

Monday, February 28, 2011. Memorials.

MR. GALBRAITH: At this point we would like to read the memorials of the NAPSG members who have passed away in the last year. Our former president, Burch Ford, will help me do that. Copies of these are on the table for you as you leave the room.

Burch:

MS. FORD: Interestingly, in thinking about this part of our program, I really see it as a sacred rite in this organization, for a couple of reasons. One is because I think it's so important to acknowledge the heads of school who have gone before us and led the way for us and to acknowledge that with gratitude, for the example they set, but also for the inspiration of what they have accomplished and what that means for us, because I think the work that we do really is God's work, and that this is an opportunity to be reminded of that, and in hearing the stories of those who have come before us, I think the inspiration that their lives infuse for us really does that and reminds us of the power and the privilege of the work that we do and the impact that we can have on the families that are, in fact, our schools.

The first memorial I'm going to read is for Lyttleton Bowen Purnell Gould, Jr., and this was written by James Carney, who was also a head of Purnell School.

Lyttleton Bowen Purnell Gould Jr.

Lyttleton Bowen Purnell Gould, Jr., consummate lifelong educator, died quietly and peacefully, as he had lived, on December 30, 2009 at Essex Meadows, Essex, CT, his home for the past many years. Lytt left behind a daughter, a son, two step daughters, ten grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren and over twelve hundred alumnae daughters of Purnell, the school he founded with his beloved Sis in 1965.

Lytt Gould was born September 10, 1919 in New York City and made his life's work in and around those environs for his ninety years. He was a graduate of Hotchkiss in 1939 and of Yale College in 1943 where he was a member of DKE and Elihu. During the Second World War, Lytt served as lieutenant in the U S Navy, as a Skipper of a sub chaser and as Executive Officer of a destroyer escort in the Pacific. His love of the sea would follow him throughout his life.

And some would argue that life began, indeed, on June 21, 1947 when he married Mary (Sis) Krech Jackson (d. 1995) to whom he was married for 48 years. Lytt was devoted to Sis, a gentle lady of great warmth and grace, whom he adored to his last breath. Together they built a life of purpose and dedication, Sis, ever the dauntless partner, joined him every step of his path in education.

Lytt began his career at the Landon School in Bethesda, MD where he taught American history, coached football and baseball and served as the head of the middle school from 1947-



'55. Thereafter, he became the Headmaster of Far Hills Country Day School in NJ until 1963 when he and his wife Sis founded The Purnell School in Pottersville, NJ where he served as the first Head (and Sis ever at his side as Co-Head) until he retired in 1973.

Purnell was an idea well ahead of its time. Lytt believed passionately that there ought to be an alternative to the then highly competitive college preparatory schools for girls (it could easily have been for boys too). He believed that people learn differently, that all students do not come in the same mold and that one size should not fit all. He believed that success in life depends on more than a college education, that self-confidence - a sense of self worth is at the core of being and of being successful. This was long before research taught us that learning is a function of neurological development and that we need to understand where the learner is and begin there, and that there are many kinds of intelligence including emotional. Not everyone bought into his ideas but he persevered and built what today would be considered a school in the progressive tradition, a school whose founding principles resonate today, a school that prospers in the 21st century.

Lytt was a mentor too. He always had time for "you" (he even spoke to strangers in an elevator). He had a generous heart, an open spirit, a kind soul. Lytt always spoke of "we," whether meaning his adored Sis or his family, or his friends, or the community in which he lived. I don't think I ever heard him speak of "me;" he was too busy thinking of others to be self-absorbed. And he was ever the teacher - rarely telling you what to do (unless, of course you were somehow in the way of the boom or had slack in the main sheet); his way was carefully to nurture, to prod, to steer.

I know this for sure - first while a young teacher and dean at Purnell and later when my wife Laurie and I were selected to succeed Lytt and Sis as co-heads in 1973. We were very young, some might say insufferably so. Much could have gone awry - but it didn't. Lytt and Sis saw to it: They guided gently, whispered softly and cheered loudly. Lytt allowed us to presume to lead and together - we kept firmly in place those guiding principles by which he and Sis had founded the school: Consideration of others, truthful relationships always, and the use of common sense.

