

## TIMELINE (#14B) HIGH SCHOOL REUNION LETTERS

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I graduated with my 1953 Oscoda High School Class on June 4, 1953. On special milestone years following that, our class has held alumni reunions in Oscoda, Michigan. Since I was living in California, I did not attend any of these reunions. However, I did respond to each invitation with a letter briefly describing my personal history to that point. The following 3 letters addressed to my 1953 classmates were copied verbatim:

#### A. 10TH REUNION (1963)

#### B. 25TH REUNION (1978)

Editor's Note:

*I signed this letter "Your Inner Willy," because that was my role as the lead actor in our senior play of the same name. We performed this 3-act comedy on 11/6/52 for the students and on 11/7/52 for the general public.*

*I portrayed the impish inner self of Willy, a dutiful 16 year old boy, who abides by everything his 3 maiden aunts tell him. Although I was supposed to be invisible to everyone except Willy, I was seen prancing on the piano, munching cucumbers, getting in people's way, and doing other mischievous tricks. Of course, by the end of the play, Willy informs his aunts that he's going to live his life as he wants to. In fact, Willy and Inner Willy become one.*

*Throughout the play I was dressed throat to toes (including my feet) in a one-piece costume (buttoned in the back). My mother, an excellent seamstress, made this costume for me from a white bedsheet. Additionally, since the actor portraying Willy did not wear glasses, I had to remove my own glasses, which made it extremely difficult to perform.*

#### C. 50TH REUNION (2003)

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#### A. 10TH REUNION (1963):

A BRIEF HISTORY (1953 - 1963) - THOMAS J. BOYER

During the summer following high school graduation, I was employed as a bellhop at Lost Lake Woods Club in Lincoln, Michigan.

That September I entered the school of engineering at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. While there my part-time jobs included each of the following:

- (1) Assistant in Research – I worked on smoke pollution experiments in the low speed wind tunnel and on fluid coupling experiments.
- (2) Student Assistant – I corrected homework and bluebooks.
- (3) Dishwasher – I worked at a girl's dormitory.

After 9 semesters of Mechanical Engineering and 1 semester of Business Administration, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in June, 1958.

During the summer months of 1954 through 1957 I worked at General Conveyors Corporation in Pleasant Ridge, Michigan as a conveyor designer.

Immediately following college graduation, I was employed at the Chrysler Missile Division in Detroit as a Design Engineer working on the structural design of the Jupiter intermediate range ballistic missile. Not long after, during January 1959, I was laid off due to a loss of contract.

The following month I obtained employment at North American Aviation in Columbus, Ohio, as a Design Engineer working on the structural design of the B-70 intercontinental bomber. During September 1959, I was laid off due to a cutback in the controversial B-70 program.

In September, 1958, while still employed at Chrysler Missile Division, I met Barbara Dupuie when we bowled on opposing teams in a mixed bowling league. We dated steadily until we were married on November 21, 1959, in Warren, Michigan. On our 3-week honeymoon, we traveled from Michigan to California via Dodge City, Grand Canyon, Boulder Dam and Las Vegas.

After our arrival in Pomona, California (located 30 miles east of Los Angeles), I went to work for General Dynamics Corporation. My job as Design Engineer consisted of working on guidance instruments of the Tartar and Terrier anti-aircraft missiles.

I resigned from General Dynamics and joined Atomics International In September of 1961. This division of North American Aviation is located in Canoga Park, California (25 miles northwest of Los Angeles). My present job is Responsible Engineer for radiation shield fabrication of SNAP 2 and 10 (Systems for Nuclear Auxiliary Power).

Our first son, David Alan (7 pounds, 14 ounces at birth), was born in Pomona on October 2, 1960. 3 hours and 1 job later, our second son, Robert Thomas (tipping the scales at 8 pounds, 4 ounces), was born on March 6, 1963, in Canoga Park.

In November, 1961, we finally purchased our own home. It is a 3-bedroom and family room home in Chatsworth (Honorary Mayor: Roy Rogers), which is located in the northwest corner of the San Fernando Valley.

My present activities and hobbies include: touch football, softball, basketball, bowling, golf, swimming, bridge and other card games, reading, taking engineering and other courses of special interest, woodworking and gardening (including maintenance of 5 citrus trees).

## **B. 25TH REUNION (1978):**

From:  
4192 Avati Drive  
San Diego, California 92117  
July 1, 1978

Dear Class of '53,

As much as I would like to, I will not be able to attend the 25th anniversary of our high school graduation. Last summer, for the first time in several years, my whole family visited Michigan for 3 weeks. Coincidentally enough, we (along with the rest our Greenbush relatives) enjoyed a Sunday brunch at Lakewood Shores exactly one year ago (almost to the day).

Many of those same relatives visited us in San Diego a few weeks ago for a triple graduation. Our sons David (age 17) graduated from high school, Robert (age 15) from junior high school, and Glen (age 12) from elementary school on exactly the same day (June 15, 1978).

You may recall that following high school, I entered the school of engineering at the University of Michigan. After 9 semesters of Mechanical Engineering followed by one semester of Business Administration, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Degree in June, 1958. During the summer vacations I worked at General Conveyors Corporation in Pleasant Ridge, Michigan, as a Conveyor Designer.

