

2013

O'Callahan Society Newsletter

O'Callahan Society, College of the Holy Cross

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O'Callahan Society 2012 and 2013 Newsletter



In Memoriam – Reverend John E. Brooks

In July 2012, the Holy Cross community lost one of its giants, Father John Brooks, the longest serving President in the College's history. But before he was President and even before he was a Jesuit, he was a soldier in World War II and his life experiences made him a strong supporter of the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) and a perceptive critic of its needed changes.

The O'Callahan Society is proud to have made Father Brooks the first recipient of the Captain Harry R. Moore Award at the 2011 O'Callahan Society Dinner for support to the Holy Cross ROTC programs (see page 3). These programs were not the only instances of Father Brooks' support for those who served and were about to serve in the nation's military forces. A little known example of this support was described by Lester Paquin, a founding member of the Society, at the 2012 O'Callahan Society Dinner.



Lester Paquin 2012 Dinner Remarks

There is one chair which remains empty tonight – symbolic of the sense of loss so many of us feel.

Last year, in this magnificent room, we honored the **Rev. John E. Brooks, S.J.**, President Emeritus of the College of the Holy Cross, with the CAPT Harry R. Moore Award, for his tireless efforts in retaining and strengthening the ROTC Unit here on campus during the tumultuous days of the Vietnam War – when so many other administrations at so many other colleges across the country were losing that battle

Here is another Fr. Brooks story: It was 1992, and a Committee had been formed by Worcester's mayor and City Council to host and appropriately display the replica of the national Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the city. I was on that Committee, along with Pierce Gould, Worcester's Veterans Services' Agent. Our first order of business was to decide where the so-called "Moving Wall" would be located during its stop in the city.

The question – Where is the most magnificent and honorable spot in Worcester for such a tribute? – seemed to have a simple answer: Mount Saint James. Gorgeous campus, magnificent view.

So Pierce and I boldly and naively sat down with the NROTC Unit's then-Commanding Officer, Timothy Winters, expecting immediate acclaim for our idea. The fact that CAPT Winters was a Vietnam veteran would certainly seal the deal.

"Are you out of your minds?" CAPT Winters thundered. "They don't so much as plant a geranium on this campus without proposals, meetings, reviews and fundraisers – all so carefully thought-out that we'll all be retired by the time they actually tell you no."

Smarter men would've taken that as a cue to excuse themselves. Not us. We persisted. CAPT Winters eventually – albeit reluctantly – agreed to arrange an appointment with Fr. Brooks.

When that day arrived, we appeared in CAPT Winters's office – Pierce and I in the suits the Captain had instructed us to wear, he in his dress whites. We followed the officer up the hill on that very hot August day – into the President's outer office, to await what CAPT Winters was sure would be our prompt but courteous dismissal.

Fr. Brooks' secretary opened the door, and we filed in – greeted by the man himself, dressed in golf shirt and chinos, sitting behind that massive desk.

"Come on in, boys," he said, adding "You must be a little warm all dressed up like that."

I knew then that we'd be fine.

We presented our plan, which included the placing of the Moving Wall on the sloping lawn just outside the Hart Center.

"That isn't going to happen," Fr. Brooks said. "They'd kill me. Here's what we can do – put it on the baseball field. You just tell me when, and I'll see to it. Sound good?"

We all nodded, expressed our thanks and said our goodbyes. To this day, I think CAPT Winters was back in his office before his heart started beating again.

The week-long visit of the Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall to Holy Cross in July of 1993 was an incredible, healing and emotional experience. Once the Moving Wall was positioned on the ball field, the College's groundskeepers landscaped the site on orders from above – complete with flagpoles, trees, plants, in-ground lighting and mulch – to look like it had always been there.

Under CAPT Winters's supervision the NROTC Unit, now Ensigns having been commissioned only weeks before, became the site's administrators. They planned and executed ceremonies, concerts and remembrances that are still talked about.

And every night during that amazing week, at sunset, a man in a green Lincoln Town Car would drive down the hill and park a respectful distance from the site. Fr. Brooks would emerge, dressed in a suit and collar, and stand at attention as "Taps" was sounded. After the nightly benediction, delivered by a Vietnam veteran, Fr. Brooks would slip quietly back into his car and head back up the hill. He attended every concert and ceremony that week; often walking the length of the Moving Wall to talk with visitors – many of whom had no idea who he was. He also politely declined to offer prayers or remarks at the site – always deferring to Vietnam veterans for that honor, claiming he had not earned the right to do so.

When it came time for the Moving Wall to leave Holy Cross and the City of Worcester, Fr. Brooks summoned Pierce, myself and CAPT Winters back into his office.

