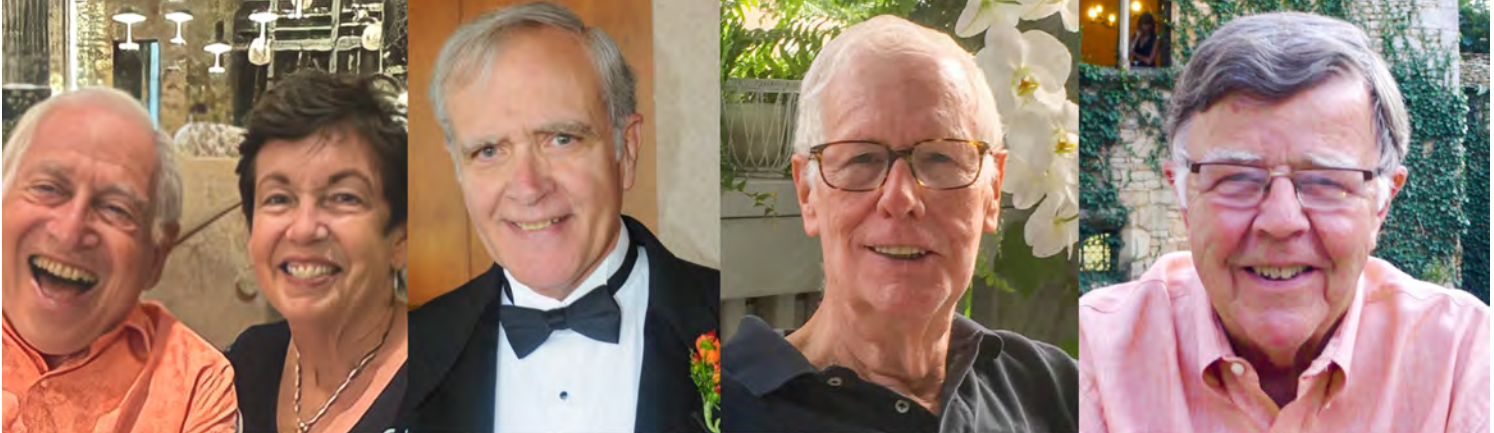




# Yale 1963 At 60







*Yale 1963*



*At 60*





The information used for this Class Book represents the latest information from the University's alumni records. If you note any errors, or have any changes to be made, please send them to:

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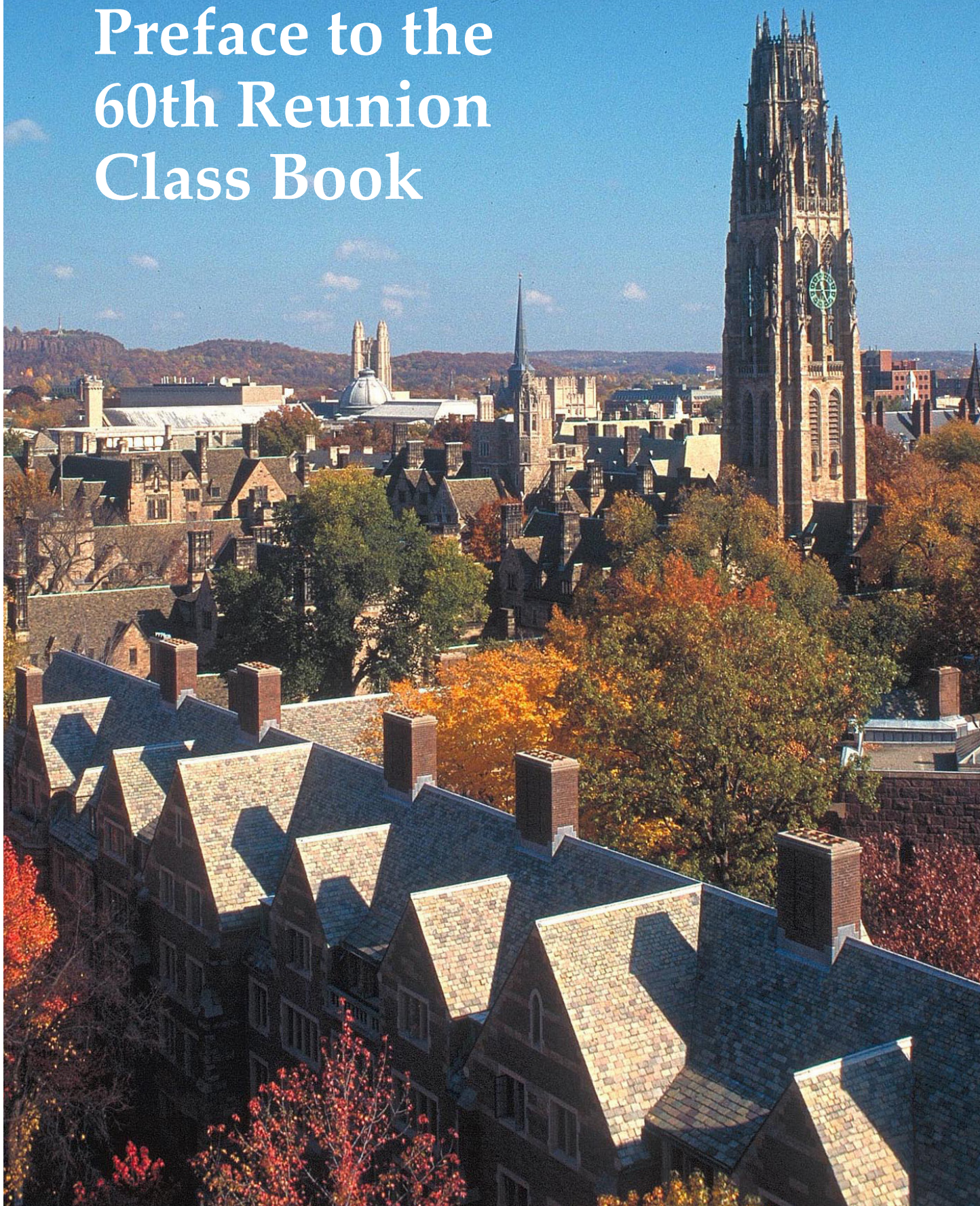
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# Preface to the 60th Reunion Class Book







*The Class Council*

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EDWARD ALAN DENNIS  
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HENRY CARYL HALLAS  
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CHARLES ARTHUR WHELAN  
FIELDING LEWIS WILLIAMS, JR.