Such an educator was well recognized. Lytt was a member of the board of Miss Porter's School, Holton Arms School, Garrison Forest School, Briarcliff College and of course Purnell. He served as trustee of Mystic Seaport Museum and Lyme Academy of Fine Arts of which he was also Chairman. Upon retirement from Purnell, Lytt and Sis located in Hadlyme, CT where Lytt then had the chance to support Sis in her passion as a pioneer in horseback riding for the disabled through the NAHRA. They founded what is today the nationally esteemed High Hopes Therapeutic Riding Center in Old Lyme, CT where they hosted equestrian events for the Special Olympics in 1995.

Lytt was an inveterate sailor. He was the proud captain of Tamaqua, which he sailed from their camp at Long Cove on Vinalhaven, ME. He also maintained a traditional lobster boat, a day sailer and a shell for Sis to do her daily rowing. Should you have happened into Long Cove while cruising Penobscot Bay, you might well have come upon a welcoming mooring. You then would have discovered by a note attached that it was yours for the asking, assuming of

course that you would send a donation to either Purnell School or High Hopes! While never a reliable income stream for either institution, the grateful checks floated in year after year.

Lytt was a longstanding member of The Headmistresses Association of the East and The National Association of Principals of Schools for Girls and cherished the friendship and collegiality that he gained from both organizations.

Lytt Gould was one of the good guys. He knew not of duplicity. He was open to ideas, openhearted, principled, always a man of good cheer and handsomer than a king. Lytt Gould left a footprint; we are all the better for his passing our way.

*James H. Carney II
Head 1973-'79
Purnell School*

MR. GALBRAITH: The NAPSG Memorials Chair is Blair Stambaugh, who wrote the next memorial, and sends her regrets and promises to be back with us next year when her health is better.

Macdonald Brooke "Mac" Halsey

Macdonald Halsey led the Kent Place School in Summit, New Jersey from 1965-1980. He died on March 23, 2010 in Bedford, Massachusetts at age 91, leaving a son and daughter, 6 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife, Anne, and a son and grandson, both namesakes. In addition to his family, his legacy includes being the first man to head Kent Place, a venerable school founded in 1894.



His path to Kent Place led from Elizabeth, New Jersey where he was born, nearby Pingry School from which he graduated in 1936 and the class of 1940 at Princeton University where he followed his father, two uncles and a great uncle. He majored in German and Classics and derived the nickname, "Rabbit" after running sprints on the Varsity track team.

Following Princeton, he served as a triple threat (teacher, coach and dorm master) at the Thacher School in Ojai, California, pausing in a long tenure over a 22-year period (1940-1962) to serve in World War II as a Navy Lieutenant on a destroyer escort in the North Atlantic. In 1962, he returned to the East Coast when he was appointed Principal of the Upper School at Sidwell Friends School. He became Head of School at Kent Place in 1965. The keystone of his philosophy was the centrality of a superb faculty. When he retired, an endowed fund in his name was initiated to support faculty professional development.

The President of the Board at the time of his retirement said of Mac Halsey, "He relied on the trust he developed among all constituents of the School as the cement to hold the

institution together.” This skill served him well during the turbulent 70’s, where he maintained a steady course directing an all girls’ school despite pressures to merge with an all boys’ school. He enlarged the financial aid budget, enriched curriculum, initiated a Parents’ Association in a formal way and established a Summer Program benefiting under-served middle school students.

Beyond the school, he was President of the NJ Association of Independent Schools and on the Council of NAPSG, as well as a Board member of Montclair Academy. In addition to NAPSG, he participated in Head Mistresses and CDSHA.

I remember his sense of humor, the twinkle in his eye and his unfailing geniality. He looked out for younger colleagues and made them feel welcome. In his obituary, the following was noted, “Mr. Halsey will be remembered by his family and friends for his kind and gracious manner, his understated sense of humor, his love of language and his unfailing ability to see the best in any person or in any situation.”

He did the headmasterly thing of spending retirement in Maine on Peaks Island where he was close to the water and sailed and played tennis into his 80’s, though he stopped keeping score and merely enjoyed the sociability of the sport. Well done, Mr. Halsey.

