

**A segment from my blog page: Springfield High School Class of 1965,
Remembrances & Reflections**

<https://psalmboxkey.com/shs-1965-remembrances/>

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Baccalaureate and Graduation: Nights to Remember

Nobody was more surprised than me that the evenings of baccalaureate and graduation became joyous occasions, mostly because the stars lined me up with classmates who were also in a rebellious mood. By the luck of height compatibility, I was paired with Bill Chandler for the procession, and he and his buddies entertained us with their humor and lively repartee. I suppose we were expected to display a certain degree of restrained decorum, suitable for the occasions, but we were already somewhere else. On the back of the Baccalaureate program, I wrote,

How can I ever forget the wonderful time I had tonight. Actually, I didn't even want to attend, but mom told me to go. The rehearsal was a riot. I had a terrific partner who couldn't be serious for a minute.

And my notes on the Commencement Program,

For two days, we rehearsed outside, marching in and out in good order. Then the night of graduation, it rains. The next day it was still raining so they had to hold Commencement in the auditorium. That night the class of 1965 gathered for the last time. I will always remember this night because we had a blast! Bill and his friends kept Dorothy and I laughing all evening. We were seated in the back rows, so no one was paying much attention to us. We were passing around candy, Cokes and sandwiches, and someone started to blow bubbles during one of the speeches. When the last person received their diploma, all the graduates started to stamp their feet and wave their hats. I loved every minute!

The principal, Mr. Smith, tried to calm us down, giving us the “shush” sign from behind a curtain, which only created further hysterics. Mustering restraint and dignity proved impossible. After this night, we would be heading out into unknown territories, so how could we possibly contain our enthusiasm and energy celebrating the moment that everything in our lives would change. For an instant, we could let go of high school and the future.

In seven years Bill would be lost, a casualty of the Viet Nam War, leaving behind a wife and two daughters. Many years later I made a pilgrimage to the Viet Nam Veterans Memorial in Washington, and I found Bill's name on the wall. I thought about graduation night, and how we laughed and joked in the back rows of the procession.