“What has happened here on this campus, this week, must not be allowed to end,” he said. “We all have to think of a way to keep this spirit alive, to do whatever we can to make sure the men and women who leave here to serve their country do so with as much support as we can give them.”

Within months, CAPT Winters had enlisted the support of Bill Dempsey to the cause, and the rest, as they say, is history.

So tonight, we mourn the loss and passing not merely of a dynamic college president and staunch advocate of providing the best education possible to our future military leaders. We also bid a reluctant and fond farewell to our founder -- a dear friend, supporter and mentor, who saw in a group of eager public servants the chance to connect the lessons and legacy he and Harry Moore established during the Vietnam War with a meaningful mission of support and encouragement for the NROTC Unit into the future.

In the remarks which have become the mission statement he penned for the O’Callahan Society in 2009, Fr. Brooks wrote that the value of having military leaders educated at small liberal arts institutions, means they are educated to possess, in his words: “an open-mindedness, reflected in one’s respect for other points of view, [a] tolerance for ambiguity, [a] passion for the truth, respect for the facts, and [a] willingness to pursue them to uncomfortable conclusions.”

His gifts shall not be soon forgotten, nor will he.

2011 Captain Harry R. Moore Award Text

In recognition of his long service to and support of ROTC at the College of the Holy Cross

At the beginning of his tenure as President of the College, when many colleges and universities were banishing ROTC programs from their campuses, Fr. Brooks led a collaborative effort among faculty and administrators which forged a pragmatic process for retaining these programs at the College by strengthening them academically and enhancing their relevancy and effectiveness in advancing the intellectual and ethical formation of prospective Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force officers.

Always a champion for liberal arts education for military officers, Fr. Brooks served on the Air Force’s ROTC Advisory Committee of select college and university presidents and was instrumental forming a similar body for Navy ROTC.

In the final years of his presidency when there were concerns about the continued viability of the NROTC Unit, Fr. Brooks supported enhancement of the College’s recruitment for the Unit. This led to the establishment of a committee that later became the O’Callahan Society. He continues to serve on the Society’s governing Board.

By his outstanding leadership, judgment and service Fr. Brooks has made a deep and an enduring contribution to the College of the Holy Cross and the United States of America.

Twelfth Annual O'Callahan Dinner

September 22, 2012

Over 230 college administrators, NROTC midshipmen, Army ROTC cadets and numerous friends and guests joined the members of the O'Callahan Society on September 22, 2012 for the Society's 12th annual dinner and reception. The theme of this year's event was one of both celebration and solemn remembrance as dinner attendees recognized the extraordinary dedication, professionalism and service of the Navy's special warfare community and the 50th anniversary of the issuance of a presidential order, by President John F. Kennedy, establishing the Navy SEALs ("Sea Air and Land" Teams).

The evening's program began with a special tribute to the memory of two men, LTJG Edward D. Murphy, a 1951 graduate of the Holy Cross NROTC program and a member of Underwater Demolition Team 5, and LTJG John P. Connors, a 1987 alumnus of Worcester Polytechnic Institute and a member of SEAL Team 4, who gave their lives in the line of duty. A respectful silence enveloped the Hogan Ballroom as the all too brief lives of these men were remembered. The Society was deeply honored to have members of LTJG Murphy's and LTJG Connors' families, as well as a number of their friends and classmates present for this tribute to the bravery and devotion to duty that exemplified the lives of these fallen officers.

In keeping with the evening's theme, the dinner's keynote speaker was RADM Garry J. Bonelli, Deputy Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. Admiral Bonelli began his Navy career as an enlisted member of Underwater Demolition Team 12 and subsequently served as Commanding Officer, SEAL Team 5 during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990-91. In 2006, Admiral Bonelli was named Chief of Staff for the Naval Special Warfare Command and, in 2008, became the Force Deputy Commander.

Admiral Bonelli's remarks offered the dinner attendees a glimpse into the shadowy world of special warfare operations and a general overview of SEAL team operations around the world. He also discussed some of the special challenges arising from the extreme demands of extended global operations, which confronted the Naval Special Warfare Command and, the more human costs and challenges faced, by the Command's elite members and their families. The admiral concluded his presentation by engaging the attendees in an informal question and answer session during which he recognized the presence in the audience of his first platoon leader.

The evening's spirit of camaraderie was enhanced by the music of the Navy's Northeast Regional Band and a selection of songs by the student a cappella group, "Fools on the Hill", who entertained the dinner attendees to their own rendition of the Navy Hymn as the evening drew to a close. By any standard, the 12th annual dinner was a successful event.

13th Annual Dinner – VADM Barry Costello '73 to Keynote

This year's dinner is scheduled for Saturday evening, October 5, 2013, to coincide with Fall Homecoming weekend. Prior to his recent retirement, Admiral Costello was Commander, Third Fleet and in 2001, he served as Commander Task Force 55 during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Further details on the 13th annual dinner will be made public as arrangements are finalized.