YALE UNIVERSITY  
CLASS OF 1963

May, 1963

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WALLACE HOWARD GRANT  
*Treasurer*  
LAWTON MILLER CALHOUN, JR.  
*Class Book Editor*  
ALAN MICHAEL KRANOWITZ  
*Gift Fund Chairman*  
ROBERT CHRISTOFFER DIERCKS

Yale today is a far cry from the Yale of fifty years ago. Gone forever are the days of the trolley car and the horse and buggy. Just as Yale has changed in the past, she will surely change in the future -- and so will we. Now, on the eve of graduation, minds are filled with memories of the past four years and faces of friends are quite distinct. But all too soon these memories and faces will fade.

In the following pages, our classmates have tried to create a vehicle by which our fading memories may be revived. This book is not meant to be merely a contemporary factual review of undergraduate life -- that would be both dull and meaningless. Rather, through subjective interpretations of undergraduate life, the editors have attempted to capture some of the spirit of Yale as we have known it. Subjective interpretations such as these demand more than a passing glance from readers. They demand a personal involvement. With this involvement, undergraduate life becomes eternal. Now, and fifty years from now, we will be able not only to read of past experiences, but also to relive them.

And so we move on into the future. Undergraduate Yale will soon be left far behind. But even when our undergraduate days become the "horse and buggy" days to a future generation, each of us will carry with him at least a bit of the past in the pages of this Class Book.



*Wally Grant*

Secretary, Class of 1963  
Wallace Howard Grant



## *60th Reunion - May 2023 - Class Book Preface*

This 60th Reunion Class Book comes to you from your Reunion Committee chaired by Wally Grant with the fervent hope that you will take this opportunity once again to appreciate this outstanding class as demonstrated in these pages and therefore join us at our Reunion in New Haven Thursday, May 25 through Sunday, May 28, 2023.

This book began 35 years ago as a 25th reunion project inspired by our classmate and then AYA director Eustace Theodore. He challenged our class to produce a 25th reunion book comparable to the leather bound ones at Harvard as opposed to prior paperback versions at Yale. This class aided by a small dedicated contingent at the AYA and alumni records responded with an outpouring of essays from more than 75% of the class totaling nearly 1000 pages. Subsequent years have seen similar responses highlighted by our 50th reunion book which was materially enhanced by the technology and dedicated efforts of Reunion Press. Participation in this year's book has been greatly strengthened by the sustained efforts of a dedicated team of classmates headed by co-editor Jon Larson.

Your essays convey thoughtful reflections on lives well lived, as well as nostalgia for the calmer era when "as Freshmen first we came to Yale" and concern for the future world which we will leave to our children and grandchildren. We were the first post-World War II generation to experience that a change in national leadership truly mattered. As freshmen we came to Yale under President Eisenhower who, despite enormous pressure, resolutely refused to commit American troops to another "land war in Asia". His departure was compelled by constitutionally mandated term limits. By an infinitesimal margin the American people elected a telegenic successor in President Kennedy who came to office accompanied by a phalanx of Harvard academics. They advocated a more eclectic approach to opposing communism in Asia. That group remained under Lyndon Johnson after an assassin cut President Kennedy down, and had a decided impact on the immediate post-Yale experience of us all.



*Jonathan, Trillium, Ben and Susan Rose*

The fifty year national roller coaster which followed the Vietnam War defies summary in this space. Suffice it to say many of its twists and turns are reflected in the wise reflections contained in these pages. Many of you have contributed in diverse ways to carry out the charge so well expressed by our Nobel Laureate Bill Nordhaus that we find it in ourselves to insist that data driven theories and facts drive our future as opposed to the false narratives so characteristic of the present day.

**We again invite you to take what may be one of the final opportunities for each of us to reacquaint ourselves with each other through these pages and at our 60th Reunion in New Haven.**

