



THE *Skirmisher*

BORDENTOWN MILITARY INSTITUTE

“RATHER BE THAN SEEM”

BMI Alumni Association, P. O. Box 91, Bordentown, New Jersey 08505



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Tersina Di Pietro, Editor

SUMMER 2017

President's Message:

It's been well over 40 years since BMI closed its doors. I am sad to say that there is a generation of Bordentown residents who have little idea what BMI was all about. The primary mission of your Alumni Association is to keep the memory of Bordentown Military Institute alive. One way we do this is by sponsoring various programs/projects around Bordentown. My favorite is our scholarship program at Bordentown Regional High School. For 92 years BMI enhanced the future of every cadet that graduated. It is only natural that we invest in the future of the BRHS Class of 2017. Executive Board Member Jim Lynch '73 (Jim is also the Mayor of Bordentown City) and I had the privilege of presenting scholarships in the name of BMI at the Awards Assembly this past June. The participants submitted essays for consideration. The BMI Scholarship Committee consisting of Bob Frisbie '61, Jeff Nissim '66, Jim Lynch '73, and Joe Porter '67 reported that the selection process was difficult because all of the essays were excellent. The scholarships were awarded as follows: \$1,500 to Leanna Diaz; \$1,000 to Emma Gerike; and \$150 each to Tiana Ramirez, Morgan Roock, Brianna Pagnani, and Alexa Piplos. We extend congratulations to the recipients. Once again, Bordentown Military Institute was brought to the forefront of Bordentown's history.

Reunion 2018 will be held on October 20, 2018, so mark your calendar now. We look forward to seeing you there.

Respectfully,

Jack

Jack Harkins '67

P.S. Don't forget to go into our Website (www.bmicadets.org). Click on “Subject Page” and browse to your heart's content. Many times we receive questions from alumni that could be answered by searching the Web. If you do not have computer capability, then feel free to write us at BMI Alumni Association, P. O. Box 91, Bordentown, NJ 08505. We are here for you and YOU are why we are here.

Rather Be Than Seem - Motto of B.M.I.

by Joe Porter '67

The motto of Bordentown Military Institute (BMI) was first found in Cicero's essay, "*On Friendship...esse quam videri.*" The essay quoted "virtute enim ipsa non tam multi praediti esse quam videri redunt." (Translation - "Few are those who wish to be endowed with virtue rather than to seem so.") Other great writers such as Sallust, Aeschylus and even Plato, used similar lines.

BMI's motto has been in place since 1881. There are over 75 schools, past and present, throughout the world, who use this motto. These include: Appalachian State University (1899), The Episcopal Academy (Newtown Square, PA), Hartford Public High School (Hartford, Connecticut), The Ellis School (Pittsburgh, PA), Royal Holloway (University of London, Surrey, England), University of North Carolina (Charlotte, NC), and Wavell State High School (Brisbane, Australia). Even TV personality, Stephen Colbert, inverted the phrase on his show as "to seem to be, rather than to be."

The state motto of North Carolina is "esse quam videri" which means "to be rather than to seem." It was made the official state motto in 1893 (twelve years after BMI). North Carolina was the last of the original states to adopt a state motto.

Many people have asked, "What does the motto mean?" Well... North Carolinians have been quoted as saying, "We don't feel as though anything; we feel things or we don't. And we will tell you about it, rather than telling you that it may, perhaps, somewhat, be something that might well have crossed our minds." In other words, be direct rather than "beat around the bush" and be indecisive. It takes a special person to be direct and do it rather than just talk about it and not do it. As the people from North Carolina say, "We were the last of the thirteen colonies to come up with a motto and it shows tenacity. We would rather be precise than seem so."

Click on: [esse quam videri](#) and read more on Wikipedia about BMI's great motto - "Rather Be Than Seem."

CLASS NOTES

'42 We received an email from newcomer **GERRY MARSHALL**. He wrote, "I remember 'The Hollow' (all of us smoked), Vespers, and marching to church on Sunday. While I was at BMI, my name was Gerard. However, when enlisting in the Marine Corps, I could only find a birth certificate for Gerald and I have used that name ever since." (*Ed. Note: It was good to hear from you, Gerry. Welcome!*)

'43 Steven Cahn, son of the late **HERBERT L. CAHN**, wrote to say that his Dad passed away in 2006, after having attended BMI's 2004 Reunion. He added, "He had a spectacular time and found some wonderful camaraderie from the other 'boys' from his WWII BMI era."

