



CLASS OF 1963 – ALUMNI NOTES JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2021

Basil Cox writes: “We have been seeing a lot of Tingle and **Richard Barnes**, virtually and at their wonderfully bucolic farm just outside of Pittsburgh, the pandemic notwithstanding. Since none of us are hanging out in bars, we figure we can safely gather with nodding acknowledgment to appropriate Covid social behavior. Often the conversation turns to Italy, with memories of our last trip there. We’re still ordering wine shipments from tiny vineyards in the hills, savoring memories of both classic and surprising southern Italian cooking. Best example of the latter would be an amazing meal in Naples cooked as the Romans would have, including wine which had been aged in amphoras. Of course the scenery on the Amalfi Coast was stunning. Tiny roads can make for slow travel, so best in Spring or Fall. The trip was put together for 15 Pittsburghers by Marco Scapagnini of Niche Italy, who has never failed to create a uniquely wonderful itinerary.”

Lowell Dodge reports the dedication of a small grove of old-growth redwoods to his grandchildren under a Save the Redwoods League program raising funds to help preserve what remains of California’s unprotected stands of redwoods and sequoia. A containment line near Portola Redwood State Park halted the Big Basin wildfire a mile short of the grove, but the ongoing fires pose a long-term threat to the ecosystems that sustain these giants. At home in Colorado, Lowell and his wife Diane recently won a Boulder County award for implementing a wildlife habitat restoration project on their acreage near Longmont. The project includes extensive plantings of native trees and understory shrubs to support local populations of fox, bear, raccoon, river otter, bobcat, rabbit, and coyote as well as the more common and mixed blessings of squirrel, deer, and elk. Lowell says it’s been an adjustment to shift from mowing

everything in sight so it looks like the groomed eastern lawns he grew up with to returning it to the wild as home to insects, mice, voles, and other critters that a variety of species, notably owls and hawks, feed on. When he is not on his tractor or tinkering with his low-tech irrigation system, Lowell retreats to woodworking, recently taking on the build-out of the interior of a newly completed boathouse, a project that consumed the entirety of a large dead walnut tree he had milled, or makes bread with wild yeast and flour from ancient grains. He and Diane continue to make grants from their family fund to support early learning and related initiatives addressing inequities in opportunity facing children in low-income communities.

Jonathan Nusbaum relates: “For the past year I have served on the board of advisors for the local Salvation Army unit. As a retired surgeon, I recognized the need for respite care, and the local unit has one of the few in centers for such care in the northeastern United States. I have found that the bulk of the clients receive care so that family members can stay employed. The current Covid crisis has curtailed the number of clients who can be served, as only home visits are allowed. Once the facility reopens, the center can serve 30 clients a day. Our current location is on the south side of Lancaster, OH, and we are seeking a new facility on the west side closer to the majority of our client base, which will double capacity, decrease transportation needs, and provide increased services. The monthly cost is currently \$1,480 per person per month as opposed to \$4,850 for assisted living, not to mention the benefits of increased socialization and continuing to live in familiar surroundings with the support of family members. At present, transfer to an assisted living facility can be postponed for an average of two years – a yearly saving of almost \$20,000. Hopefully the increased services can further increase this interval.”

Jerry Sugihara reports: “After 40 years, I was planning on retiring from my nephrology practice, but was contacted by the local Blue Cross about helping to develop a chronic kidney disease education program for them. Hawaii has a very high rate of kidney disease, especially among Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. There are also a very limited number of nephrologists in the State so we are providing much needed infrastructure. We now have a nurse practitioner, nurse, social worker, dietician, and psychologist on our team to help guide patients along a very complicated pathway. I feel we are really making a difference in their outcomes. Long term I would like to expand the program across the State by utilizing telemedicine.”

