



THE *Skirmisher*

BORDENTOWN MILITARY INSTITUTE

“RATHER BE THAN SEEM”

BMI Alumni Association, P. O. Box 91, Bordentown, New Jersey 08505

Website: www.bmicadets.org
E-Mail: bmicadets@gmail.com



Tersina DiPietro, Editor

WINTER 2017

President's Message:

I want to take this opportunity to wish all my Bordentown Military Institute Brothers a very Happy New Year.

Now that the dust has settled from BMI Reunion 2016, I am proud to say it was a resounding success! We did get rained on a little bit at the flag-raising; however, that did not dampen anyone's enjoyment. Otherwise, the food, the dancing, and most of all the reminiscing and fellowship were as good if not better than ever. Mark your calendars for October 2018. We are determined to make the next reunion even better.

Your Alumni Association is looking forward to a happy, healthy, and productive year for 2017.

Respectfully,

Jack

Jack Harkins '67

REUNION 2016 REVISITED

Reunion 2016 was a success and the inclement weather did not deter alumni from enjoying the festivities. Classes from 1947 to 1974 were represented, with the Class of 1966 again winning with the most attendees.

On Friday evening, alumni and friends gathered at the Bordentown Yacht Club for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and conversation. Alumni became reacquainted with their classmates of long ago or, in some cases, met former cadets for the first time.

The next day was cloudy with rain showers but the weather did not dampen the spirits of those who came to remember those days of long ago. By the time they gathered to march through the streets of Bordentown, the rain had arrived. The marchers did not let it deter them from what they came here to do. At the statue site, our President **Jack Harkins '67** decided to cut the intended program short although the traditional flag ceremony went on as usual. **Jim Lynch '73**, Bordentown's Deputy Mayor, brought greetings from the City of Bordentown.

Alumni and guests then headed for the Scottish Rite Building for dinner and dancing. A table of delicious appetizers was available during the cocktail hour, followed by a buffet dinner catered by Toscano's Ristorante, Bordentown's finest restaurant. Everyone praised the delicious cuisine. As **Angelo Candelori '56** said after one of our reunions, "The evening was filled with fun, friendship, and feasting." During the dinner, Jack paid tribute to **Angelo** who was largely instrumental for the rebirth of the Alumni Association as we know it today.

The highlight of our reunions is always the Old Boys' Drill during which alumni march to commands given by former cadet leaders. Although the alumni population is aging, they followed the commands almost to perfection.

Former cadets came from far and near. Two members were present from Venezuela: **CARLOS BENDAYAN '47** and **GUILLERMO GONZALEZ '69**. Two sets of brothers were among the attendees: **Russ Seto '53**, **Stan Seto '56**, and **Steve Seto '65**; **Ed Pepler '53**, **Bob Pepler '57**, and **Richard Pepler '61**. Also, the Lynch family was well represented by relatives: **John Lynch '47**, **Joseph Lynch '48**, and their nephew, **James Lynch '73**.

Following dinner, some alumni and their guests danced the night away while others continued in conversation with their fellow classmates. Judging from the many comments we received, we can say that a great time was had by all who participated. If you were there, it was good to see you. If you were not there, we missed you and we hope to see you in 2018!

CLASS NOTES

'37 We received an email from Gary Sandler, son of **QUENTIN SANDLER**. He states that his father is 96 years old and living in Miami Beach, FL. He also said that his uncle, **ROBERT SANDLER '48** is 86 years old and living in Boynton Beach, FL. Gary wrote, "They are still doing fine." He reported that he knows **ROBERT PEARL '63** who lives in Pinecrest, FL.

'44 **SID Benjamin** sent a note stating how sorry he was that he was unable to be here for Reunion 2016 due to nerve problems in his back and legs,. He said that nowadays he lives by the old song, "Don't Get Around Much Anymore." He still recalls the great times he had in the past when he attended several of our reunions.

WALT GODWIN would like to hear from anyone who remembers him from the Class of 1944. He wrote, “I was known at that time as Capt. Walt Godwin of Co. A. I am now living with my new wife of the past six years at an assisted living facility and am almost always at home. So call me at 520-219-2345.”

