

SAVE THE DATE

NEW CANAAN HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1959 50TH REUNION

OCTOBER 9TH, 10TH, 11TH, 2009

“New Canaan High School Class of 1959.” Sounds kinda classy—because it is classy. Our graduating class closed out a decade that had absorbed and moved past the hardships of WWII and the Korean War. But a new kind of war, the “Cold War” was in full swing. It didn’t impact us much, then.

We came along too early to be “Baby Boomers” but that was just our good luck! So, we knew Elvis, the real Elvis, in a decade that added Rock ‘n Roll to the world’s music genres. “*Bird Dog*” by the Everly Brothers, “*At the Hop*” by Danny & the Juniors, “*Earth Angel*” by the Penguins, and “*Lonely Teardrops*” by Jackie Wilson, to name just a few classics, weren’t oldies to us.

New Canaan’s own Vance Packard was defining and identifying the stratification of class in our society. The list of literary masterpieces that originated in our decade is much too long to even start to enumerate here. But many writings foretold the coming social upheavals of the 1960s.

For better or worse, our decade saw television replace the radio as the most technologically advanced appliance in our homes. The movies we saw at the New Canaan Playhouse and the Norwalk Drive-In changed too. Classic love stories and musicals gave way to rebelliousness, tough, gritty actors, again foreshadowing the upheavals of the decade to come. And prosperity created a new form of entertainment: shopping.

Gasoline at New Canaan’s stations cost 30 cents a gallon, and a uniformed “gas station attendant” pumped it for you! Those mega mobiles we cruised town (or went “parking”) in took \$5 in gas and seven or eight of our friends (all in the front seat). Seatbelts were a thing of the future.

In 1958, the NCHS Choraleers sang at a conference of the New England Association of School Superintendents in Swampscott, Massachusetts. In the audience was the keynote speaker—young Congressman, future President of the United States, John F. Kennedy!

Graduates of NCHS Class of 1959 have gone on to fill almost every imaginable roll and career: i.e. doctors, lawyers, nurses, therapists, scientists, teachers, technicians, journalists, computer experts, venture capitalists, Wall Street bankers and brokers, real estate moguls, politicians, visual and performing artists, and, ever so important, dedicated moms and dads.

If you don’t know it already, many of our classmates (maybe you included) have achieved wonders with pens, typewriters, paints, brushes, musical instruments, voices, cameras, and, yes, computers. The Class of ’59 can boast of having visual and performing artists who know their stuff. If they aren’t all professional, well, they could be. And we’ll see their works at our reunion because there is going to be an arts festival.



Now we’re asking ourselves “is it possible that nearly 50 years have passed since those times?” Well they have and on **October 9th, 10th, and 11th, 2009** we’re going to celebrate not just those times but we’re going to celebrate who we are, what we’ve become and the world we’ve helped build.

So what do we have to look forward to at our reunion?

The Arts Festival will be held Saturday afternoon at the Library. We have reserved New Canaan Country Club for Saturday night dinner and are working on a place for Friday evening and Sunday morning brunch. We estimate the cost at about \$125 per person for the weekend activities.

Our website (<http://nchs1959.blogspot.com>) will allow classmates to catch up in advance and will be the place where we will also post any updated times and locations of events.

We will reserve a block of rooms at the Court Yard by Marriott conveniently located in Norwalk on Route 7 for a group rate. (That rate is currently \$79 plus tax.)

50TH REUNION ARTS FESTIVAL

A committee is working feverishly to bring about a 50th Reunion Arts Festival at the New Canaan Library during the reunion weekend and after. So we are going to see some examples of what we have achieved in the arts professionally and avocationally (you won't find that word in the dictionary, but who cares, we know what it means).

There's going to be poetry and prose to read, to listen to and most importantly, to inspire us. We'll see and hear the voices and instruments of our musicians. And there will be artwork to appreciate and maybe take home. The afternoon will finish with wine and cheese. The list of contributors to this event grows, but the Class of '59 Arts Committee wants to hear from anyone who has ever created anything and would like to put it on display. This could include anything from painting to poetry, from pottery or quilting to an articulated robot (hey, everything is art!). So, please get in touch. Here are the people to contact:

VISUAL ARTS: PAMELA CHATTERTON-PURDY PDPURDY@YAHOO.COM 508-430-1422

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: DICK PERRY RSPERRY@STNY.RR.COM 607-962-2669

CHORALEERS: DAVE EMMERICH DAVID.EMMERICH@SUNYSB.EDU 631-751-6116

Sign up for Choraleers and if you act now and contact Dave you will get your very own copy of the famous May 20th, 1959 Choraleers Spring Concert CD!

POETRY & LITERATURE: ANDREA COUSINS A.COUSINS@EARTHLINK.NET 413-549-2887

Andrea needs your prose and poetry in "exhibit-able" (read that "hard") copy form by June 1, 2009 Mail to: 63 Montague Road, Leverett, MA 01054

SUGGESTED REUNION MANNERS BY EMILY POST-IT

- *Refrain from saying "Oh, you haven't changed a bit since high school." We all know we've changed, at least on the outside. Instead try: "Gee you look great for an old geezer."*
- *Give people time to find the right pair of glasses when you have something to show them.*
- *If you don't recognize people by their pictured name tags, pretend you do.*
- *Limit pictures of your children to 10 and your grandchildren to 20.*
- *Take only 15 minutes to talk about each grandchild. For great grand children take all the time you want.*
- *Talk loudly, like we did in the halls of NCHS, but for a different reason.*
- *Unless there is a paramedic in the room don't throw your arms around someone if they don't see you coming.*
- *If there is any dancing, make it slow. OK, it will be slow anyway even if the music isn't.*
- *If you haven't been back to New Canaan in a while, don't be surprised to see a mansion soaking up the lot where your house used to be.*

Steve Gravereaux, Chairman, Reunion Planning Committee, spgarg@optonline.net
Special thanks to Craig Tomkinson for writing this newsletter.