

# CLASS OF 1966 50TH REUNION YEARBOOK

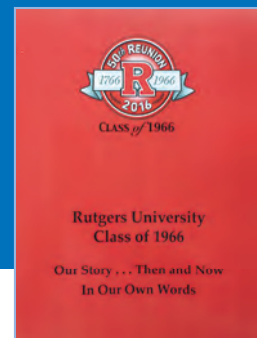


PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANE HARDIES DC'68.

By Hal Shill RC'66 and Larry Benjamin RC'66

**I**t all started in November 2013 with an email call to classmates for memories of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy—the most startling event of our generation—50 years earlier. The overwhelming and deeply moving responses prompted calls for recollections of other undergraduate experiences, and a Class of 1966 history listserv was created. Its members contributed a treasure trove of memories, telling the story of a special group of graduates (Rutgers' bicentennial class) living through a special and historically significant time (1962–1966).



YEARBOOK EDITORS AND WRITERS (FROM LEFT) STEVE FRAKT, HAL SHILL, ED MALBERG AND LARRY BENJAMIN WITH COPIES OF THE YEARBOOK PRESENTED AT THE CLASS DINNER. PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANE HARDIES DC'68.

Class president Ted Hardies RC'66 and the class officers felt that these recollections should be published and presented to the university as a gift from the Class of 1966. Funds were raised from class leaders and listserv participants to cover the publication costs. Other classes have compiled reunion books that included a class history, classmates' profiles, and an "In Memoriam" to deceased classmates—but we were unaware of any that featured a "Class Memories" section capturing detailed memories of undergraduate life: why we decided to attend Rutgers, freshman year, dorm life, food and drink, academic experiences, sports, planning for the future, and many others. Those

recollections—from 53 classmates on 31 topics—and postgraduate life stories and photos are combined into our 50th Reunion yearbook, "Our Story ... Then and Now in Our Own Words."

Freshman year was a year of profound adjustment. Dean of Men Cornelius Boocock warned us to "look at the man on your left and the man on your right" (Rutgers was all-male at



DEAN OF MEN CORNELIUS BOOCOOCK. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE FRAKT RC'66.

the time), then realize that only two of us would still be around for graduation. Nearly 500 of us were temporarily housed in experimental dorms at The Heights.

Ed Malberg RC'66 wrote in the class history chapter of the yearbook, "It was not ... recognizable as a campus. Nor were the living spaces ... recognizable as dorms. The men there didn't have beds ... they had units that featured mattresses on wooden shelves." That arrangement lasted only one term. As Ray Kaden RC'66 put it, "Second semester at the new Clothier dorm was like going to heaven."

Classroom work brought new challenges. English Composition, in particular, brought back bad memories.

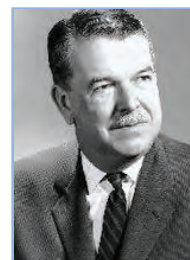
"I hadn't a clue about all the hidden meanings of the stuff we were reading," Alan Lemberger RC'66 wrote, referring to sexual themes embedded in short stories. "I'm an engineer. I interpret things the way they are written."

Advised that the professor was "big on the Oedipus complex," fellow engineer John Bravo RC'66 attributed all literary characters' behavior to that condition and

earned a B in the course. In contrast, many of us were spellbound by superb lectures from senior faculty in the Western Civilization course.

That first year also introduced us to dorm life, campus and grease truck food, fraternities, ROTC, media, other extracurricular organizations and—of course—sports, whether intercollegiate, intramural, or just as fans. The email response showed that we shared so many experiences, but may have gone about them in very different ways.

"We lived in a series of 'parallel universes' without realizing it at the time," Michael Perlin RC'66 said.



PRESIDENT MASON W. GROSS. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE FRAKT RC'66.

We also learned that the university president, Mason W. Gross, didn't just stay in his office. He was a regular presence on campus—as a teacher, adviser, leader, and listener.

In the 50th Reunion Yearbook, Walt Orth RC'66 recalled that Gross invited the crew team to his office for a chat and would even show up at practices. When angry students protested food poisoning from Commons



ALAN LEMBERGER RC'66 AND WALT ORTH RC'66 HAVE A LIFE-TIME OF SHARED EXPERIENCES. THEY MET IN KINDERGARTEN AND WERE ON THE CREW TEAM. PHOTO COURTESY OF LARRY BENJAMIN RC'66.

food, Gross spoke to the protesters and assured them the situation would be corrected. They knew he would keep his word and dispersed.