DICK ROCKWELL sends greetings to all who may remember him. He emailed us stating, “Since I am now in my 90's, I am not traveling very far these days. Sadly, in the last year, I have lost my BMI and college roommates and I miss them. You folks are doing a great job and I congratulate each of you..”

'47 We were pleased to receive a letter from **BRADFORD BOONE**. He wrote, “In 2010, I began exchanging emails with **JOHN SILBERMAN (Silbie)** '48. The last time I saw Silbie was when he and **DICK KESSLER** '48 drove down to South Jersey for a visit, a visit Silbie wrote about in his book, 'The Life and Times of an Ordinary Joe named John.' After my army days, I started a graphic arts business that lasted until I retired. While at BMI, I was editor of both the *Sword and Sabre* as well as *The Skirmisher* so I enjoy reading current copies of *The Skirmisher*. It is nice to know there are former students who are preserving the spirit and traditions we shared as cadets. However, it is a bit unnerving to read the 'In Memoriam' page only to note the passing of yet other former classmates. Each time I read a familiar name, I am reminded of a BMI moment I shared with that person so long ago.”

'49 We received a note from Barbara Helander, wife of **GORDON HELANDER**. She wrote, “Gordon is unable to respond to you personally; however, as his wife of over fifty years, I know BMI was important to him.”

'51 **PAUL MARTINEK** had planned to attend Reunion 2016 but his poor health prevented his doing so. He wrote, “Some days are better than others.”

TOM McDERMOTT had to cancel his plans to attend our reunion. He asked us to accept his donation on behalf of himself and **PAUL MARTINEK** in recognition of the 65th anniversary of their graduation. He added, “We shared a room on the second floor, facing the courtyard of Old Main.”

'53 **DICK BISCONTINI** attended the reunion. He said, “I could not believe I graduated in 1953...63 years ago! Yet so much of those years and cadets are remembered.!”

'54 **ANTHONY CARABELLI** was honored recently by Trenton Mayor Eric Jackson and City Council naming a section of Elmer Street in Trenton “Anthony P. Carabelli Way.” Tony worked diligently for over 18 years to have that area of Trenton developed. Tony recently retired from public service after 46 plus years.

We received an email from **JOHN TAUCH**. He was unable to attend the reunion because he was attending **BILL KEATING**'s granddaughter's wedding. He added, “Bill (deceased) graduated in 1954 with me. See you in two years.”

'55 **ROGER SPIVACK** has retired to Sarasota, FL. He reported the sudden and unexpected death of his wife, Elaine, on April 12, 2016.

'56 **FRANK GIOVE** sent an email informing us that his health is “pretty good, no complaints, just a little older and a little slower. I am exercising four days a week under the supervision of a personal trainer. My brain works okay and, God willing, I hope I can make the next reunion in 2018.”

'57 **KEN SMITH** tells us that he enjoys reading *The Skirmisher*. It is his favorite piece of mail. (*Ed. Note: We like to hear that.*)

'58 **J. R. ARTHUR** and his wife passed through Bordentown recently. He wrote, "I had the opportunity to play BMI's Alma Mater and Flower of Scotland at the BMI statue as we were returning from our trip to Baddeck, Nova Scotia, where I was attending the Gaelic College, learning to play Cape Bretton fiddle and brush up on my bagpiping skills. We hope to attend the 2018 reunion which will be the 60th reunion for my class." JR is planning to contact as many of his classmates as possible so that the Class of 1958 will be well represented at the reunion in 2018. Also, he continues to be active in his role as Santa Claus. He said, "I must admit that the 'short people' certainly do keep a Santa young!"

'59 **BOB DENT** has retired from ministry. He served thirty-one years at the First Presbyterian Church of Monroe, NY. Bob and his wife, Judy, retired to Maine. He sends greetings to alumni although he was unable to attend Reunion 2016. He wrote, "I still value the relationships we had and the comments so many of you wrote in my yearbook. I was delighted to hear that Captain Nelson attended one of the alumni reunions. He was the only person in five years who wrote me up and gave me four hours of Penalty Duty marching. It was his first inspection of the Battalion right after he came from Korea. I was reported for having a rusty upper hand guard band on my M-1 rifle. Perhaps because of that report, I was not too fond of Capt. Nelson. But it turned out, he was a very special person and I found him to be an extraordinary member of the staff." Bob would like to hear from **BILL KUHL** and **JIM THORPE** (*not on our list unfortunately*).