Immediately following college graduation, I was employed at the Chrysler Missile Division in Detroit as a Design Engineer on the Jupiter missile. Not long after, in January, 1959, I was laid off due to a loss of contract.

The following month, I went to work for North American Aviation in Columbus, Ohio, as a Design Engineer on the structural design of the controversial B-70 bomber. In September of 1959, I was laid off due to a cutback in this program. About that time I began to wonder if my chosen career as an engineer in the aerospace industry was all that it was cracked up to be.

In September, 1958, while still at Chrysler Missile Division, I met Barbara Dupuie when we bowled on opposing teams in a mixed bowling league. We were married on November 21, 1959, in Roseville, Michigan. On our 3-week honeymoon we traveled from Michigan to California - the only time we have driven cross-country.

After our arrival in Pomona (30 miles east of Los Angeles), I went to work for the Pomona Division of General Dynamics Corporation - another aerospace company. This time I worked on guidance instruments of the Tartar and Terrier anti-aircraft missiles.

After almost 2 years, I resigned and joined Atomics International in September, 1961. This division of North American Aviation is located in Canoga Park - 25 miles northwest of Los Angeles. I was the Responsible Engineer for radiation shield design of SNAP 2 and 10 (Systems for Nuclear Auxiliary Power). Since there wasn't a big demand for nuclear reactors in space satellites, I quit that job after 4 years.

I went to work for Solar Division of International Harvester in San Diego starting in October, 1965. I designed a large poppet relief valve used in underground installations of gas turbines. However, after a year there, I decided to move on again.

So I continued my checkered career in aerospace and went across the street (literally) to the Convair Division of General Dynamics in November, 1966. Would you believe that I found a home and have been there ever since? Originally, I designed structure for various airplanes. After less than a year there I changed jobs and have been in the cost-related disciplines of Value Engineering, Producibility and Design-to-Cost since then. These jobs have all involved cost-reduction of our aerospace products primarily through control of the engineering designs.

My current job is the Project Engineer responsible for Design-to-Cost of the Tomahawk Cruise Missile. This Missile (which gets much publicity in S.A.L.T. Talks) can be launched from a submarine torpedo tube, deploy wings, tail fins and engine inlet and cruise many miles to a target. We are also bidding on other launch platforms for our missile such as surface ships, aircraft, and from large trucks.

Just last summer I got my Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from San Diego State University. It took me 6 years of attending college part-time to accomplish this feat.

Until a few years ago I was fairly active in such sports as softball, golf, touch-football and volleyball. Right now, however, my interests are less strenuous and include photography, reading, woodworking, gardening and taking courses of special interest at the local adult school in the evenings.

We own our 4-bedroom home in San Diego - about 7 miles from Convair. It is on a large lot (by California standards) on which we have many growing things including eight citrus trees. It is a year-around job trying to keep it up.

Barbara works half-time at the University of California at San Diego. She still enjoys bowling once a week during the season. David works part-time at Sea World in the food department. He would like to become an architect and plans to attend Mesa College in San Diego this fall. Robert is thinking about becoming a lawyer. Right now he is in France for a month on a study tour with his French class. Glen will be going to a Catholic junior high school in the fall.

We are all quite active in various young people's activities such as Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Little League Baseball, Youth Soccer, judo lessons, various music lessons (David has taken piano for 11 years) and other school activities.

I would appreciate it very much if you could forward copies of any other histories you receive for the reunion. Also appreciated would be a list of attendees, pictures or a write-up of the festivities. Here's hoping we can all enjoy a 50th reunion. I hope to see some of you before then.

Your "Inner Willy"

(signed)  
Tom Boyer

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**C. 50TH REUNION (2003):**

From:  
4192 Avati Drive  
San Diego, California 92117  
April 23, 2003

To:  
Ida Robinson Papp  
22121 Colgate St.  
Farmington Hills, MI 48336

Dear Ida,

Thank you for the invitation to attend the 50th anniversary of our high school graduation on June 14, 2003. Unfortunately, I will be unable to come to Michigan then to join the celebration. I'm sorry that I don't know the whereabouts of any of our classmates.

My current status is:

1. I have been living in the same house in San Diego since 1966. My address is shown above and my telephone number is 858-273-5480.
2. My wife of 34 years, Barbara, died in November, 1993, after a 2-year battle with breast cancer.
3. I have 3 sons ranging in age from 37 to 42. They are all married and each has 1 child. They live in Southern California (within 115 miles of me) and each has a computer-related job.
4. I retired from General Dynamics Corp. with 29 years service in June, 1994. My entire 36-year mechanical engineering career was spent working for various aerospace companies, primarily located in Los Angeles and San Diego.
5. My health has been above average and I live a very quiet life. My interests include photography, woodworking, gardening, reading, theater, travel and dating. I take a keen interest in all University of Michigan activities. I watch their sports on television and attend their football games and glee club concerts whenever they occur in Southern California.

I would appreciate it if you would provide me with copies of personal histories, list of attendees, photographs or a write-up of the reunion.

Sincerely,

(signed)  
Tom Boyer