

Memories of the 50th Reunion
Steve Coester

Chuck Stone was sitting next to me at our Thursday evening 18th Company party at the Severn Inn. He looked around at all of our classmates and their spouses and said something like, "Steve, look at these guys. We have the best darn bunch of classmates in the whole class." Of course I agreed except at that same moment twenty-three other companies were having similar parties at similar venues and at each one someone was say exactly the same thing. And everyone was telling the exact truth. The bond within the class as a whole and especially within each company is like no relationship at any other university.

The thing that struck me the most during the reunion was I never saw a classmate or wife with anything but a smile on their face and a pleasant word of greeting. That's something to be said for a large bunch of over- seventies. You'd think there would be a grump in there somewhere. If there was I never saw him.

A few weeks before the reunion, Bill Earner asked for volunteers for the various activities. I'm not a volunteerer but it must have been after "wine time" so I put in Yvonne and my names for a couple of functions. Best decision I made. It put us where many classmates had to pass and gave us a chance to greet and introduce ourselves to people I didn't know fifty years ago. And speaking of meeting classmates, I appreciate everyone who came up to me, shook my hand and thanked me for my work on the class website. It is a bit of work, but I get much more out of it than I put in, and it puts me right in the middle of everyone else's hard work, and lets me communicate with so many of you.

The other thing that really impressed me was how seamlessly everything went. From registration to the class and company dinners, to the tailgate and football game, and finishing with the memorial service, everything went perfectly. Kudos to all the chairmen and their committees and especially the Earners, Jennifer and Bill for making this a great reunion.

At our 18th company dinner which was organized by Jan and Peter Quinton, Peter had brought a large collection of memorabilia including his b-robe, sliderule, full dress uniform, coffee mug, Reef Points, Lucky Bag, shoulder boards, and even several old LOG magazines including the one that told of the infamous 18th Company Christmas Party that cost a lot of stripes and class standing. Seeing everyone pick up conversations that were interrupted by graduation was amazing and heart warming.

The musical talents of the Class of 1963 Singers was fantastic. They did a wonderful job of entertaining us at the class dinner and I'm told, at the memorial service. Congratulations to all of them. And the slideshow that I provided of our

four years at the Academy was a hit also for those who could look up from the delicious dinner and good conversation.

Tailgate went off without a hitch and Bob Forster did the impossible getting us the space inside the stadium gates. The football game ending was right out of a novel with Navy beating Pitt in the last second 24-21.

Spencer Johnson did a great job of making the class meeting informative and entertaining. Dave Puckett and Ron Klemick demonstrated what "Quality--63" really means with educational support to the children of our deceased classmates, the \$6.3 million legacy gift to the CAE and the Another Link in the Chain program.

I was unable to attend the memorial service but upon returning home received several notes from classmates about Mike Shelley's emotional speech which is now posted on the website.

I'm afraid this will be our last 50th reunion but it was the best it could possibly be. Quality--63!