ROBERT WILMOT WILLIAMS credits Mrs. Cora Lee, a BMI Infirmary nurse, with saving his life when he was a cadet. He has written a tribute to Mrs. Lee, an excerpt of which is on page 6. Also, Robert arranged to have Cora Lee recognized at Bordentown High School on February 22 as part of their program in conjunction with Black History Month.

'62 **PHILIP HICKMAN** (MSG, US ARMY Retired) wrote to say that he looks forward to reading *The Skirmisher*. He added, "It brings back memories of one of the best years of my soon-to-be 73 years. Skills learned at BMI served me well in ROTC and in active duty – Army 1966-1969; Delaware National Guard 1979-1998 (Retired)."

'63 **TOM ASHLEY** sent an email telling us that he enjoys reading *The Skirmisher*.

TOM DEVLIN found us on the Internet. He wrote, "I was in Junior School with **WES HAND**. I attended BMI from 1961 to 1963. I did not graduate. I have been living in the Washington, DC, area for half of my life. I am now retired and living in Silver Spring, MD."

STEVE McNAMARA was not able to attend the Reunion 2016 festivities but is making plans to be here for 2018.

'64 **MARK CONTE** has been on the sick list but we are sending good wishes his way for a speedy recovery. Mark lives in Ewing, NJ.

'66 **HENRY BERRY** wrote to thank all those who put together Reunion 2016. He added, "Everyone had a great time."

HAL HURKA wrote, "Although I could not make it to my 50th reunion, I did manage to catch up with an old roommate, **JOHN MARSTON** '66. He and his wife have owned Leslie's Tavern in Bellows Falls, VT, for thirty-one years. My wife and I had a great night, great food, and the company of wonderful hosts while reminiscing about BMI."

'67 We received an email from **CARTER BROWN**. He wrote, "We all had different experiences at BMI. How often we took for granted those who led and taught us. Faculty background we knew nothing of until we read their obituary. Recently I took the time to read each one (on the BMI website). I was

amazed by their caliber and the anonymity of their backgrounds. We were truly blessed and had no clue. These people were icons. How many times did we laugh at George, the cleaning man. He always wore a ski hat and winter coat in the heat of summer as we sweated. Both of his hands were grossly disfigured. Yet if you were truly lucky, you might catch him in an amazingly rare moment playing the piano in the study hall. I thought I was at Carnegie Hall. In August, 2016, we went to Arlington to visit my wife's parents' grave. While there, I paid my respects at the grave of LTC Bradman located in the highest row with the honor guard for the tomb of the unknown in view behind his headstone. How many of us knew that his dad was a General Officer. LTC Bradman is buried along with his wife Sue and two minor children. Also, there is a grave for their son killed in Nam. I hope the (Bradman) girls know the pride we have for the entire Bradman family.”

GARY COHEN reconnected a couple of years ago with **GUILLERMO GONZALEZ '69**. Gary wrote, “Pancho and I share the same birthday. We both went from BMI to Philadelphia College of Textiles & Science. It is funny how the older we get the more important it is to stay in touch and reminisce.” In learning of the passing of **STEVE SAGAL '63**, Gary wrote, “Another very nice man has left our ranks.”

MICHAEL EATON wrote to thank **JACK HARKINS** and all of the BMI Alumni Officers and staff for following in the footsteps of **ANGELO CANDELORI '56** and **JERRY ROSSI '44** to keep the memories of BMI alive and for making our reunions something special. (*Ed. Note: Thank you, Michael.*)

WILLIAM ROYLE found us on the Internet recently. Bill lives in Birmingham, MI. (*Ed. Note: Welcome, Bill!*)

'68 When **KARL HELICHER** sent us his new address, he told us that he retired last August.

ANDREW MICHAELIAN sent us the sad news of the passing of **JIM ESPIN '67**. He wrote, “We are looking for football jerseys from our team to give to his family. Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.” You may contact Andy at 949-445-9526 or andrewsmichaelian@gmail.com.

'69 **GUILLERMO GONZALEZ** attended our reunion, after which he wrote, “Very satisfying experience. I was very happy to have participated.”