Gurney Williams writes: “Like at least several of us, I’m writing my own obituary during these Covid months, with nostalgia and graveyard humor. Some of us will remember the soft-spoken, gentlemanly philosopher, Brand Blanshard. We were lucky to attend his lectures, because they were among his last. He retired during our Sophomore year. His final large class ended with just the right quotation, from Socrates: ‘The life unexamined is not worth living.’ Now, after more than half a century as a journalist, I have examined and written about many lives. My turn. One robust source for inspiration is the poet Walt Whitman, who was a close friend of my great grandfather, Francis Churchill Williams. ‘Do I contradict myself?’ Whitman asked. ‘Very well, then I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes.’ I am lean, and my brain lately has probably lost a multitude of neurons and glial cells, but my thoughts and writing contain millions of contradictions. In contrast with Whitman’s grandiosity, humorist James Thurber taught me how to laugh in death’s dark face with just a few simple words. Early in his life, as a newspaper reporter, he wrote perhaps the best-ever first sentence for an obituary. ‘Dead.’ Next paragraph, ‘That’s what the man was when they found him with a knife in his back in front of Riley’s saloon at the corner of 52nd and 12th streets. . . .’ Here’s my tentative beginning: ‘Alive.’ Next paragraph, “That’s what Gurney Williams wasn’t on [date tk] after

living [tk] years of abundant love, laughter, mistakes, and adventures.”” When the time comes, my family will send the final iteration to *The Rye Record*, my hometown paper. It will be in the third person, but under my byline. I hope a beautiful and smart woman will edit me.”

Paul Neill died on September 7, 2020. Paul was born in East Orange, NJ in 1941, and raised in Short Hills. Following his graduation from Yale University, Paul proudly served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the years preceding and including the Vietnam War. He earned his MBA from NYU and Rutgers University, and had a lengthy career in corporate management before running his own consulting firm until his retirement. Beyond his degrees, his service, and his professional accomplishments, Paul’s crowning achievement is his half-century marriage to his soulmate, Lillian, who survives him. Their love and devotion serves as both foundation and model to his beloved children Kimberly and Brian. It was in his retirement that Paul’s varied talents and interests flourished – as historian to Christopher, jokester to Sean, shark hunter to William, homework helper to Aiden, storyteller to Jaxson, and the primary subject of Nora’s most-admired artwork. Paul was a voracious reader, often juggling multiple novels while not missing a page of the New York Times. He loved classical music, rugby, sailing, and the beaches of Cape Cod. He often returned to Yale with his children and grandchildren for football games each Fall, and enjoyed attending crew races with his long-time friend and classmate **Bill Petty**. He was smart, yet humble. He was dignified, yet quiet. He was a confident speaker, yet even better listener. He was generous with his time and attention. He was patient and he was kind. He will be missed by many, and remembered fondly by many, many more.

Paul Field remembers Paul Neill as follows: “It was dreary winter of our junior year. In a moment that perhaps changed the course of Paul’s life, I was hurrying out of Silliman, past Paul. He asked where I was going in such a hurry. ‘*Free beer and John Wayne movies!* At the

Navy ROTC building!’ ‘Oh, boy! I’m in!’ He immediately joined me, Pete Roman, and others for a terrific string of boozy Wednesday nights with the Marine unit. And although I don’t think we had thought much about our military service, in 1964 we found ourselves USMC officers cruising the coast of Viet Nam.” **Peter Roman** writes: “My favorite memory of Paul Neill is from my wedding in 1966. It was a military wedding in dress white uniforms and Paul was circulating among the guests at the reception being his usual pleasant and amiable self. Then the thought struck him (as he told me later) that it might be fun to declare it an old Marine Corps tradition to drink wedding toasts from a helmet. His field gear was in his car, so he went and got his helmet and filled it up with a few bottles of champagne. I still have a 6x8 color picture of Sally, my wife as of an hour before, giving him a quizzical look as a smiling Paul handed her the helmet.”

Timothy James O’Connell passed away peacefully on September 10, 2020 at the West Haven VA Medical Center in Connecticut. Born in Rockville Centre, NY, on June 28, 1941, and raised in Glen Cove, Tim graduated in 1959 from Friends Academy of Locust Valley, where he excelled and loved sports. A natural athlete, he was invited to try out for the New York Yankees while still a teenager, a thrilling moment of his early life. Tim was recruited to play football for multiple Ivy League colleges. He proudly chose Yale, keenly aware that New Haven was where his father’s Irish forebears had settled. At Yale, he lived at Jonathan Edwards College and was a member of Skull and Bones. He polished his Latin translating skills and developed a love of history. Known for his calmness under pressure, Tim was quarterback of the 1959 undefeated freshman team, and played on the 1960 varsity team. That team also won every game – and to this day, is Yale’s only undefeated and untied varsity football team since 1923. Tim also played basketball and baseball for Yale. He graduated in 1963. A proud member of the Air National Guard, Tim was among the thousands of reservists mobilized in 1968 by President Johnson to

