

Cheltenham High School Class of 1968 40th Reunion Committee Report

The CHS Class of 68 Reunion on November 7 and 8, 2008 was a resounding success due to the efforts of a great organizing committee. Preparations for the reunion began scarcely five months before the event in June, 2008, when I contacted both Sherry Wolf and Stu Sarshik inquiring about our 40th reunion. Sherry had been chairperson for the 30th, and Stu was the former student council president.

I had my first meeting with Stu in mid July, 2008. We met for dinner and discussed possible plans for a reunion. From that meeting we reached out to others to form a committee and had our first meeting in August, 2008.

Meanwhile I was busy calling former classmates. While the class of 68 was not the biggest CHS class, it did have about 530 students. Taking information from the 30th reunion, the CHS Alumni Association, and using all of the tools available on the internet, I was able to reach a large number of classmates by telephone. Of the 530 about 260 were reached by telephone in the months of July and August, 2008. In combination with earlier reports and updates while making these calls, it was determined that about 32 former classmates were deceased. It is important to note that the tools now available on the internet make this effort so much easier (in many cases even possible) than it would have been 10 or 20 years ago. Many calls led to dead ends, but I found that calls to wrong numbers more often than not resulted in courteous responses. My guess is that there are many calls like this made. I have even received a few myself about other peoples reunions. It was time consuming but fun, almost like detective work, and so rewarding to find missing classmates.

I had created a class web page after the 30th reunion in 1998 with pictures and a password secured class list, so I expanded on that and created a 40th reunion page which included online registration, a blog, memorial page, pictures, and pages for some of the elementary and junior high schools. We also secured our own domain name - CHS-68.org

Information from the web page registration form was directly transferred to a Microsoft Access database where school pictures, scanned from the yearbook, were added. Fields included all contact information for the classmate, including elementary and junior high schools attended, and an opportunity to make comments. The database also had a question about desire to attend the reunion which gave us a rough idea of how many to expect. Often one call led to information about finding others.

As calls and contacts were made, classmates were directed to the web site to register their information. This relieved the committee from having to enter all of this information manually. As the database grew, it was sent out regularly via email to all that had registered. After the initial phone contact virtually all information was disseminated via the web or email.

Two email lists were created, one which included all registered classmates and one which included the organizing committee. The committee grew to eleven members and included Stu

Sarshik, Jeb Breit, Irene Cooper, Doug Crompton, Barbara Dando, Dave Friebel, Chris and Susan Levey, Hal Shanis, Carol Shore, and Sherry Horowitz. Dinner meetings were held at Mirna's Café in Blue Bell throughout August and September, 2008.



CHS Class of 68 40th Reunion Committee.

Seated, Carol Shore, Stu Sarshik, Irene Cooper, Barbara Dando, Standing Doug Crompton, Chairman, and Chris Levey, husband of Susan Levey. Not pictured are Jeb Breit, Dave Friebel, Sherry Horowitz and Hal Shanis.

The committee decided on a two day reunion event. Because of the late notice, we were unable to secure a Saturday evening venue for dinner so we decided on Friday evening and booked the Spring Mill Manor in Ivyland, PA for Friday evening November 7. At our first meeting, Stu and I discussed the possibility of having an open house at CHS. Stu was able to reserve the School for the afternoon of Saturday, November 8. We now had two big events to plan and only about two months until the reunion.

In the last few months we continued to register classmates and provided an online form that could be mailed with a check for attendance to the reunion. Our treasurer, Irene Cooper, did an outstanding job of keeping track of the attendees and funds. Those attending were passed to me and noted into the database. This made it possible to easily print name tags with

pictures for the reunion. For prior reunions we had paid a service to do this, but with technology advances and the one integrated database it was much easier to accomplish this task on our own.

Jeb Breit was able to obtain a DJ from Eddie Bruce Entertainment for Friday evening and we met with Spring Mill Manor to plan to the event. Spring Mill was great and did just about everything. We had minimal decorations. Spring Mill supplied the school color linens. Carol Shore arranged balloons and laminated pictures at each table. Memorabilia display and registration tables were setup in the entrance room and the CHS banner was displayed on the wall. Dinner was a stations buffet with a cash bar. Special recognition and thanks to class member Iris Persofsky Goldschmidt, President and CEO of Airport Wireless, who donated over \$1000 in door prizes which were given out with drawings throughout the evening.