— *Jonathan C. Rose*



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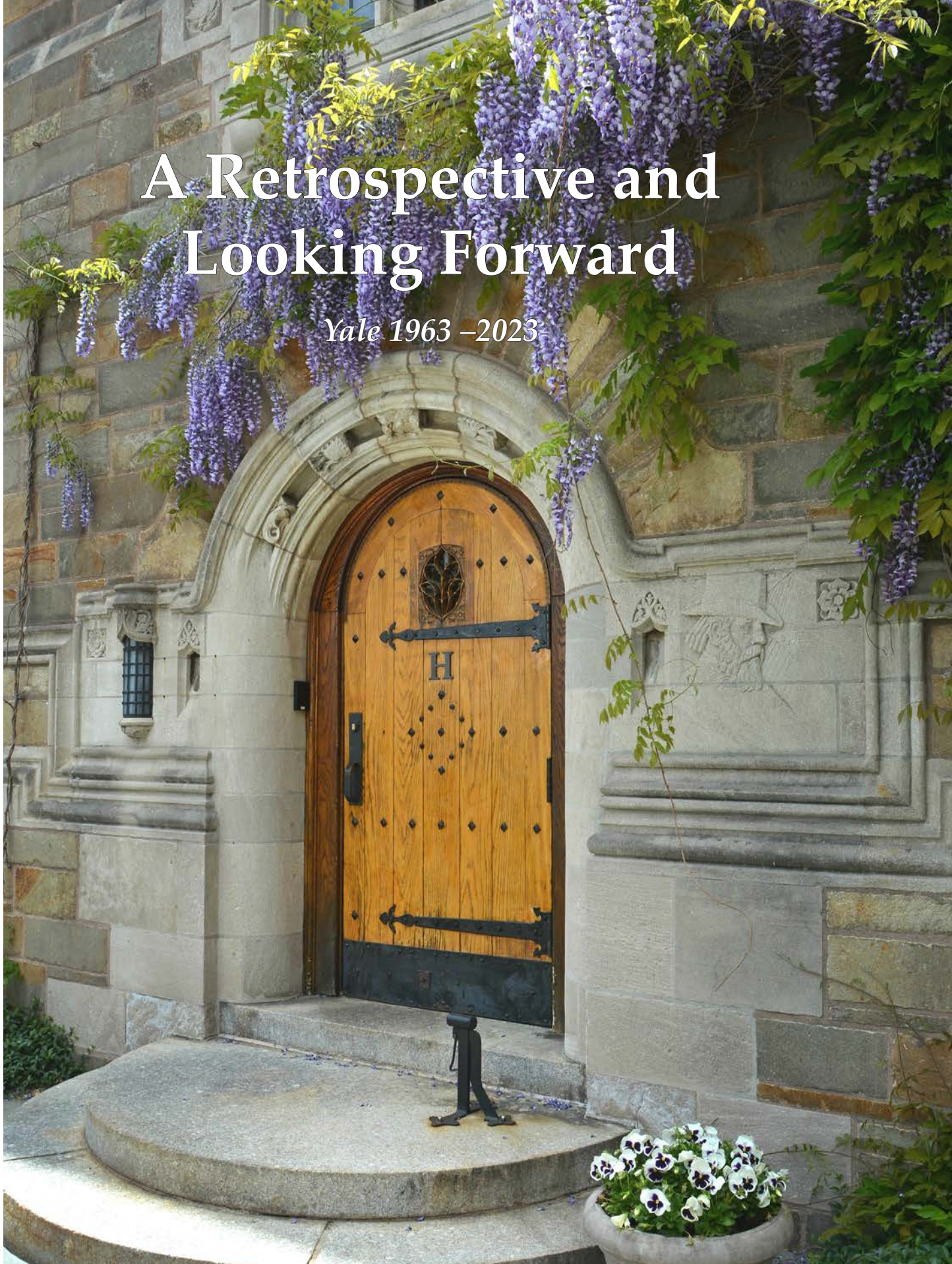
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Hansel T. Wood, Jr.



# A Retrospective and Looking Forward

*Yale 1963 – 2023*







*Jon Larson*

Yale is now 22 years into its fourth century since founding in 1701. During those 321 years Yale has produced a remarkable:

- 52 U.S. Senators
- 33 College Founders and Presidents
- 25 Governors
- 24 Pulitzer Prize Winners
- 20 U.S. Cabinet Officers
- 17 Supreme Court Justices
- 6 Foreign Heads of State, and
- 5 U.S. Presidents

The lives of our own grandparents and grandchildren will have touched parts of four centuries. We ourselves have experienced and shared the past 81 years. Over those 81 years we have performed many Roles at various times during our lives. These Roles, both expected of us and sought after by us, are reflected, recorded and described in the over 300 personal life Essays in this Class Book.

- Close Brothers
- Supportive Friends
- Brave Soldiers of War
- Hard working Providers
- Good Sons and Grandsons
- Creative Captains of Industry
- Enthusiastic Teachers and Students
- Valuable Employers and Employees
- Loyal Public Servants and Statesmen
- Loving Fathers and now Grandfathers
- Supportive Husbands and exciting Lovers
- Good Citizens of the U.S. and of the World

As one of the co-editors of our "Yale 63 at 60" Class Book I enjoy the opportunity to early read the Biographies and life story Essays being submitted by classmates as well as the personal Remembrances of classmates who have passed in the five years since our 55th Reunion. I strongly recommend treating this as a book and consuming it start to end, reading all of the Essays in which we share our strong concerns about where the country and our democracy are heading, inflation, the economy, immigration, pro-life and pro-choice, health at 80+, global warming, downsizing our living arrangements, and loss of a long time life partner. These issues and concerns are all reflected in our writings that also provide some hopeful and helpful answers

We report the following statistics for our Class of 1963:

- 1045 Graduated In 1963
- 735 Living (70%)
- 310 Deceased (as of December)
- 87 have passed since our 55th Reunion in 2018.

414 of us responded supplying updates to this Class Book with Essays and/or Demographic updates. We believe this 56% response is another participation record for a Yale 60th Reunion class.



Our personal life stories recounted in the Essays include historical events, summaries of our lives, (Yale to now), careers and creating wealth, noted achievements and set-backs, our life partners, family and prideful progeny, life's greatest gifts, our non-profit work, dealing with the health and infirmity issues of aging, and looking ahead to the future. This range of subjects is reflected below in shortened partial selections from twelve of our full Essays in hopes you will be motivated to take the time to read all of the 300+ Essays in this Class Book.

— *Jon Larson*

• • •

Looking back at my class reunion essays written for 2013 and 2018, I realize that I could use the exact same words for my strongest reactions: appreciation and gratitude. During the past five years, there has been continuity, along with significant new developments.

Five years ago, I wrote that the big life change was my ordeal in 2016 after being diagnosed with a very aggressive, mutating, life-threatening lymphoma cancer. I am a 6-year cancer-free survivor, I have even run races in 2022, and I'm held up by my oncologist and nurses as their "poster child." With so many other patients with tragic results, it makes them happy (as it does me).