ARTHUR SAWL and his wife Nancy have moved from the City of Nevada, CA, to Santa Fe, NM.

'70 **JOHN KAVCSAK** and his wife Susan were attending the Cranberry Festival in Bordentown in early October where they learned that BMI was having a reunion later that month. They participated in the reunion and later John wrote, “Had a great time. It was wonderful to see so many great BMI people.”

“SOW A THOUGHT, REAP AN ACT,
SOW AN ACT, REAP A HABIT,
SOW A HABIT, REAP A CHARACTER,
SOW A CHARACTER, REAP A DESTINY”

(Do you remember seeing that on one of the walls at BMI?)

A tribute to my angel, Cora Lee, who saved my life

In 1958, I was a student at Bordentown Military Institute in Bordentown, New Jersey. One day, I began to have trouble breathing and went to the newly built BMI infirmary. The school nurse was on duty, and she had me get into bed there for observation. As the day went on I was having more and more trouble breathing. It felt as if I had a ball stuck in my throat, obstructing most of my air intake, and I therefore could barely breathe or speak. Through that night it got worse and I was awake all night, becoming exhausted by having to breathe every breath incredibly deeply in order to keep from suffocating. I still remember that feeling today. Cora Lee arrived at the infirmary for her first shift after having been off the previous day, when I had first entered the infirmary. She immediately saw the problem (and summoned an ambulance). The ambulance staff decided I needed a trip to the nearest hospital in Trenton, while wearing an oxygen mask. Cora had saved my life, as I was so exhausted that I doubted that I could have continued to breathe much longer. I grabbed Cora's hand and would not let go, forcing her, very willingly on her part, to ride next to me in the back of the ambulance several miles to the hospital. Cora was my absolute angel through all of this. I thanked my dear Cora then, and again a week later when I returned from the hospital after having spent the first twenty-four hours in an oxygen tent and a week on powerful medications to combat the bronchial pneumonia, with which I was diagnosed there.

After so many years having passed, and my frequently thinking so fondly about Cora, I have recently felt compelled to formally and publicly document Cora's personal courage. Thank you so very much, Cora, for my life. My wife, my 2 children and I owe you so very much.

Robert Wilmot Williams '69

A WORD TO THE WISE

From time to time, we receive correspondence from alumni inquiring about their roommates, classmates, etc. Too often, this search takes place AFTER the person for whom they are searching has passed away. If you want to make contact, NOW is the time. If we have their email or home address, we will be glad to pass your inquiry on to them. Also, be sure to read CLASS NOTES in *The Skirmisher*. There is a lot of "good stuff" in there.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues and other contributions, although much appreciated, are NOT tax deductible. Dues cards for 2017 will be going out soon via first-class mail.

YEARBOOKS

We have yearbooks available for years 1965, 1967, and 1968. Requests will be handled on a first-come first-served basis. Some have writing in them but they are all in good condition. Email us at bmicadets@gmail.com or send a letter to BMI Alumni Association, P. O. Box 91, Bordentown, NJ 08505.

REMEMBER

If you live somewhere in the winter and somewhere else in the summer, we want ONLY one address. Thank you for your cooperation.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Occasionally we receive correspondence from alumni informing us that an alumnus whom we indicate as having graduated in a certain year was not in their graduating class. If the person attended but did not graduate from BMI, we use the latest year he was in attendance. We do not always know what grade he was in when he left.

IN MEMORIAM

The officers and members of the Executive Board join with the entire membership of the BMI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION in extending sincere sympathy to the families of:

BONHAM, GEORGE "SKIP" '66

ESPIN, JAMES '67

HILL, DONALD G. '47

LEE, MRS. CORA (Infirmary Nurse)

SAGAL, STEVEN A. '63

SHIPPS, HARRY '45

STEINERT, HOWARD '59

TANTUM, JAMES K. '63

TROUT, RICHARD '52

TRABULSI, PHILIP '42

For a complete list of deceased alumni, go into our Website bmicadets.org and click on "In Memoriam."

BORDENTOWN MILITARY INSTITUTE
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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**“HOLD YOUR HEAD HIGH AND KEEP YOUR
MIND OPEN –
YOU CAN ALWAYS LEARN!”**