The Saturday event at CHS, although informal, was actually harder to plan because we were renting a room and everything else was on us. Jeb Breit and Dave Friebe planned and acquired the refreshments. Prior to the event Susan Levey and Barb Dando created a list of former teachers and sent out invitations to those for which we had contact info. Arrangements were made with the school for student tours during the afternoon. Decorations consisted of mums on the tables, and some of the left over decorations from the evening before with the CHS banner again hung on the wall. Because we wanted to avoid wasting leftover food, all food was prepackaged. The unused food was given to the CHS Student Council for use in their Thanksgiving gift basket project.

We were especially excited that many of our teachers were able to attend the Saturday open house at CHS. Attending were Ron Dellecker, Jim O'Reilly, William Norton, Ed Bringham, Wilma Slyoff, Kay Stretton (Tom Stretton's wife, the former Kay Dubee, Tom was unable to make it due to another engagement), Harvey Fleegler and wife Cheryl, Dale Sander, Leonard De Pue, Linda Lonsinger, and Joe Nejman.

Teachers who sent regrets were Joesph Reavy, Thomas Sexton, Elaine Hunter, Trudi Hertfelder, Betty Dando, Roy Buri, and Daryl Biser.

From the comments received from attendees this was our best reunion so far. Certainly for many it was because it was their first. I do not have a count, but I would guess as many as 10 to 20 had not attended a prior reunion. I had more than one person tell me that they had never been contacted before to attend a reunion. Having attended both events, I would have to say they were uniquely different. While it was great to have the excitement and energy that the large crowd and entertainment provided on Friday night, the four hour informal open house on Saturday seemed to provide a much better opportunity to socialize in a relaxed atmosphere. Just being in the school, going on the tour with fellow classmates, and having former teachers present put me, and I am sure others, in a very reflective mood.

Now that we have the database more or less up-to-date, with email addresses for everyone, and a web page for updates, we will no longer have to go through the task of finding everyone again in five or ten years. In addition to the web page we have a CHS68 group on FaceBook and a mail list, and Blog where classmates can stay connected in the future.



Doug Crompton and Dave Friebel hand checks from the Class of 1968 40th reunion to CHS Alumni Association Chairperson Betty Cataldi and member Rich Marburg, February 11, 2009.

The cost for the reunion was set at \$68 per person, which covered both the Friday night dinner and the Saturday Open House. We sold Saturday only admission for \$20 after we met our quota of about 150 for the Friday dinner. The attendance count for the reunion was a total of 167 for Friday night. This included 86 classmates and 81 guests. The Saturday open house had about 80 attendees. Monies collected exceeded expenditures due to judicious spending by the committee. This resulted in an excess of \$3500. \$1000 of this was from monies in escrow from the 30th reunion in 1998. The committee decided to put \$2000 in escrow with the CHS Alumni Association for the next reunion. The remaining \$1500 will be given to the CHS Alumni Association. \$500 designated for general operating expenses and \$1000 to be used for a specific item or items which would directly benefit CHS students such as library books. It is specifically requested that this not be for one time events or infrastructure expenditures.

For those who like statistics, the number of classmates that attended without a guest was 54%. The number of classmates who registered for the database was 40%. The number of classmates who attended the reunion was 17%. These numbers assume 500 living class members.

And finally I want to thank everyone, the committee, the attendees, teachers, the CHS Alumni Association, and the CHS administration for helping to make our 40th reunion such a great success. We intend to have a 45th reunion in 2013. See you there!

Doug Crompton
Chairperson, 40th Reunion Committee, CHS class of 1968
January, 2009

CHELTENHAM HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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June 13, 2009

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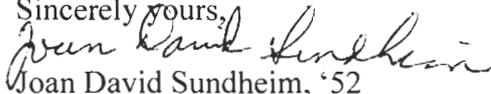
Dear Douglas:

The Alumni Association would like to thank you for your check in the amount of \$3,501.56. It was distributed, as you requested, in the following manner.

1. \$500.00 to the alumni association operating fund.
2. \$1,000.00 for the high school. We are waiting for the principal to let us know how this money can be used.
3. \$2,001.56 for the class of 1968 escrow account.

Many thanks again.

Sincerely yours,



Joan David Sundheim, '52
Corresponding Secretary

