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“Always go to your class reunions,” says a local columnist in Los Angeles. Okay, I’ll go, no problem. But figuring out how to respond to the twenty-fifth reunion class book info/photo solicitation requires a little more effort, and the prospect of summarizing the last twenty-five years in a page-and- a-half causes me to sit back and ponder where the time has gone.

The summer after graduation I kicked around for a while and went with Stew Powell (’68) to Wyoming, and then off to B school at the University of Chicago. I lasted one quarter. With the war and a mid-ioos draft number, I enlisted in the Naval Reserve for a two-year stint. But after boot camp at Great Lakes and a stint as a seaman apprentice on board ship peeling potatoes and cleaning latrines, I decided that three-and-a-half years as an officer would be a better fate, so I opted for OCS at Newport. When I received my commission I requested East Coast shore duty, but in typical Navy style I wound up as engineering officer on a destroyer headed for ‘Nam. Despite two tours to Westpac, including an unnerving and unwanted stay in Da Nang and a generally miserable career as a line officer, the Navy did indirectly influence my career. While stationed on the aircraft carrier Midway I read The Fountainhead and decided that architect as hero was what I aspired to be. More on that later.

The other thing the Navy did was introduce me to my wife. She was a shipmate’s date at a party, and when they didn’t hit it off I moved in. We were married in 1973, while I was in graduate school studying architecture at the University of California, Los Angeles. Ellen worked as a teacher while I finished school. We settled in Pasadena, California, and our children were born in 1977 and 1980: a son, Nick, who wants to play college hockey on the East coast (Hooli, help me), and a daughter, Megan, who seems to enjoy just about every sport, including soccer, softball (dad as coach), basketball, and swimming. Speaking of sports, I have managed to sustain my tennis game over the years. Even though I was pretty lousy in college, John Skillman, bless him, allowed me to letter senior year. In the ensuing years I actually improved and have had some success winning some seniors forties tournaments locally in Southern California.

Each spring one highlight I look forward to is the return of the Yale tennis team to this area. For the last ten years or so I’ve watched them play successfully against high-caliber, nationally ranked teams. I recently received a tennis alumni newsletter proclaiming the Ivy title for 1993. It is, of course, sobering to realize that I am twenty-five years older than most of these young men. The visit with the team and coaches enables me to get some first-hand news about Yale, and I’m glad to report that the players are a fine group.

Other than that, my main contacts with Yale have been through periodic visits from ex-roommates Steve Holahan, who used to come to Los Angeles every couple of years, and Hal Valeche, who did likewise. We haven’t seen each other since the twentieth, so I’m looking forward to seeing them both. For a while Wayne Willis lived out in this area, and even though we didn’t know one another well in college, we got to know each other better afterward. Same with Wilkes McClave, who lived in Topanga Canyon and whom we visited after the twentieth.

Professionally, I’ve been practicing as an architect for the last fifteen years and have had my own firm since 1980. We specialize in what’s called urban infill housing (read condos), some custom homes, and industrial facilities. A few of my projects have been published in local and national magazines, which I have to admit is nice. The rewards of the profession are mostly intangible—the sense of satisfaction in seeing a building rise out of the ground from a set of drawings I’ve created, knowing that structure will probably outlast me on this planet (barring the Big One in Los Angeles before I go).

My most memorable recent achievement was to hike to the top of Mount Whitney, 14,464 feet, in the eastern Sierras, with a group of mostly under-forty brothers-in-law. I am not a camper/outdoorsman, and it hurt! However, the whole male bonding thing emerged as we encountered something called a yellow-bellied marmot that stole all my food, a bear that ripped open an ice chest and was sent scurrying by a rock barrage from one of the more foolhardy of the group, another guy who retched continuously after we got to 12,000-plus feet but wouldn’t give up until we got to the peak. Certainly the cliche of feeling on top of the world fit when we dragged ourselves over the top.

I guess the imagery of being on top of the world goes with the Yale mystique. In my own case, I can’t measure that in terms of great fame or fortune, at least so far. What I count among my blessings is that Ellen (now a successful marriage and family therapist) and I will soon celebrate our twentieth anniversary together, a marriage that has produced joy, sorrow, ecstasy, a lot of hard work on our relationship and growing intimacy, trust in each other, good health, and two great kids.

Coming back down closer to sea level, I am looking forward to the reunion, to see what the old haunts look like and bring Ellen (again) and the kids (first time) to New Haven