Unit News

Ensigns and 2nd Lieutenants Commissioned

2012: In May, the NROTC Unit commissioned sixteen graduates in separate commissioning ceremonies. On May 10, five NROTC graduates from WPI and four MECP graduates from WSU were commissioned at WPI in a joint ceremony with Army and Air Force ROTC graduates. MGEN Timothy McHale, USA was the commissioning officer. On May 25, LTCOL Paul B. Brickley, USMC, commissioned seven Holy Cross graduates in the Hogan Campus Center.

In his remarks LTCOL Brickley '93 (son of John P. Brickley '61 BGen USMC Ret) stressed the value of their liberal arts education as they assume leadership of sailors and marines. The six 2nd Lieutenants reported to The Basic School. The ten Ensigns reported to: flight school (4), submarine training (3), surface combatants (2) and explosive ordnance disposal training.

2013: This spring, fifteen midshipmen were commissioned: thirteen ensigns and two 2nd lieutenants. In a joint ceremony at WPI with Army and Air Force ROTC, seven WPI ensigns were commissioned on May 10. On May 24, CAPT John Schneider '87 USN administered the oath of office to six Holy Cross ensigns and two 2nd lieutenants in the Hogan Campus Center. CAPT Calvin Slocumb addressed the fifteen new ensigns and second lieutenants, their family members, Father Boroughs and other members of the campus community.

Initial assignments included flight training, nuclear power school, surface warfare school, explosive ordnance training, SEAL training, and Marine Basic School.

Change of Command

Following the 2012 commissioning ceremony, the Society presented Captain Ron Harrell with a replica of the O'Callahan Bowl for his active embrace of the traditions of the College's proud Navy ROTC Unit especially the legacy of Father Joseph T. O'Callahan SJ. Captain Harrell was bonged ashore with side boys from the unit staff and the newly commissioned officers.



In June 2012 CAPT Harrell retired from active duty and moved to Jacksonville FL where he commands an NJROTC unit. CDR Jamie Godwin, the Unit XO, became the Acting Commanding Officer of the Holy Cross NROTC Consortium which now consists of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester State University and Yale University as well as the College.



In April 2013 CAPT Calvin Slocumb became the 26th Commanding Officer of the Holy Cross NROTC Consortium. He comes to Holy Cross from a tour as Commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron TWO, comprised of twelve permanently forward-deployed ships in Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory--the Navy's largest squadron. For CAPT Slocumb's full bio go to the College's web site at <http://academics.holycross.edu/nrotc/staff>. CDR Godwin continues to serve as the Unit XO.

President's Review

Since the spring of 1951, midshipmen have passed in review before the president of the College. Battalion strength is currently 60 – 90 midshipmen and includes students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Worcester State University. In 1999, the Society joined thirty other organizations that annually make award presentations to midshipmen for individual achievement.

2012: The reviewing party included Reverend Phillip Boroughs S.J., the new president of Holy Cross; President Dennis Berkey, WPI; President Barry Maloney, Worcester State; Dean Mary Miller, Yale University; Rear Admiral Richard Breckenridge, Commander Submarine Group Two; and Captain Ron Harrell, Commander Holy Cross NROTC Consortium.

Awards included: the Society's Fr. Joseph T. O'Callahan Memorial Bowl to Midn 1/c Mary Shaw; the 1st Lieutenant John Power '41 Memorial Scholarship (also commemorating LTJG John Connors WPI '87) to SSGT Jacob Macomber, USMC; and the LTJG Frank Malinski Memorial Scholarship (also commemorating LTJG John Martin HC '67) to Officer Candidate Glenn Tetreault USN.

2013. Held April 12, Susan Goddard Dooley '81 LTCOL USMC (Ret) who was the first woman commander of the Holy Cross midshipmen battalion was the speaker. Ms. Dooley is the Director of Admissions at the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey CA.

Midn 1/c Frances Klimzack was awarded the O'Callahan Memorial Bowl by Reverend John Savard S.J., Rector of the Jesuit community at Holy Cross. The John Power '41 Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Midn 3/c James D'Angelo and the Frank Malinski '62 Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Midn 4/c Grant Brinning.

Reunion Open Houses

2012: In the O'Callahan Room in Carlin, over 45 alums enjoyed coffee and conversation with the Unit's Acting Commanding Officer, CDR Jamie Godwin USN, staff officers and eight Ensigns. Classes represented: '47, '51, '52, '55, '56, '62, '67, '87, '72, '77, '87, '92, and '07.

2013: At this year's open house, CAPT Calvin Slocumb USN, staff officers and nine new Ensigns welcomed 20 alums from classes '51, '63, '67, '68, '73, '78, '88, '03, and '08.

