

May 10, 2014

Senior Class Speech

My Dear Classmates of the Class of 1964

In being together on this grand occasion of our 50th Carolina reunion, contrary to Thomas Wolfe's book title, "You CAN'T Go Home Again"...tonight we know that we are...**home again!**

It was a great privilege to me to serve as President of our Senior Class in 1963/1964, and we are all fortunate to be back here 50 years after we graduated.

I want to extend my deep appreciation to Larry McDevitt, Linda Scherk, and all the reunion committees who have worked tirelessly to make this 50th reunion such a great success.

Our Family

I. 4th & 5th Generations

This weekend is especially meaningful and sentimental to me because I am proud to be in the 4th generation in my family to graduate from Carolina. And Harriet and I have 2 daughters, (Caroline and Emi), and they have graduated here as the 5th generation of our family at Carolina.

II. Move to Chapel Hill

I had "a double blessing" with respect to Chapel Hill because I moved to Chapel Hill long before I began school here as a freshman. In 1954 when my family was living in Greensboro, my father got a telephone call from Billy Carmichael of the Consolidated University and out of the blue he asked my Dad;
"Charlie have you ever thought about coming back to

Chapel Hill?” My father’s immediate response was;
“ONLY EVERY DAY!”

Thus in the summer of 1954, my family and I moved to 716 Gimghoul Rd. Our house was “**2 blocks** from the varsity tennis courts; **3 blocks** from Woollen Gym, and **5 blocks** from Kenan Stadium”. In other words, a young boy’s paradise. Often on summer nights, I could hear the chimes of the Bell Tower.

II. Charles Kuralt

You have all heard of Charles Kuralt, Class of 1960 at Carolina. Before he became a prominent national TV broadcaster, Charles Kuralt broadcast Carolina baseball games from Emerson Field. When I was in the 5th and 6th grade, after school I would walk right by Emerson Field when Carolina was playing a baseball game. Kuralt would be sitting in a small chair behind home plate and I would sit down on the ground next to him.

Watching the Carolina baseball game and listening to Charles Kuralt broadcast at the same time was a great joy for a young boy.

III. Football Injury; Played for Dean Smith

When I came to Chapel Hill as a freshman, I had hoped to follow my father's and grandfather's footsteps and play football at UNC, but a serious knee injury during a freshman football game ended my football career. I was fortunate to be able to play basketball for Dean Smith, who became one of the most influential people in my life. Even as a young coach, Coach Smith emphasized the importance of being a true gentleman on and off the court. His devotion to his players and his integrity at the highest level has taught me lessons that I have kept with me throughout my life.

IV. Great teachers at Carolina

We all had the great privilege of taking interesting courses at Carolina taught by outstanding professors who made such a difference in our lives. Bernard Boyd and Sam Hill both had a gift for teaching the Old and New Testament in the most interesting ways. Twenty years later, their teaching inspired me to teach adult Sunday school classes for many years at All Saint's Episcopal Church.

We have all been taught and inspired by great teachers at Carolina. Frank Klingberg, Carlyle Sitterson, and Doris Betts are a few I would name. They were distinguished lecturers, historians and brilliant scholars.

And I will never forget Chancellor Bill Aycock, who received a spontaneous standing ovation from 150 students at the end of one of his lectures in Law School.

I am sure you all have your own list of professors who touched your life during your education here.

V. A Million Thanks To Our Classmates

Some of you may know that I have been recently diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment which most often leads to Alzheimer's. The lessons I learned here at Carolina and the friendships I have made have already been instrumental in my dealing with this disease, and Carolina will continue to keep my spirits up going forward. I am sure all of you have had many challenges in these 50 years. Today what is important is that we are all back here together sharing our experiences and drawing strength from our 54 years friendships.

When I gave our graduation speech on that rainy day in 1964, I remember emphasizing that we are “**not Carolina students for only 4 years but for the rest of**

our lives.” This has turned out to be true. In the last 50 years we have changed tremendously... The world has certainly changed and the University has been through many changes. **But what has not changed 50 years later is our passion for Carolina and what it has meant to each of us.**

Our enthusiasm as students of Carolina is just as strong tonight as it was then because we know the immense benefits of a diploma from this great place, and we are uniquely fortunate to have gone to Carolina together **and that is forever.** So now 50 years after our graduation, we salute and honor our University- **Davie Poplar, The Old Well, The Bell Tower,** and especially the **classrooms and professors** which have been our home and the birthplace of thousands of ideas we were exposed to from 1960-1964.

On this occasion of our 50th reunion, I simply acknowledge that whatever I have accomplished over the last 50 years is based upon, and because of, my youth, my college and law school days in this great place.

By growing up in Chapel Hill, and going to college and Law School here, I am the luckiest student who ever lived.

So *here* is to the future. We still have much to accomplish and now, we have not only the passion of our youth but the wisdom of our age. Let's thank our Alma Mater and make Carolina proud!

Charles M. Shaffer, Jr.