Ours was a class not only passionate about campus issues, but



THE DAILY TARGUM FRONT PAGE ON NOVEMBER 22, 1963, CREATED UPON LEARNING OF THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE FRAKT RC'66.

about ones that changed the world. News of the Kennedy assassination made that November Friday of our sophomore year unlike any other. The campus was closed, and the scheduled football game with Columbia was postponed.

“People were walking around in a daze, some crying, others in disbelief,” Lou Chazen RC'66 recalled. “We were all glued to the only TV on the dorm floor for the weekend.”

This would not be the only time the world beyond Rutgers would challenge our priorities. Early in our freshman year, the Cuban Missile Crisis prompted classmates to wonder whether we faced imminent incineration in a nuclear war. Classmates later petitioned on behalf of a Rutgers senior arrested for engaging in a voter registration campaign in Georgia. The escalating war in Vietnam prompted an all-night teach-in late in our junior year. Remarks supportive of the Viet Cong by Eugene Genovese, a history professor, became a national story and an issue in the state's gubernatorial campaign that year. President Gross spoke out strongly in defense of freedom of speech, resisting political pressure for Genovese's dismissal. The Daily Targum's anti-war editorials prompted a campus visit by FBI agents to Perlin, who also served as the newspaper's editor-in-chief.



KEN JOHNSON AND TED HARDIES AT THE CLASS OF 1883 MEMORIAL GATEWAY AT OLD QUEENS, WHICH THE CLASS RENOVATED AS ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY GIFT. PHOTO COURTESY OF LARRY BENJAMIN RC'66.

Those are a few anecdotes from our undergraduate story, now 50 years in the past. The “Profiles” section picks up the story by bringing the reader up to date with the lives of 129 classmates since graduation. An “In Memoriam” listing identifies deceased classmates. Short biographies of these classmates, gleaned from reports in the “Class Column” of Rutgers alumni magazine, and personal tributes from friends are included.

The “Profiles” essays detail the remarkable professional and personal achievements of our classmates. Jack Jacobs RC'66 and Dave Schuller RC'66 are honored in Rutgers' Hall of Distinguished Alumni. Jacobs received the Medal of Honor for his gallantry in Vietnam. In April, the Army ROTC Scarlet Knight Battalion headquarters was dedicated to Jacobs and Frederick Kroesen RC'44. Schuller was recognized as a “renowned leader in treating cancers of the head and neck.” For four decades, he helped lead cancer research at Ohio State University.

Members of the Class of 1966 have succeeded in many fields. Take aerospace: Ken Johnson RC'66 was a pioneer in the design and launching of satellites from the Lockheed Martin Space Center. Or agriculture: Bill Castle RC'66 started the pomegranate industry in Florida. Or oceanography: Bob Embley RC'66 led many explorations using submersibles and unmanned robotic vehicles to map the ocean floor and discover new life forms. Or law: Perlin is a widely recognized advocate of mental disability law. Or theater: Eric Krebs RC'66 is a Tony-nominated producer of off-Broadway shows. Or politics: Wayne

Valis RC'66 served in the White House under Presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

Classmates also used their essays to share moving personal stories. George Lane RC'66 tells how he and his wife decided to accept a daughter with Down syndrome. As a result of that experience, he wrote a book about parental choices and the blessings of a special child. Jeff Grote RC'66, a freshman football captain who became an award-winning architect, expresses his appreciation to coach John Bateman for refusing to allow him to continue playing football after suffering three concussions.



MICK AND RICK WEISZ HOLD THE CLASS OF 1966 BANNER WHILE ANDY LAWRENCE HOISTS THE 1966 FLAG AT THE ALUMNI PARADE DOWN COLLEGE AVENUE. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE WEINER RC'66.

“Coach Bateman was way ahead of his time, and I remain grateful for his judgment,” he wrote.

This yearbook is one of our class' many contributions to Rutgers and to American society. “Our Story” is part of the larger Rutgers' story. History professors have asked permission to use its memories in their university history courses. The “Class Memories” also stand as a unique contribution to social history, capturing the 1960s college experience through the eyes of its participants. By linking 50-year-old recollections with current biographies, this volume documents our transition from the undergraduates we were to the people Rutgers helped us become. ✨

*Hal Shill is class historian and Larry Benjamin is class correspondent of the Class of 1966. They co-edited “Our Story... Then and Now in Our Own Words.” The yearbook is available for \$42.89 plus shipping and taxes by ordering online: [www.createspace.com/6110156](http://www.createspace.com/6110156).*