*Doug Allen*

— *Doug Allen*

• • •



*Bud Conrad*

I now watch closely the political developments of COVID, and the realignment of the super powers, as I see our country in Late Stage Empire Decline. I am appalled by the presidents we allow to be our leaders since JFK. The Wealth Disparity does not fit with the egalitarian ideals of our previous generation, where my father grew up from a small farm to become a Yale University Dean of the Engineering Department.

I fear for the future, especially as we face expansionist government that wants to control more, even as our basic strengths are in decline.

At my age, I no longer am able to affect the paths of our world political rivalries, or to be part of inventing new futures, but I do take pride in the success of my progeny. (Son at Facebook, Daughter home schooling 5 children). Despite my criticisms of my culture and my higher education, I benefitted greatly, and was given many privileges beyond what has been the lot of many. Our generation came alive and aware after the worst of the world wars, and our country has experienced relative peace and technological prosperity. Silicon Valley offers good weather, intellectual stimulation, and prosperity.

I think we are headed to one of the worst financial declines of the last 100 years, as we print up fake money of no intrinsic value while government believes it can do anything, without responsibility. Big Pharma and the MIC (Military Industrial Complex) expand the control state. The Federal Reserve accommodates the Federal Government deficits, while the Super Rich continue to gain on everyone else. The environment is of conflict and destructive change. I see decline of stocks, bonds, and real estate.

— *Bud Conrad*



For starters, it has become crystal clear that we cannot rely upon fate to preserve our democracy. We must actively protect it ourselves — from one generation to the next. Toward that end, I published a book this past year calling upon our generation to begin passing the torch to the young, helping them forge lives of service and leadership. I was gratified that the book, “Hearts Touched With Fire”, hit the NYT best seller list and a number of universities have asked me to come talk with their students.

It has also become clear that the older we grow, the more precious family and friends become. Anne and I spend far more time with each other and have grown ever closer these days. She is a source of joy as well as strength. We also see far more of our two children, Christopher and Katherine, and our five grandchildren. We especially like it when they join us at our wonderful get-away place on Cape Cod and travel with us beyond our borders. To a welcome degree, we also find ourselves sharing dinners and lunches with friends as often as once a week. They keep us alive and laughing.

At the same time, it has become clear that we are more vulnerable than 10 or even 5 years ago. Our bodies and our minds are not as nimble as they once were. And we have experienced profound sorrow at too many memorial services.

We are pursuing all of the obvious — exercise, nutrition, sleep, social engagement and the like. But we have also come to believe that a certain amount of acceptance — stoicism, as the ancients called it — is necessary. As a friend recently told me, “Clearly, 60 has become the old 50; 70 has become the old 60, but remember: 80 is still 80!”

When all is said and done, we are immensely grateful that we are still vertical. We still have family and friends to sustain us. And many of us have had glorious lives — due in no small part to our years together at Yale.

— *David Gergen*



*David Gergen*



*Gates and Claire Gill*

I am looking forward to our Reunion next year and having a chance to see in person old friends and meet new friends as well.

We will share songs, love and laughter in further proof that when it come to the Class of 1963... time does not avail!

As Class Historian I can say without fear of contradiction: no Yale Class in History has been able to sustain such amazing friendships. And that is the greatest achievement of our Class. Yes, we have an Undeclared Football Team, we have Senators, Heroic and Medal winning Warriors, a Nobel Prize Winner, many successful lawyers and entrepreneurs and great professors and teachers and doctors, and even preachers!

But the greatest success of our Class is that we have kept the shared love and laughter going over almost sixty years. We have continually created the most important art of life: keeping old friends, and making new friends. That is why I say as Class Historian: **1963 is Yale's Greatest Class!**

— *Michael Gates Gill*



This last chapter of our lives does have a grim cast. The specter of a self-absorbed former President and his minions fomenting violence, bigotry, and insurrection, playing on a celebrity-addicted society practically inert in the face of impending climate catastrophe, makes us wonder if we would choose to bring children into the world if my upcoming reunion were my 5th instead of my 60th. Back in the day, while I was at Yale, times were also tumultuous; many of us worked to resist injustices, and always with a sense of hope that “we shall overcome.” Perhaps some day.



*Barbara and Tom Greenspon*

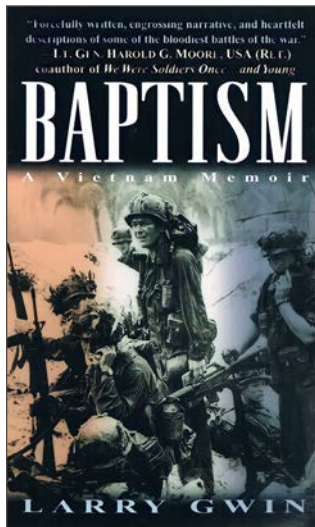
— *Tom Greenspon*

(reprinted from the Class Book section on the U.S. Military service of Yale 1963 that classmates first published in our “Yale 63 at 50” Class Book for our 50th reunion in 2013).

Prologue to *Betrayal: A Post-War Memoir* (unpublished)

This book, then, is about my early years back home from Vietnam. I was heartsick at what had happened there. I was disgusted at our two-faced politicians. I was enraged at how Vietnam veterans were being treated when they came home. And I felt guilt for having survived, for having come back home to my folks and my girl when most of the men I’d served with hadn’t made it back to their folks, their girls, or their families. **[106 of the 146 good men in Captain Gwin’s Alpha Company, Second Battalion, Seventh Cavalry, were KIA].** And then we were betrayed.

I’m better now. My rage has abated. My guilt is almost gone. And when I see the flags flying on Memorial Day, I think of my absent comrades with more than just a terrible sense of sadness. I think of them with love, and lots of pride.