Society News

O’Callahan Fund Established at Holy Cross

For more than a decade, the O’Callahan Society and its predecessor, the O’Callahan Committee, have supported the NROTC Unit at the College from donations raised from its members and friends. That support funds activities that enhance the experiences of midshipmen and recognizes their achievements.

In July 2011, at the request of the Society, the College established the O’Callahan Society Initiatives Fund. The College transferred the balance of \$3100 from its O’Callahan Committee Fund (established in 1994) to a new restricted fund account. This new fund is “...to be used for future deposits by alumni and friends for support of the O’Callahan Society and payment of the society’s initiatives.” In October 2011 the Society deposited the balance of its bank checking account, \$4000, into the O’Callahan Society Initiatives Fund. On June 30, 2012 the O’Callahan Society Initiatives Fund balance was \$9087 as reported at the 2012 Annual Meeting.

Donations to Holy Cross that are designated to the O’Callahan Fund will continue to support the College NROTC Unit. The College will acknowledge these donations.

Former Vice Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff on Campus

In April 2013, General James Cartwright, USMC Ret, spent two days at Holy Cross. On the first day, the former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under Presidents G. W. Bush and Obama addressed the campus community regarding “Changes in The Future of the U.S. Military Presence and Activity” in Seelos Theater in Kimball Hall. That evening the College hosted a dinner for the general and a small group of students and faculty and the next day, General Cartwright met with two political science classes as well as with the College’s NROTC midshipmen.

The general’s visited was co-sponsored by the College’s Peace and Conflict Studies Program, the US Naval Institute and the O’Callahan Society.

Leadership Succession

At the 2011 Annual Meeting, Bill Dempsey advised Society members that Jack Nugent had stepped down as vice chair of the Executive Committee (ExComm) and that he intended to step down as Co-Chair of the Society and Chair of the ExComm before the next annual meeting. Jim Delehaunty agreed to serve as vice chair immediately and, effective January 1, 2012, when Bill stepped down, Jim became Co-Chair of the Society’s Board and Chair of the ExComm.

William Dempsey ’63 – Chair Emeritus – O’Callahan Society

At its January meeting, the ExComm formally recognized Bill Dempsey’s eighteen years of leadership of the O’Callahan Committee and the O’Callahan Society. The committee named Bill Chair Emeritus of the Executive Committee and, at its 2012 Annual Meeting, recognized Bill as Chair Emeritus of the Society. At the annual dinner that evening, Bill was presented with a replica of the O’Callahan Bowl inscribed with the Society’s motto “Duty-Devotion-Service”.

Remembrance

New Book about Fr. O'Callahan, Holy Cross and the USS Franklin

Published in 2011 by the US Naval Institute "*Saving Big Ben – the USS Franklin and Fr. Joseph T O'Callahan*" is a great read for Holy Cross alumni especially those from the '40's, '50's and '60's. The chapter titles and sub titles will challenge your Latin.

"Father Joseph T. O'Callahan was the first military chaplain to receive the Medal of Honor. An unlikely war hero, the bespectacled Holy Cross math professor who became the U.S. Navy's first Jesuit chaplain served in combat in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. He was on board the USS Franklin, an aircraft carrier known as "Big Ben," in the Okinawa campaign in early 1945 when a kamikaze attack nearly destroyed the ship and killed hundreds of sailors. As the Franklin lay dead in the water, consumed by flames and drifting toward Japan, the chaplain organized firefighting crews and ministered to the injured and dying..." USNI promotion

The author, John R. Satterfield, not only documents Franklin's ordeal and the Fr. O'Callahan's gallant actions, he draws on Jesuit sources to reveal a campaign that was waged by the Jesuits and others that ultimately resulted in the Medal of Honor award in 1946.

LTJG John Connors WPI '87: At the June 2012 first reunion weekend open house, members of the NROTC Class of 1987 [see photo] gathered by the Silver Star Wall of Honor in O'Callahan Room in Carlin to remember their Unit classmate who was killed in action in Panama in 1989 leading SEAL Team Two.



Major Joseph M. Loughran '55 USMC: Led by Leo Scolafo and Joe Mullaney, members of the Class of '55 honored their classmate killed in action at Khe Sanh, Vietnam, on May 2, 1968. They placed a plaque on a bench that is located in Memorial Plaza behind O'Kane Hall, where there other benches dedicated to other Holy Cross graduates.

LTJG John E. Martin '67: At the 2012 President's Review, Tom Rooney '67, on behalf of the Society presented an award in the name of classmate and roommate. Jack died at Naval Air Station Lemoore, CA on March 6, 1969 when the P-3 he was on board crashed.