

First Class Club Fund Rabble Rousers

Dale Hruby - April 2016

At every Class of '58 Reunion or Mini-reunion, when we gather in small groups in the Benny Havens Room, the reminiscing inevitably turns to hilarious incidents of Cadet days which fall into the category of being "classmated," As the years go by, we learn more and more of these wonderful tales -- you know what I mean -- the slide rule stepped on, the scratched B plate, the room orderly quilled for trash in trash can put there by a roommate just before SI. I do not believe I was ever really classmated while I was a Cadet. However, well after graduation the closest thing to it happened when Tony Smith suggested to the Executive Committee that I take his place as chairman of the Class Gift Committee since he was to depart for a few years abroad working for the Otis Elevator company. Fortunately, we have remained pals.

At the beginning of this adventure, it wasn't clear where the committee was going to end up. We were literally bombarded with ideas and suggestions -- We explored renovating an old wooden set of quarters (occupied in our cadet days by the redoubtable Major Flannigan and his huge family) into a "Guest House" near the Cemetery; it was suggested we build a gazebo on the South Dock; the Supe wanted us to create a memorial walkway between Central Area and the East Academic Building; we gave serious thought to reconstructing part of Fort Putnam; one classmate thought we could rebuild Kosciusko's Garden below Cullum Hall; (My own dear wife, Dodie, jokingly suggested we "renovate" Highland Falls to make it more competitive with Annapolis in recruiting!). We finally struck pay dirt when the Cadet Hostess, Caroline Gaspard suggested to George Lawton that we look at the Ordnance Compound as a possible First Class Club! Voila! Eureka! The Great Class of '58 responded magnificently and a star was born. Few Class Gifts have come close to rivaling our First Class Club for direct impact on Cadet Life.

If you are going to get "Classmated," I suggest you try to match my experience -- not only did I work with a top rate group of our classmates on a wonderful, most satisfying Class Gift project, but, I was able to pass the job off to Andy Andreson who shepherded it through major challenges and the whole thing then came full circle as Andy passed the job on to Tony Smith. Since Tony returned, he has taken over with a vengeance and ridden the project through some really challenging times. He continues to provide wise and prudent oversight on everything to do with the FCC and we couldn't have a better man to see us through the current reconstruction and the forthcoming transfer of oversight to the Class of 1983. Once again, the great class of '58 is responding in first class fashion and setting an outstanding example for the younger classes.

We are approaching our goal in pledges. Many thanks to all who have stepped in to contribute toward our goal! If you haven't yet stepped up to the plate with a pledge, you can still contribute to this great project and pop your chest up with pride at supporting the best gift ever created for "The Corps!" "Continue the March, Troops!"