Written by Blair Stambaugh

MS. FORD: This next memorial is for Joyce McCray, and it was written by Marjo Talbott.

Joyce McCray

Joyce was born on September 28, 1932, in Hammond, Indiana, the only child of Milton and Madeline Gevirtz. She was forever proud of her Midwestern roots and would regale us with stories of going to Chicago to shop at Marshall Fields – in fact, her friends and family would receive at least one box of Frango mints each Christmas. Joyce craved walleye pike and often had it shipped to her in D.C. for special occasions.



Her mother passed away when Joyce was young; but her father, who was a pioneer in providing excellent health care for all, died only a few weeks shy of his 100th birthday.

Joyce was an excellent athlete who also followed sports intently. She boasted with pride of being a great fan of Indiana basketball, to the point of forcing friends many years later to watch the movie “Hoosiers” with her. More than any other sport, though, tennis became her passion. As Aggie Underwood noted, “every match was characterized by her tenacity, effort and competitiveness...Joyce got balls no one should. Every point was life or death.”

Joyce graduated from Hammond High School in 1950 and was one of three in her class to take the College Board, receiving a record score that earned her admission to Wellesley. As was always the case, Joyce embraced her new home with gusto. She was one of the college’s

most loyal fans and became Class President. Each time her reunion came around, Joyce would organize the activities – she always was looking for the next party.

She went on to earn a Masters degree from Yale and Harvard University, and worked in various non-profits and political campaigns. She moved to NYC with her husband, Dick McCray, who had gone to Yale Divinity School but then took Joyce's advice to become a medical doctor. For a while, Joyce stayed home to raise three children: Jennifer, Wilson, and Susan. Joyce always had a huge amount of energy – which, she admitted, could be overwhelming if not properly channeled. Supposedly, one day when her kids were school age, they greeted her with a brief case and urged her to go back to work.

She immediately landed a great job at Professional Children's School, where she became the Head of the Upper School. Later she became the Director of Development at Ethical Culture School. Surprising even herself, in 1977 she was offered the job of Principal at Friends Seminary, even though she was not technically a Quaker! Joyce helped to turn around an institution that had been floundering both financially and programmatically. She was an extraordinary executive, manager, and educational leader. As one graduate wrote: "Most interesting, and perhaps ironic, is that Joyce, known as an exquisite talker, knew so well when to be quiet. She knew when and how to listen, and how to keep the silence of faith."

After 12 exceptional years as a Head of School, she decided she wanted to do something different and moved to Washington, D.C., a city she loved because it was the center of our national government. She was fascinated by politics and wanted to help make the system work better. She became the Executive Director of the Council for American Private Education and was extraordinarily successful, once again making a difference.

When she stepped down from CAPE, she became Vice President of IES, one of the founding partners in Resource Group 175 with Edes Gilbert and a very influential search consultant. As such, she helped NAIS find Pat Bassett. She had always been an incredible mentor to many of us, but in this role she helped shape school leaders for the next generation. She also selflessly served on many school boards, including Collegiate, William Penn Charter, Sheridan, and Maret. As one person noted at her memorial service, Joyce "was a mother to us all." How true!

Written by Marjo Talbott

MR. GALBRAITH: This memorial was written by Blair Stambaugh as well.

Miriam Putnam Emerson Peters

On November 4th, 2009, The Danvers Herald Newspaper reported the death of Miriam Putnam Emerson Peters on October 29th, that same year, at home in Northampton, Massachusetts. Mrs. Peters was 100 years old and had kept up her Head Mistress Association membership, though her last headship ended in 1970. She had been the head of the Mary A. Burnham School for ten years, merging it with the Stoneleigh School in Greenfield in 1968. She served the resultant Stoneleigh-Burnham School as Co-Principal for 2 years before retiring. Prior to those years, she had founded Burnham-by-the-Sea, a summer school for girls in Newport, which she helped run from 1950-58.



Well educated, she received her diploma from the Alliance Française in Paris in 1931, and a certificate of study from the University of Grenoble. In 1932, she graduated from Smith College cum laude. She began teaching at the Bolton School in Connecticut, then the Emerson School in New Hampshire, and for three years, she was head of the Howard School in West Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Miriam was an amazing person for several reasons. One, she had a passion for family and history. To wit, her letters to her Mother from her year in France in 1931 are in the Smith College Archives.