'44 **SID BENJAMIN** is 90 years young! He is one of the seven founders of the current BMI Alumni Association. (*Ed. Note: Thanks, Sid.*)

'47 **BERNARD FEATHERMAN** received the 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award presented by The Highland Beach Coastal Democratic Club in recognition of his lifetime of public service to his community and the Democratic Party. Also, the Footlighters Club voted him Florida's Mayor of the Year. (*Ed. Note: Congratulations, Bernard!*)

'48 **PAUL STANTON** wrote to express his appreciation to the BMI Board members for their continuing efforts in maintaining a viable BMI Alumni Association.

'49 Along with his dues, **EDWIN GLICKMAN** wrote, "Keep up the great work!"

'52 **FRED HUBER** sent us his picture taken in 1946 during his BMI days. He was sitting on the cannon at BMI. He added, "Happy to still be a part!"

'56 **LARRY CRAMMER** lives in Murrells Inlet, SC. He wrote, "If any of my 'old' friends are still around, I would like to hear from them." His email is gmbabelc@aol.com.

FRANK GIOVE wrote, "If I am still alive in 2018, I will be at the reunion. My brain is that of a 15-year-old but the body is 79 and kicking with the help of bourbon and Our Lord."

GUY HAAG informed us that his wife passed away in 2014. He has a daughter who lives in England with her husband and two children. He added, "They are getting a good education."

'57 **BOB HENDRICKS** is trying to locate **DENNY FRY** from the Class of 1957. If anyone knows where he is, let us know and we will pass the information on to Bob.

'59 **HENRY CREMER** sent us the obituary for **ALEXANDER "BUD" BICKAR**. Henry wrote, "We were quite close at BMI before I went back to William McFarland High School, after which I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. I retired in 1980." Henry is trying to locate **WILLIAM GRIEST '59**.

BOB DENT wrote, "Life is good in Maine. I appreciate the information that comes to us from BMI. That was a very special era in my life. I probably did not realize how special it was at the time."

HARRY CHEBOOKJIAN lives in Cypress, TX, with his wife Loretta.

We received an email from **CHUCK HELLRIEGEL**. He sent his new address in Seabrook, TX. He added, "Sorry I was unable to attend the last reunion but the last NASA Testing for the mockup of the

James Webb Space Telescope before the arrival of the real telescope had to take precedence. Greetings to all my fellow classmates.”

STUART SOMERSTEIN moved to Budapest, Hungary, some time ago. He asked if we have information on **PAUL BEISER '59**. (*Ed. Note: Sadly, we do not.*)

'60 RAY SWANTON wrote to tell us that he now has a “new place to call home.” He and his wife Lisa have moved to The Villages, FL.

MINOT YEATON sent an email telling us that he heard from **RICK SHIPPEN** who told him about the reunion. Minot added, “Great to make contact after so many years!”

'62 PETE MERCATANTI sent a note along with his dues. He wrote, “You are doing a great job keeping BMI alive.”

DENNY TODDINGS wrote, “Great memories reading *The Skirmisher*. Played with **BILL DRUEDING, TOM HEIST,** and **PHIL HICKMAN** on the 1961 undefeated East Coast champs. We also played for University of Delaware's 1963 National Championship team. I would like to hear from any teammates (cell: 609-384-3746). Great time living in Mitchell House.”

'63 We heard from **TOM ASHLEY**. He recalls that the last reunion he attended was the year **FLOYD LITTLE** attended. Tom added, “It was a great affair. I hope to attend again in the future. I live in Charlottesville, VA, and am enjoying retirement and being close to my daughter and her family. We live on a golf course, Spring Creek, and life cannot get much better. I remember fondly the teachers and characters at BMI that made an impact on my life. I especially remember George, the janitor. During my first year I was into carving birds. I left one in George's closet as a token gift for Christmas. That began a relationship of exchanging simple gifts for the rest of my stay. One day I was ready to take the bus to Trenton to take the College Boards when I realized I did not have money for the bus. George came out of the shadows, stuffed a \$5 bill in my hand and left. I also had the pleasure of hearing him play the piano when I came over to Main. He was in the Assembly Hall playing beautiful music on the piano but as soon as he saw me, he stopped and went about his business. George shaped the way I evaluated people for the rest of my life. Never judge a book by its cover!”

'64 ANTHONY LEONARD wrote, “My wife and I moved to Raleigh, NC, in 2011. My youngest son married a local girl. Having breakfast with her father one day I learned he is a graduate of Manlius Military Academy, Class of 1964, and a former football player. That was the only team BMI lost to in that four-year stretch. I have to listen to that story every time we get together!”

'66 JEFF NISSIM wrote to tell us he enjoyed talking with **STEVE SETO** at the last reunion. Jeff added, “It was so great catching up on our lives since our BMI days. What a success he became. It is an honor to know him.”

