

BHS – 50 Years Later

Where does the time go and why does it go so fast?

The year was 2016. It was July 19th that I noticed the reunion posting for Brookline High School. The 50th reunion to be held in June of 2017.

Since joining Classmates, I had checked out a number of friends among my former classmates. Most have been accepting of me as I am today. Only one wasn't and that is rather sad but life goes on. By the time this announcement hit I had already made changes to my profile updating from the boy who graduated to the woman I was becoming back in my freshman year. Back then you could not talk about such things.

Browsing through the yearbooks, yes I kept all of them. The comments are priceless pieces of personal history than can never be replaced any more than the various friendships made along the way.

So naturally, I decided to attend and started making my plans. I put money aside and made arrangements from a dear friend to go with me, and with my sister's son to stay with her while we were away.

In March of 2017, we scheduled the airline, rental car and a place to stay. By May 29th, we had everything packed except the incidentals, toiletries and things that don't get packed till the last minute anyway.

June 1st. Karen's son John arrived early evening from Arizona. My friend arrived from work around midnight. We showered and went to bed. Up at 3 am, dressed, had breakfast and by 4am were off to the airport for a 7:15 flight to Boston. We took seats just after the wing with my friend in the window seat and relaxed while the other passengers boarded. A smiling young woman asked if the remaining seat was taken and I said, 'no but you can have it.' Liz and I quickly became friends talking about many things. She shared pictures of her son, Mother, Sister and a host of others. She said she was walking into the plane looking at everyone to find a good seat. Finally she saw 'a woman and her husband' and said I looked friendly. I told her, 'actually he is my boyfriend' and the discussion went from there. We chatted all the way to Midway where she got off the plane. She was a good traveling companion.

Another young lady took Liz's seat for the leg to Boston. My friend slept a lot and we read our books.

We collected our baggage and headed for the shuttle to the rental car center. I could not believe how HUGE Logan Airport had become in 50 years but it was practically a city all by itself.

At the rental center we learned that Mass had replaced all toll booths, and their attendants, with electronic tolling. This meant we had to options. One, let the automatic system take pictures as we went through the toll interchanges and get billed, or rent a transponder which will allow tolls to be directly billed to a credit card. We also learned that we actually had to PAY extra for me as a second driver.

Despite all the changes over time, my geographic memory of Boston and vicinity was amazingly accurate. Still, it was a good thing that I took a GPS unit with me or we would have been perpetually lost. Naturally our first destination was the place we were to stay for the next 5 days.

Confused by the layout of the community, I called our hostess on the phone and she came out to direct us to her place and where to park. Inside we found a cozy and quiet 2 bedroom apartment. Melly, our hostess, showed us around and we settled our things in our room and just lay down to relax. Later, we went out to get something to eat but every place that was open had no convenient parking. We ended up buying a few things at a local market, went back to the apartment, ate, played some cards and went to bed.

Saturday morning dawned bright and sunny. We had all day and decided to visit the JFK Museum. We took lots of pictures inside and out and after touring the museum we had lunch at the cafe there. When we left the sky had turned overcast and some light rain was falling. On the way back to our place, I took a side trip to see the High School and the place I lived when I attended Brookline High. Both places had undergone changes.

Back at the apartment we took a bit of a nap and then got dressed for the reunion dinner which we almost missed because the GPS took us past where we were supposed to be. I decided to be smart and call the place on my phone. The name had changed from what I had listed but returning back the way we had come I spotted the new name on a sign as I overshot our destination. Anyway we got there, parked the car and since the Golf Club was still open, we got shuttled up to the building from the parking lot.

There were a lot more people than I had expected and we were greeted Susan Taymore as soon as we walked in. So many people remembered me that I did not remember except from yearbook photos. I also remembered more than the 2 or 3 I expected to be there and we had a great time eating, chatting, taking pictures and re-connecting. I think the high point of the evening, for me, was when Mariyln Yas showed up. I took 4 photos of her but all 4 came out blurry. I kept the least blurry one of her. A friend from my homeroom so many years ago, I was very happy to connect again. Well, that's a lot to condense from the hours pleasantly spent with old classmates and friends. My friend and I were both well received and I was gratified by the total acceptance from everyone there. As for the pictures, well I have permission to have the pictures but not to display them so there will be none posted here here. Ok, I will post pictures of me.



Me at home 06-02



Me on pier at JFK museum 06-02



Me at reunion dinner 06-02



Me at statue in the quad at BHS 06-03



Badge at BHS 06-03

Standing in the quad before the graduation it strikes me as strange somehow. I remember the quad being so much bigger back then or maybe it was that I wasn't so big myself back then.