Rest in peace, gentlemen.

— *Larry Gwin*  
*Captain, U.S. Army, 1963–68;*  
*Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart,*  
*Air Medal, Combat Infantryman’s Badge,*  
*Ranger Tab, Airborne Wings*

*“Anyone who has experienced combat is irrevocably altered. It comes with the territory.*

*That’s one of the indelible things war does to us. We think of it all the time. We have lived our lives notwithstanding it, the horror of it. Really.*

*It has altered our perceptions of life.”*

*“I have two simple wishes for the future:*

- 1. That our political leaders never again commit us to war unless it is an absolute necessity, and*
- 2. That our people will ‘Answer the Call’ if it comes.”*

— *Larry Gwin, “Baptism”*

• • •



*Art Laffer*

Since I intend on living to circa age 137, let me give you an update on my career, prior to the 2022 release of my latest book (written with Brian Domitrovic and Jeanne Siquefield), *Taxes Have Consequences: An Income Tax History of the United States*. I am a relic of the Nixon administration along with several other prominent classmates. I was the first Chief Economist at the Office of Management and Budget under George Shultz, in the early 1970s, just as budget deficits began to become chronic. I was a close witness of the Ford Administration. In those far-off Ford years, I drew the tax-rate/tax-revenue curve on a napkin for classmate Dick Cheney that Yale economics Nobel Robert Shiller said got mentioned in the press about as much as the Rubik’s cube. I personified the Reagan tax-cut economic policy. Donald J. Trump draped the presidential Medal of Freedom over my head in 2019.

Institutional affiliation, after a few nice runs, lost its flavor. I was a professor of economics at the University of Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s, and then at the University of Southern California in the 1970s and 1980s. On my own since 1984, running consulting and investing businesses as well as nurturing a nonprofit dedicated to “supply-side” political-economic principles have proven rewarding. Six children have begotten 14 grandchildren and they 4 great-grandchildren (so far). I still wear New Haven adornments, as made clear several weeks ago, when with comedian Ben Stein on stage I said of his Yale tie, “Hey, I’ve got one of those!” As Fitzgerald is reported to have written to his daughter, “beware of Yale wolves in their J. Press tweeds.”

Now in my dotage, I often wonder how I would like to die. I have come to the conclusion that I would prefer to die the way my uncle did, peacefully in his sleep—not like the three passengers in the car he was driving.

— *Art Laffer*

• • •

One of life’s greatest gifts to me has been Yale, and in particular my associations with Y’63 colleagues. One of my great regrets in life is not making the effort earlier starting in 1959 to get to know as many of our classmates as possible. I allowed myself to get into a comfortable vertical



stovepipe space of around 100 Engineering classmates and studies, roommates, Calhoun (Hopper) College, intra-mural sports, Beta Theta Pi, Mace & Chain, and I missed out on the 900+ other amazing classmates and organizations and activities of which I have only become aware through reconnecting with '63 starting with our 25th Reunion. Since then, I have enjoyed managing our [www.yale63.org](http://www.yale63.org) class web site, participating in helping plan reunions, guiding two Y63 tours (Tour de France in 2015 and the British Isles in 2016), and organizing a Gathering in San Francisco in May of 2022, all "labors of love" and a small repayment to my classmates for what they and Yale have gifted to me over the years. Co-Editing the Reunion Class Books has been a real privilege as well, interacting with new classmates for the first time and reviewing their own life update Essays being submitted.

1959-2023: A personal retrospective. The world population was 2.8 billion in 1959 when we first arrived on the Old Campus in September of 1959. Today it is approaching 8 billion. I was most fortunate to experience three of the world's great educational institutions: Punahou School in Hawaii, Yale University, and the IBM Corporation which all taught using the standard classroom chalkboard with a live professor lecturing for an hour on a specific subject and schedule and sitting in class taking notes. Textbooks were purchased at the Yale Co-op bookstore or checked out of Sterling main library or the smaller college libraries. Since then, the Internet, the Personal Computer, the iPhone, Search engines, WikiPedia, personal GPS locaters, and instant global communications have impacted our lives and learning as much or more than any single major invention group in history including gun powder, the steam engine, the internal combustion engine, electricity, centrifugal pumps, the automobile, trains, the airplane, the microscope, X-rays, radio and television, and antibiotics.



*Jon Larson*

I marvel back to old fashioned learning at Yale before we had the new technologies used by today's students and professors including personal computers, word processing, Email, cell phones, voice mail, texting, laser printing, fast Internet Google searches, online scheduling, group Zoom meetings, Podcast lectures, EBooks, electronic self-publishing, and Coursera online distance learning. And today we have educational and history channels among the 300+ channels of 24x7 color streaming programming on TV sets into our homes with remote controls and high resolution video with instant replay and program recording for later playback at our own convenience. Today's students have been transformed by technology into a new world of learning. And this remote learning also enables us as adults to continue our education and learning online well past college and for our lifetime. In the right hands and used for the right purposes to inform, educate and bring understanding and light to darkness, these technology tools are marvelous inventions benefitting humankind that open doors to lifelong learning.

Unfortunately many of our social problems today result from the relative newness of these Internet driven technologies and tools that can speed an untruth around the globe in seconds, make it easy for people to talk without stopping to listen, and allow people to get siloed into self reflecting safe info only groups that filter out and ignore opposing opinions that do not match with their pre-conceptions, beliefs, and psychological comfort levels. Internet web robot software applications called Bots generate and distribute automated tasks such as messaging at high speed and high volumes over the Internet with the intent to imitate human activity on a large scale worldwide. These Bots (info messages generated by machines) create and distribute billions of infomercials purporting to be the truth at no cost quickly worldwide, usually with a specific political message.