In addition, she was a direct descendant of General Israel Putnam of Danvers, who commanded the battle of Bunker Hill. She lived in his house in her early years along with her two brothers and parents. In 1992, she and her one surviving brother deeded that historic family home including all the furniture, clothing, papers and land to the Danvers Historical Society. The archivist for the town said, “The gift including papers from the 17th-20th century and artifacts and documents are the history of the Emerson family. They are the entire contents of one family.”

Her life was meaningful and an example to the students of her day. In addition to being a member of the Head Mistresses and a Past-President of NAPSG, she served her church as a trustee and deaconess. She was a volunteer at the Cooley Dickinson Hospital, President of the Tuesday Bridge Club and a member of the Historical Societies of Danvers and Northampton. She traveled to over 40 countries.

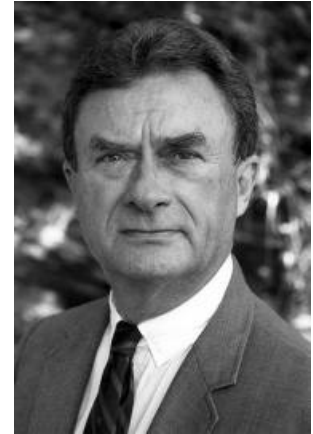
While she may not have led a multimillion dollar capital campaign or worn a hard hat dedicating a new building, she was much beloved by her students and faculty. One has only to look at a YouTube video on the Stoneleigh-Burnham website or read the reflections of a life well lived in the Spring 2010 Bulletin to know that!

Blair Stambaugh

MS. FORD: This memorial is for John Harrison Wright, Jr., and was written by Blair Stambaugh with help from Bruce Galbraith and Renee Bennett.

John Harrison Wright, Jr.

“Jack” Wright was born in 1930 and died on July 9th, 2010 at the age of 80. He graduated from Murphy High School in Mobile, Alabama in 1948 where he was in 2006 elected to the School’s Hall of Fame for outstanding alumni. He earned his BA at Sewanee, the University of the South and a Master’s degree from the Harvard School of Education, where he received the Alumni Book Prize for being first in his class. He served in the US Air Force during the Korean War as a photo interpreter with the US Air Force Intelligence. Following his service, he taught and was Admissions Director at Sewanee Military Academy. He later taught on a Fulbright Grant in Italy and Lebanon. When he returned to the USA, he became Dean of the Faculty at Chatham Hall in Virginia.



Subsequently, he became Headmaster of the Gill St. Bernard’s School in New Jersey, and the Masters School in Dobbs Ferry, NY from 1980-1990. At Dobbs, he maintained a strong tradition of academics, faculty support and service. His legacy included creating more on campus faculty housing and establishing an endowed fund for teaching enrichment. When he retired in 1990, the School created the Jack and Win Wright Scholarship Fund to provide education to daughters and relatives of Masters School alumni/ae. Jack’s final headmastership brought him back full circle to St Luke’s in Mobile, following several years as Head at Bermuda High School for Girls. The current Head of St. Luke’s has said, “Jack Wright inspired anybody he came in contact with. He loved education. He loved being a lifelong learner He loved kids.” The Jack Wright Award was named for him at St. Luke’s, given annually to a middle school student who was tops in English and writing. Following his retirement, he returned often to events at school. He leaves his wife, Win, four children and their spouses and five grandchildren.

When Win wrote of his passing to NAPSG she said, “We both used to love NAPSG Conferences more than any other”. Rest in Peace, Jack Wright.

*Written by Blair Stambaugh with help from his obituary from The Press-Register,
assisted by Bruce Galbraith and Renee Bennett, Master’s School.*

Please join us for a moment of silence.

Thank you. And if I might, on a completely different note -- and I hope this doesn't sound disrespectful -- when Judith was being introduced and we were told something about the etymology of both Sabbath and school, and the relationship with leisure, I couldn't help remembering something Samuel Johnson said, which might be comforting to any of you who are feeling a little bit guilty about being away from school. He said, "All intellectual improvement arises from leisure." So enjoy until we reconvene. Thank you.