Sunday morning we had plenty of time on our hands but knowing how hard it always was to get a parking spot, we decided to head for the school early. We got a good spot beside the field. Just in front of us a woman was camped out on a lawn chair to save a place for her husband to park when he got back from running errands. She came over to us and we had a great conversation. While we were talking Susan Taymore and another fellow graduate came by so we joined them and went into the main building. The front entrance was added on and the original front entrance was preserved inside. I was pleased to see that preservation of the history of BHS. The new entrance is imposing and I suppose they needed the space for a variety of reasons. They did a good job integrating it into the original building.

Inside, there was a room where we all met to have some refreshments while waiting for the graduation exercises to begin. When all was ready, we lined up in the hall and marched out just ahead of the graduating class of 2017. I remember a similar march 50 years ago when I, in my cap and gown, went out from BHS to the playground, there to receive my own diploma. It was an honor to precede the current graduating class and to have my friend march out with me and to be announced as members of the Class of 1967.

Some few of my fellow graduates left as the current class was seated. Most of the rest of us stayed through the speeches, entertainment and presentations. Over the years, BHS has grown with the community. When my class was white, the current class was multi-national, multi-ethnic and very much diverse as one would expect to happen over time. It was great to see the tradition of education at BHS embrace the wider world of which we all are a part. And the Class of 2017 has a much more difficult, and potentially rewarding future than we had, I think. It will be interesting to see these graduates in 50 years to see what they have made of themselves. I don't expect to be here for that but it will still be interesting none the less. If I could have said one thing to these graduates it would be something like this. Make your mark by being yourself. Don't try to be OTHERS, though you can strive to be LIKE others who have qualities to be emulated. Don't be any less than the best you can be. Since only YOU can decide what that is, don't let anyone hold you back to tell you that you can't be what you set your mind to be.



New BHS Front Entrance 06-03

When I left BHS 50 years ago, I took something of it with me and the Class of 2017 will do likewise. What we too was MORE than the education, more than the sports, more than the social activities, it is the friendships built while learning those things we needed to learn. It is the ability to embrace and accept our varying differences and to forge into our respective futures with confidence gained by attaining our diplomas. By the way, we don't stop learning just because we left a particular school. Learning continues in every aspect of our lives. BHS gave us the foundation on which our futures have been, will be, built.

Just before the graduates were to receive their diplomas, the rest of us from the Class of '67 left. A young woman in the band asked, you're leaving? I said "class of '67. I got my diploma 50 years ago." As I smiled and left she said "oh." Once again I left my mark on BHS as it left it's mark on me.

On the way back to the apartment, we picked up some food for dinner and after eating, we played some more cards, watched a movie on tv and crashed for the night. It started raining before we got back from the store and rained all Monday and Tuesday.

Monday we slept in then got up and had breakfast, since we bought food for supper and breakfast, played cards and watched tv. Notice no mention of computers? That is because we left all that HOME. Early afternoon we headed off to Worcester to visit my friend's sister and husband. We arrived safely and went to a nice Italian Restaurant and enjoyed good food and conversation. Back at their home we got to see some wild deer and wild rabbits but the lighting was not good enough for pictures so we didn't get any. Our hosts have a lovely, if somewhat eccentric, home and after getting the traditional 'nickle tour' we settled down to some more relaxed conversation. Then it was past time to leave so we headed back. All tolls in Mass are now electronically collected either by use of a special transponder or by getting a bill in the mail after your lic plate is photographed as you pass the toll point. Toll booths and their attendants have been eliminated. From the posted signs I gathered that a local transponder paid one toll, an out of state transponder paid a higher toll and, for those who get billed, a still higher toll. On the plus side, the state saves a lot of money.

Tuesday dawned wet and still rainy but that is ok. We had planned to spend time at the Science Museum in Boston. Evidently it was a day for schools to take their students to the museum as the place was literally overrun with young students. I am not sure how much they learned as most seemed to be having fun pushing the various buttons and turning the knobs. We took a leisurely turn around the museum, had a bit of lunch, took in the show at the planetarium, bought some gifts at the gift shop, finished checking out the rest of the museum and then headed back to the apartment.

Once again we stopped at the market for food for supper, a couple of muffins for the morning and after supper, we went out to gas up the rental car. Our vacation was almost over.

Most of our things were packed before morning and all we had left was our toiletries and things to pack before heading back to the airport. We got back in plenty of time, turned in the car and hit the shuttle back to our terminal. At the terminal we had some light breakfast at a Friendly's concession before going to the boarding area. Our flight was 15 min late taking off and we still arrived 15 min early for the transfer at Midway. A short wait there and the last leg of our journey home was begun.

We met up with my sister and her son after collecting our luggage and then headed for home. Once back at the house, John, Karen's son, headed back to Phoenix as he had to go back to work the next day. My friend stayed over night and went home shortly after breakfast to go back to work that night. As for me, I got things unpacked, laundry done and basically relaxed. It was a great vacation but it was still good to be back home.



The moose and I 06-06