And now AI Artificial Intelligence ChatBots as ChatGpt can interact like a human. Clearly we have a ways to go before these Internet driven tools can be mastered for the best use for Humankind.

Looking ahead: Our ages in the 80's today truly are the new 70's, thanks to the great advances in healthcare that have kept me and many of us going and allow us to anticipate continued enjoyable and productive years ahead. Three good ways to assure a life legacy are to plant a tree, write a book, and father a child. I have done all three. Mission accomplished, I can now relax. Every day is a gift to be enjoyed, or not, surrounded by my life partner of 58 years Karen, my family (including two grandkids as Stanford undergraduates), and many lifelong friends and folks who love me because of my many imperfections, not in spite of them. And I have learned that **my family extends beyond genetic and marriage links to include anyone and everyone I choose to Love**. That is one big family, includes you, and it is growing each and every day that I remain here on this planet we all share. May God continue to bless us, one and all.

— Jon Larson

• • •

So all's good on the personal front, though I can't say the same for the state of our country or the world, for that matter. Here, then, is my brief take on the things that "keep me up at night":

1. The continuing failure of U.S. politicians to heed the will of the people and enact reasonable gun-safety laws, namely a ban on assault weapons, high capacity magazines, and ghost guns.

2. The deeply divided nature of our country, dominated by voices of anger, threats, and deceit rather than engaging in civil discourse based on facts, science, and mutual respect.

3. Our discouraging unwillingness to face the existential threat of the global climate crisis---and our failure to take strong action and set an example for the world.

Wish I could be more positive, but alas, I feel we're in deeply troubled times.

All the more reason for us to gather together in New Haven for our 60th to celebrate our time at Yale and the friendships forged there. Boola! And thanks!

*Hoy McConnell*



— Hoy McConnell

• • •



*Bob Morris*

In addition to teaching a couple of courses for the Center, I was fortunate to help initiate and design, along with an interracial team, an anti-racism effort in Summit and surrounding communities. The curriculum for in-depth discussion groups tackles the hard-core issues of systemic, institutionalized racism.

My years at Yale and in Graduate School set me up to have a challenging, interesting, unexpected and enjoyable career in church, education and the local community. Having now reached my early 80s, I think it's time to "retire" a bit more deeply, with more time to spend with my wife, old and new friends and family, travel a bit more, cut back on teaching and church work. In addition, my wife of 53 years, Suzanne, and I realize it's time to move to lodgings more suitable to our advancing age, and we're in the process of scoping out possible home and retirement communities, as well as the gargantuan, Sisyphus-like task of shedding the accumulations of over forty years in the same house.



“Retirement” has always seemed an odd, market-place driven concept. “Refocusing” feels more accurate. At 81 I’m in good health of body and mind to do some creative refocusing and more leisurely engagement. I look forward to what the next chapters will bring.

— *Bob Morris*

• • •

*Bill Nordhaus was awarded the 2018 Nobel Prize for Economics for his contributions to the study of long-term economic growth and its relation to climate change.*

The vision of comprehensive central planning collapsed with the Berlin wall in 1989. Even with modern supercomputers, the economy is far too complex to be managed by the largest and most idealistic of hierarchies. Instead, countries have found the formula for prosperity in the mixed economy: contracts that govern private exchange, government support for basic science, alongside profit-oriented research and innovation of the market. Looking Backward reminds us of the profound difficulty of predicting the structure of our societies far into the future.



*Bill Nordhaus*

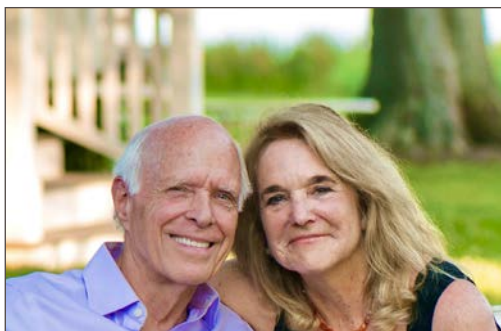
If we go to sleep today and wake up at century’s end, what will we find in 2100? Will it be a dystopian landscape where the successors of today’s thuggish leaders find new methods of control and new tales to spin about ancient empires and climate change? Will ocean crustaceans be footnotes in the cookbooks? Will the Western forests of the United States be replaced by charred ponderosa pines and savanna?

It need not be so. We should instead find strength from our valiant high-school science teachers, our great research universities, and forward-looking political leaders. We should insist that the data-based facts and theories of natural and social scientists replace fake facts and false narratives. We should persuade nations to look to the EU and similar club-like organizations as models for global governance in human rights, resisting war, and climate control.

Our futures are not in the stars but in ourselves. We will not be here in 2100 to witness the results of our efforts. However, our grandchildren will be here, with their children and their grandchildren. I hope that they will look backward with appreciation – that they can say that we, in this generation, including the efforts of the Yale Class of 1963, had the resolve to overcome the obstacles and take the steps necessary to preserve our precious democracies and this beautiful planet.

— *Bill Nordhaus*

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*Charlie Yonkers*

Another big change is Unease. I confess to being destabilized by threats to democracy and the rule of law, as we knew it, from the Far Right, whether January 6 insurrectionists, the Ivy-credentialed SCOTUS, or unbridled right-wing news media. I feel unease as well from aging issues with its losses and mounting debits

— *Charlie Yonkers*

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**Our extended thanks to ALL of the Class members who have contributed over the years** to the Class Books, to Reunion planning and execution, and to the Administration and Financial management it takes to keep our Y'63 class members in communication and in touch worldwide. Special thanks to Wally Grant for serving as Reunion Chair for our 60th along with classmates who have served as Reunion Chairs over the past 50 years. Our thanks to Jonathan Rose who has been the Editor of our Reunion Class Books over the years. And to our banker Michael Freeland for handling our funds so carefully. Special thanks go to our Class Secretaries who have served us well over the years: Wally Grant, Jim Baird, Bev Head, Stan Riveles and Guy Struve.