back up U.S. demands for the return of the USS Pueblo. During his service, Tim relocated to Myrtle Beach, SC with his then-new wife Nancy (Freitas) O’Connell, formerly of Brooklyn, New York. Upon his honorable release from active duty, Tim considered following in the footsteps of his father, a trial lawyer on Long Island. He attended Chase College of Law in Northern Kentucky, just across the border from Cincinnati, Ohio, while Nancy attended the University of Cincinnati for her master’s degree in education. Tim then worked at the O’Connell law firm in Mineola, NY. But Tim ultimately decided that law was not his calling and moved into insurance and financial services, working at Transamerica. By 2008, Tim relocated to New Haven and he lived a retired and active lifestyle, enjoying many Yale football games and reunions with his football teammates. Living just blocks from campus, Tim often visited local restaurants, including Mory’s. He was jolly and positive, and grateful to share happy memories with his son, Anthony, his daughter Vanessa and his grandchildren. Tim suffered several bouts of cancer, starting in his early thirties and until his death. He appreciated the doctors and other medical professionals who treated him over the years, especially at Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale-New Haven and at the VA hospital in West Haven. Survivors include three children, Patricia Gottesman, Vanessa O’Connell, and Anthony O’Connell, as well as six grandchildren. He is also missed dearly by his first wife, Nancy, who enjoyed spending time with him in his final years. He was truly an inspiration to his family.

Jud Calkins writes: “When a host of lads, mostly strangers to one another, assembled in late, hot August 1959 in the shadow of the Yale Bowl to prove themselves in Freshmen football, one among them had already been anointed: Timothy James O’Connell, of Glen Cove, Long Island, a lonely Catholic at Quaker-affiliated Friends Academy of Locust Valley, where he was a four-year starter in football, three at quarterback, plus Long Island’s prestigious *Mister*

Basketball and, in baseball, good enough to warrant a tryout with the Yankees at age 15 (arrived by public transport). At quarterback Tim helped lead the Bullpups to an undefeated, untied season against six Ivy opponents, playing against Harvard in the finale with a cast protecting bone chips in his left wrist and leading the final, game-winning drive. Tim moved on with his teammates to varsity football where the unbeaten string was extended to 15 games by the heroics of Yale's 1960 team, winner of the Lambert Trophy as best team in the East. Tim also became a multi-year starter in varsity baseball. He was a reserved but affable classmate whose adult life was hampered by illness and absence from his children and his Yale brotherhood, but through initiatives of his teammates and children Anthony and Vanessa he was reunited with the Class of 1963 at recent reunions. The season of '59 has become shrouded in lore and bound the Bullpups tightly together. Just before Tim's death Anthony arranged a moving gathering by Zoom in Tim's hospital room with many fellow Bullpups in attendance. **Hank Higdon** noted, perceptively, that apart from Tim's athletic prowess 'there was always a twinkle in his eye.' And there was more: in conversation, Tim would hold himself at a slight angle, his gaze slightly away, as if reserving a bit of himself only unto himself, perhaps prompting his high school yearbook to cite as his main occupation, 'Thinking.' Tim will remain a Bullpup in spirit, and through his son Anthony who now, by acclamation, has become an Honorary '59 Bullpup."

Michael Gates Gill writes: "Tim O'Connell was voted Irishman of the Year by the Knights of Columbus our Senior year. I went with him to watch him receive the award. He was treated like a young Jack Kennedy. Tim had that same kind of Irish charisma – a light and cheerful charm that drew everyone to him. That night Tim just had to approach the podium and the whole room was on their feet clapping and applauding. Tim said: 'I don't deserve this.' Then he paused, 'But I sure do enjoy getting it!' The whole room erupted with laughter and more applause. Tim was a natural. A natural athlete. Most of all, Tim was a natural in the

friendly and cheerful way he treated everyone from a famous professor to a local priest at Jocko Sullivan's bar. After Yale, a brain disease hurt Tim, and knocked him off balance. But he never lost his love for life. Tim's family were an adoring and important part of his life throughout – just as were his loyal Yale friends who always loved him and showed their love and loyalty.”

