinny, the style was the mini;

You never saw so many thighs.

At our next get-together, no one cared whether
They impressed their classmates or not.
The mood was informal, a whole lot more
normal; By this time we'd all gone to pot.

It was held out-of-doors, at the lake shores;
We ate hamburgers, coleslaw and beans.
Then most of us lay around in the shade,
In our comfortable T-shirts and jeans.

By the fortieth year, it was abundantly clear,
We were definitely over the hill.
Those who weren't dead had to crawl out of
bed, And be home in time for their pill.

And now I can't wait; they've just set the date;
Our fiftieth is coming, I'm told.
It should be a ball, they've rented a hall
At the Shady Rest Home for the old.

Repairs have been made on my hearing aid;
My pacemaker's been turned up on high.
My wheelchair is oiled, my teeth have been
boiled; And I've bought a new wig and glass
eye.

I'm feeling quite hearty, I'm ready to party;
I'll dance 'til the dawn's early light.
It'll be lots of fun; I just hope there's one
Other person who gets there that night
Betsy Neff Cote

**(Editors Note: I regret I have lost the
information on who sent this to me but I
think it is worth passing on.)**

Subject: Who Packs Your Parachute?

Charles Plumb was a U.S. Navy jet pilot in
Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane
was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile.
Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy
hands. He was captured and spent 6 years in a
communist Vietnamese prison. He survived

the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience!

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!"

"How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb.

"I packed your parachute," the man replied.

Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!"

Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today." Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he had looked like in a Navy uniform: a white hat, a bib in the back, and bell-bottom trousers. I wonder how many times I might have seen him and not even said 'Good morning, how are you? Or anything because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor.'"

Plumb thought of the many hours the sailor had spent at a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Now, Plumb asks his audience, "Who's packing your parachute?" Everyone has someone who provides what they need to make it through the day. He also points out that he needed many kinds of parachutes when his plane was shot down over enemy territory--he needed his physical parachute, his mental parachute, his emotional parachute, and his spiritual parachute. He called on all these supports before reaching safety.

Sometimes in the daily challenges that life gives us, we miss what is really important. We may fail to say hello, please, or thank you, congratulate someone on something wonderful that has happened to them, give a compliment, or just do something nice for no reason.

As you go through this week, this month, this year, recognize people who pack your parachutes.

I am sending you this as my way of thanking you for your part in packing my parachute! And I hope you will send it on to those who have helped pack yours! Sometimes, we wonder why friends keep forwarding jokes to us without writing a word, maybe this could explain it: When you are very busy, but still want to keep in touch, guess what you do--- you forward jokes. And, to let you know that you are still remembered, you are still loved, you are still cared for, guess what you get? A forwarded joke.

So my friend, next time when you get a joke, don't think that you've been sent just another forwarded joke, but that you've been thought of today and your friend on the other end of your computer wanted to send you a smile, just helping you pack your parachute.

[Now for a teaser about the Gathering in San Diego last month. Read more about it in the December issue. \(That is if people send me articles about it.\)](#)

From Judy Risler Covington (60)

BUSHY PARK GATHERING: San Diego, October 2003.

It's a fact: get a high school reunion notice, and your whole life will flash in front of your eyes. Any discomfiture you feel is in direct proportion to how many years it's been since you walked the hallowed halls. High school reunions conjure up a whole gamut of

emotions, from eager anticipation to the certain, albeit irrational, fear that you are going to look like you look now and everyone else is going to look like they looked then. But you go anyway, Especially if you were a military brat. Because deep down there is a need to be with your own kind one more time.

Unlike our civilian counterparts, we haven't known each other since the crib. We didn't grow up together, or sit side by side in a classroom for years at a stretch. The fact was, we seldom considered anything, friendships included, in terms of next year, next month, or even next week. We were a gregarious group, as military brats tend to be, but our nomadic lifestyle allowed only the briefest of relationships, however intense they may have been. Once we parted company, the chances were slim and none we'd ever see each other again. Emotionally, long-term friendships were a luxury we couldn't afford. So we simply enjoyed the time we had together, for however long it was to be. And while it was ingrained in us to smile and say hello to a new kid, because we'd all been there, goodbyes weren't that easy. So sometimes we didn't say them at all.

But that didn't stop us from thinking about each other now and then. Whatever happened to the girl down the hall who played that one scratchy record over and over again? Or the guy who borrowed your favorite shirt and never returned it? What about the teacher you just knew was going to flunk you for the sheer joy of it, but then went the extra mile to help you pass an important exam? And the roommate to whom you bared your soul, who knew more about you than any other living person, but liked you anyway? Finding people who'd traveled into and out of our life so randomly, so quickly, decades before seemed like an exercise in futility. Names change. People change. Circumstances alter. Situations hinder. Where do you start, when

you have nothing to start with? How could we all have been so close, and yet known so little about each other? Nobody was really from anywhere. If you weren't from the same base, you weren't entirely sure if your friends had brothers or sisters, or what rank their dad was, or where they lived before they crossed the pond to our little corner of the world. Where did they all go when they left? What have they been doing all these years?

Eventually, the computer became our lifeline to yesterday. Even when our searches resulted in dead ends and brick walls, we persevered. We kept at it even through long, dry spells when there was no information at all to go on, nothing concrete to encourage our efforts, no positive proof that anyone, anywhere gave a damn one way or the other. Then, out of the blue, a name, or better yet, an email, would surface. Somebody would remember somebody else, who might still have an address, or a phone number of someone who roomed with a friend. Slowly we began to reconnect.

To renew friendships thought to be lost to us forever, uplifts the spirit and satisfies the soul. Certainly, we've all changed in varying degrees. Forty plus years will do that to you. But inside, we're the same bunch of transients who temporarily inhabited the same space, in a small school on the outskirts of London. It's good, and right, and necessary that we be together again. The memories we share define us, and make us unique. And let's face it: Bushy Park, the good, the bad and the ugly, as well as the funny, the sad, and the crazy, was an experience none of us will ever forget. .

Thank you for taking the time to touch yesterday again. I hope you leave instilled with a new resolve to help with and continue our efforts to re-link the chain of friendship that was forged so many years ago.