Each of us count our years at Yale and the associations we made those four years as keys to achieving our superb records of community and public service, creating wealth for our society, and uncovering new perspectives that have contributed significantly to the global intellectual wealth we share that benefits us all and future generations to come. Throughout these pages one reads of our hopes, our commitments, our many achievements, and our visions for the future. While unique in their own way, they can also be seen as part of a common goal to secure a strong foundation for our country and our world that we leave to our children and grandchildren and future generations. Looking back, our Class as a whole can take pride in our various leadership roles ranging from community and public service, finance and business, research and scholarship, and to our continual support of Yale and its mission.



And we have taken special note herein recognizing and honoring the outstanding efforts of the 256 of us who served in the U.S. Military.

**“The Long Goodbye”.** We are all in some manner or other, now and will be over the coming years, engaged in the long process of saying goodbye. Every day, hour and minute we are here become ever more precious and valued as the allotted time for our lives here on Earth seems to accelerate towards its end. This includes the painful possibility of living on with our lives diminished after losing long time Life Partners who may predecease us (“Con te Partirò”).

**Looking forward from here,** our hope must be that our experience and insights become a permanent part of history and that they will be openly valued and shared so that others who follow us will view, appreciate and benefit from our commitments and vision. Our lives and these Essays reflect in many ways our hopes for securing a better future for our society and this nation. This Book may be seen as a continuing volume in a greater story that is yet to be written by new generations of Yale men and women including the Yale Class of 2023 who in 60 years will be writing their own Class Book “Yale 2023 at 60” as Yale reaches its own 362nd year since founding in 1701 as “The Collegiate School to educate students for Public employment both in Church and Civil State.” In the over 300 years since its founding, Yale has worked to educate those who would become leaders and contributors to every sector of society. We have continued in that tradition well.

And now as our physical capabilities begin and continue to fail us, and as our mental recall becomes less crisp, our consciousness of things for which to be thankful and our ability to love and to forgive, others and especially ourselves, continue to expand towards infinity as we become more God-like ourselves. This is God’s way and will.

**We hope you are able to join us in New Haven in May** for what we anticipate will be a most outstanding 60th Reunion.

Best regards and Boola,

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— *Jon Larson*







# Reflections for the 60th Reunion

## 1963–2023: A Retrospective

Avi Nelson '63

*(This retrospective, originally written for our 40th, was updated for our 60th.)*



*Lucille and Avi*

To get an idea of how this year's graduates view us, at our graduation the 60th reunion was for the class of 1903 – most of whose members were born in 1881.

As of November 2022, just over two-thirds of our matriculated Class of 1,038 was alive. By way of comparison, for all US white males who were eighteen years old in 1959, the survivorship was 46%. For many of us, however, this or the next Reunion will be our last (at the next Reunion most of us will be approaching 87).

A full six decades have passed since our graduation (we sometimes wonder how that could be). Over those sixty years, we and the world have undergone both subtle and seismic transformations. Three-fifths of a century has altered not only our ages, but also the economics, technology, styles, and politics of our age.

On May 31, 1963 the Dow 30 closed at 727. (The NASDAQ didn't exist until 1979.) Of the thirty companies on the Dow that day, only one (Procter & Gamble) is still on. (You could win some bar bets on that.) Five years ago, six were still on. Many of the remaining twenty-nine companies have disappeared altogether as corporate entities. Size and profitability are no inoculation against future failure. In 1963, it was inconceivable that General Motors, the nation's largest and most profitable company, could ever face bankruptcy.

Some more 1963 to today comparisons:

1963	2023
Federal budget: \$111 billion	(CBO proj.): \$6.12 trillion (55 times as large)
Defense: 48%; Deficit: \$4.8 billion)	Defense: 12%; Deficit: \$1.15 trillion (240 times as large)
Median family income: \$6,249	(2021): \$70,784
Gallon of gas: 29¢	



1963	2023
Average cost of a new car: \$3,233 (Cadillac: \$5,000)	
Average cost of a new house: \$12,650	
Eastern Airlines shuttle (BOS–NY): \$11	(2022): Delta shuttle \$204 (Eastern Airlines no longer exists)
Postage stamp: 5¢	
Loaf of bread: 22¢	
12 oz. steak at Mory’s: \$7.60	Steak and Shrimp Chimichurri: \$39
Taft Hotel (single/night): \$6.00	(2022): The Taft, now an apartment complex, sold for \$52.5 million in 2022
One year at Yale: ~\$3,000	Yale: \$80,700 (tuition: \$62,250) Harvard: \$76,963 (tuition: \$52,659) Princeton: \$79,540 (tuition: \$57,410)

**Comparisons with inflation:**

- Consumer Price Index (CPI) 2022/1963: 9.5 : 1  
i.e. \$1.00 in 1963 bought what \$9.50 bought in 2022
- the cost of a year at Yale has increased at about three times the rate of inflation;
- the federal budget at over six times;
- the federal deficit at over twenty-five times;
- median family income at about 1.2 times.

**In 1963:**

**Top movies:**

- Cleopatra
- From Russia With Love
- It’s A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World

**Some songs that became #1:**

- Blue Velvet (Bobby Vinton)
- He’s So Fine (Chiffons)
- Deep Purple (Nino Tempo & April Stevens)
- Hey Paula (Paul & Paula)
- Surf City (Jan & Dean)
- So Much In Love (Tymes)
- Our Day Will Come (Ruby & The Romantics)

- My Boyfriend's Back (Angels)
- It's My Party (Leslie Gore)
- I Will Follow Him (Little Peggy March)

--- and sixty years later we remember the music to each one.