Wally Grant remembers: “I met Tim on the first day of Freshman football and had the pleasure of being a teammate of his for the four years of our Yale football careers. I also had the pleasure of rooming with Tim in Jonathan Edwards College our Senior year. Tim was a terrific athlete and a rascal with a wry sense of humor. He was fun to have as a roommate and often left me guessing as to what excitement was to come next. There was seldom a dull moment with Tim around. I'm proud to have been Tim's friend.”

Hank Hallas writes: “Tim was referred to as a ‘rascal’ during the memorable Zoom call. He was indeed. I found myself one Saturday night Freshman year with the two biggest rascals in our class . . . **Pete Truebner** and Tim! It was post football season and we were in the corner entryway on the third floor of Wright Hall overlooking the corner of High and Elm. The Campus Police used to hang out there under the street lamp, perfect targets. Tim got his nickname that night. I had watched Tim weave his football magic Freshman year. He was our leader but he crossed swords with Coach Ollie Sophomore year. Tim was relegated to JV games. I don't recall him ever losing. We were trailing Princeton and Tim called a deep fly pattern, my favorite. When he threw the ball he led me into the defenders. Of course I was upset with this but we got a pass interference call. We got better field position, scored, and won the game. Tim knew what it took to win. He will be missed greatly as a leader and friend.”

Ian Robertson remembers: “Tim O'Connell was known to us as Tackah or Timmy. He arrived at Yale after a spectacular three-sport career at Friends Academy. At quarterback he was

the ‘Anointed One.’ **Hank Higdon**, who had won state in Ohio as a sophomore quarterback, assessed the situation and moved to halfback. **Jud Calkins** whose John Burroughs team had gone undefeated (kinda – talk to **Hanser**, Captain of St. Louis Country Day) and won state in Missouri, chose to stay at QB. So did “**Rusty**” **Reaves**, the all world prep athlete, **Tom Fake**, the Natrona, WY standout, **Weldon Rogers** and, of course, our incomparable **Wally Grant**.

Timmy started. He shared time with Jud, Wally, and early on Rusty as well as Tom. Tim was a big athlete and a skilled passer, making critical game savings completions to the likes of **Hoey**, **R. Jacunski**, **R. Jacunski**, Higdon, and others. Most memorable was his effort in the Harvard Game, played at home in mud. Timmy, despite bone chips in his wrist, started the game and shared time with Jud. Timmy led us on our game-winning drive, wisely handing off to Schmaltz, “The Speedster” (as per the Yalie Daily), who fled 65 yards in the mud then ran it for the go-ahead TD. This inspired “Ball Gate”. For 59 years Timmy treasured the Game Ball he received after the Harvard Game. **Jud Calkins** was given a Game Ball as well. **David “Schmaltz” Weinstein** recently said, ‘As I was walking off the field, Gib handed me the Game Ball!’ Fact is they all deserved one and treasure their trophies still.

Coach Jordan Olivar did not like to play Sophomores. He expected to lose a game for every Soph that started. Timmy was our guy but he played behind Tom Singleton and Bill Leconby. Unfortunately, Tim did not endear himself to Ollie. Ollie sent him in the Brown game with orders to run out the clock. Instead Timmy chucked the ball, First Down!! Ollie was livid. Late in the season Princeton week, the scout team (read O’Connell, Hallas et al.) went up against the first team defensive backs: Wolfe, Muller, and Singleton. They were best DBs in the league. Timmy shredded them. He threw three TDs to Hallas. Ollie was beside himself. Timmy had an unbelievable arm. Friday before the 60 Princeton game the QBs were having fun in the Bowl, airing it out as far they could. Singie made a truly impressive throw. Timmy got a ball and easily

and casually chucked ten yards further than Tom. Clearly, Timmy had the kind of arm that could have allowed him to play on Sunday. Senior year Timmy began as our starting quarterback. The offense had a hard time scoring. Ollie stubbornly stuck to his belly series offense. That offense had been incredibly successful in '60. After three games Timmy sat. The Varsity went 2-5-2. 29 well placed points over nine games would have resulted in our third undefeated season. One wonders if Timmy and Horse Hallas could score three TDs in a single scrimmage against the best DBs in the league, how many could they have scored in nine games? We will never know.” Timmy would have thrived in another offense. Sadly, he never got to play on Sunday. But that was not because he lacked the talent.

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