'67 JOE PORTER did some research on BMI's Motto, “Rather Be Than Seem.” Check it out on page 2. It makes for interesting reading.

STEVE SMITH wrote, “I recently found the hymnal that I kept from the BMI Chapel as a treasured memento. In the 1980s, I traveled with my then young family from California back to my old BMI. I knew a lot had transpired but still I was shocked to see it like that. The Main Building was locked and the dance studio that had rented it had vacated. I went to a realtor who was more than happy to try and sell me Old Main. The asking price was \$125,000 and negotiable. We toured the building and saw there was a great deal of damage. In the back stair hall that led to the Junior School dining room, I saw a pile of chapel hymnals. These hymnals were our class gift to BMI in 1967. Picking one up and opening it showed the dedication to Bessie Smith. When I was on guard duty, it fell for me to give my arm to guide

Mrs. Smith beside Dr. Smith at the wheel of his grey 1965 Cadillac. I asked the realtor if she thought I could take a hymnal. She told me to help myself so I took one. I wish I had taken more because shortly thereafter Old Main burned and all those books would be lost.”

KEN VAN FLEET asked us to put him in touch with **CARTER BROWN**. He added, “We caused a lot of trouble way back then.”

'68 JAY PINTO wrote to say, “See y'all in 2018.”

'69 JOHN KELLY said he was unable to make the last reunion but he will make an effort to get a group together from the Class of 1969 to attend Reunion 2018.

'70 We received an email from **MAURICE “MOE” COLONTONIO**. He wrote, “I read in *The Skirmisher* about **ROBERT WILMOT WILLIAMS'** remembrance of the school nurse. We used to affectionately call her Slippers.”

'71 We recently heard from **JOHN JENNINGS** who lives in Salado, TX, and he is now a member of our Alumni Association. (*Ed. Note: Welcome, John.*)

KIM KOWALCZYK wrote, “All is well with my family. I plan to come to Bordentown some time soon to walk around and reminisce once again and see how things have changed. I am interested in any REAL original photographs of the little red schoolhouse that was somewhere behind Mitchell and the arms room and the tennis courts. I am also interested in purchasing personal or candid original photos of buildings for which I would pay a reasonable price. I am especially interested in inside shots if people want to part with them. Also, I read about Cora Lee. She was truly an angel for many, including myself. I had scarlet fever with a 105 temperature. I even hallucinated from the fever and I remember her staying by my side. Even knowing her for the short time I did made a life-long impression of someone I would truly miss. I am so proud of those who remembered and honored her.”

FACULTY: Steve Libro is a faithful dues-paying member of our Association. He wrote, “Keep up the great job of trying to maintain something that was great. Your efforts are much appreciated.”

We recently heard from Gwen Posich Myers, daughter of the late Col. Lewis Posich, a member of the former BMI faculty. She wrote, “My siblings and I have good memories visiting BMI when my father taught there.”

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues and other contributions, although much appreciated, are NOT tax deductible. If you have not paid dues for 2017, it is never too late. Just send a check for \$20 made payable to BMI Alumni Association and send it to P. O. Box 91, Bordentown, NJ. Thank you. Payment of dues is not a requirement for membership.

YEARBOOKS

We have yearbooks available for years 1965, 1967, and 1968. Requests will be handled on a first-come first-served basis. Some have writing in them but they are all in good condition. If you are interested in receiving one of these yearbooks, email us at bmicadets@gmail.com or send a letter to BMI Alumni Association, P. O. Box 91, Bordentown, NJ 08505, We are charging \$5.00 to cover mailing costs. Please do not send this amount until you receive the yearbook.

IN MEMORIAM

The officers and members of the Executive Board join with the entire membership of the BMI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION in extending sincere sympathy to the families of:

BALDANZI, GEORGE M. '55

BREGMAN, ROBERT '47

BRINTON, DAVID '62

FLURER, JACK '51

FOROSTYNA, ROMAN “RAY” '58

GUIDETTI, RICHARD A. '64

SZEKER, ERNEST '66

YANES, TIBALDO “TIB” '56

For a complete list of deceased alumni, go into our Website (www.bmicadets.org) and click on “In Memoriam.”

On April 19, 2017, **HENRY BERRY '66**, **PHILIP GAFFNEY '66**, and **JEFFREY NISSIM '66** attended the funeral for **GEORGE “SKIP” BONHAM '66**. They traveled to Arlington National Cemetery, attended the chapel service, and then walked to the burial site. There was a color guard, band, and a platoon. There were two black horses that carried the casket. Approximately thirty-seven family and friends attended. At the end of the ceremony, the BMI Alumni Association gave Skip's son a BMI cap in remembrance of his father's time at Bordentown Military Institute.