Then, in the spring, unsolicited counsel of indeterminate verity: Jimmy Soul's "If You Wanna Be Happy" ("for the rest of your life never make a pretty woman your wife. So, from my personal point of view, get an ugly girl to marry you.")

The Beatles broke onto the U.S. music scene in late 1963.

**Top TV shows:**

- Bonanza
- The Twilight Zone
- The Andy Griffith Show
- The Beverly Hillbillies
- Leave it to Beaver
- The Dick Van Dyke Show
- The Flintstones
- The Fugitive
- Alfred Hitchcock Presents
- Perry Mason

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In 1963 the first liver transplant took place, zip codes were implemented, and the Lava Lamp was launched. But Studebaker closed, as did Alcatraz Prison, and the US nuclear submarine Thresher sank in the Atlantic.

1963 also witnessed the introduction of:

- the Instamatic Camera
- touch tone phones
- pull-tab cans, and
- tape cassettes (we played records; after a long hiatus, they're making a partial comeback).

But unknown at our graduation were:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•cell phones</li> <li>•portable phones</li> <li>•smart phones</li> <li>•answering systems</li> <li>•faxes</li> <li>•snowmobiles</li> <li>•ATMs</li> <li>•SUVs</li> <li>•MRIs</li> <li>•CDs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•DVDs</li> <li>•GPS</li> <li>•cruise control</li> <li>•disposable diapers</li> <li>•plastic bottles</li> <li>•home microwave ovens</li> <li>•photocopiers</li> <li>•flat-screen TVs</li> <li>•personal computers (and all their progeny)</li> <li>•digital anything</li> <li>•and a host of others.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



Also yet to come:

- moon landings
- mini-skirts
- permanent press
- leisure suits
- bell-bottoms
- long sideburns and long hair on men
- tattoos on women
- blue hair on both genders  
(there were only two)
- thong clothing
- AIDS
- high-tech sneakers
- tofu
- sushi
- disco
- rap music
- Zoom (and the need for it)
- body jewelry

TVs were black and white, and we actually had to go to the set and turn a knob to change channels – of which we were lucky to get three (and those only with deft adjustments of antenna “ears” and horizontal and vertical control knobs). There was virtually no cable. Most cars came with only AM radios and bench seats. Cholesterol was an unknown term, as was ecology. Doctors routinely smoked, even in hospital rooms, along with most everyone else. A Web site was a spider’s residence. Apple was only a fruit. But we didn’t need pliers to open everything from the store, because no maniac had yet poisoned a bottle of Tylenol.

Social media would have meant announcements for mixers. Collegiate concerns about micro-aggressions and safe spaces were non-existent. Political differences were not yet tribal, and political discourse was still civilized.

Lockdowns occurred infrequently with prison riots. Only bandits wore masks. Women wore hats and gloves. Men stopped wearing hats with Kennedy.

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When we graduated, John Kennedy was President. (In 1960, he and Lyndon Johnson had defeated Richard Nixon and Henry Cabot Lodge in one of the closest presidential races in history. Unlike others, we always have the year of Kennedy’s assassination at our fingertip – along with the deaths of Robert Frost and Pope John Paul XXIII.

In 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech; the Ba’ath Party took control of Iraq, the shah ruled in Iran – although most of us could have found neither country on a globe, nor another one called Vietnam.

In New York City the tallest structure was the Empire State Building – as it was again for over a decade until April 2012. Yale’s archways and entries were always open. Terrorism and riots happened only in distant lands. Through no metal detector, with luggage uninspected and shoes unremoved, we simply walked across the tarmac (not a jetway) and up a portable stairway to board an airplane.

We were among the last classes to go through college when the campus did not convulse in synchrony with the world’s agitations. From today’s perspective our bright college years were almost a time of insular innocence. But we did not regard it that way then. In the autumn of our senior year, the Cold War catalyzed the Cuban Missile Crisis. The world came to the brink of nuclear war (how close was not learned until twenty-five years later). That the Soviet Union would collapse on its own in less than a quarter century seemed, at the time, inconceivable.

But by commencement, optimism was in full flower. We commenced with that special feeling

reserved for credentialed youth; that we had (almost) all the answers, unlimited energy, infinite time, and a prescription for victory whatever the challenge. Now we have less time and fewer answers; perhaps, at least, we ask better questions.

When we were kids there was a popular TV show called “You Are There.” Each week it reenacted a historical event, periodically interrupting the action for questions from hypothetical reporters embedded, as we would now say, among the protagonists. The host was Walter Cronkite, and he ended every program with the same words:

*“What sort of a day was it – a day like all days, filled with those events that alter and illuminate our lives. And you were there.”*

Since graduation we have been there for some 21,914 days of alteration and illumination – including, for each of us, some days that were more dark than illuminated. But in reflecting back, we gain added respect for the accuracy of our alma mater’s prophecy:

*“How bright will seem through memory’s haze, Those happy, golden, bygone days.”*  
How bright, indeed, do they now seem.

Robert Penn Warren was a professor of literature at Yale when we were here. His Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, “All The King’s Men,” ends with:

*“...soon now we shall go out of the house and go into the convulsion of the world, out of history into history and the awful responsibility of Time.”*

We were in the “house” of Yale for four years; we have been out for sixty. As undergraduates we did not contemplate, nor could we comprehend, a temporal passage of such magnitude. I have lived through the six decades, but I cannot tell you where the years have gone. Again from the Alma Mater:

*“...How swiftly are ye gliding by,  
Oh, why doth time so quickly fly?...”*

Now we members of the Class of 1963 reconvene. The sixty years that were in our future are in our past. For all the divergence in life’s paths over that interval, we share one convergence – our awareness, growing daily in poignancy and acuity, of the awful and precious responsibility of Time.

—December 2022





