



The Blarney Stone

P.O. Box 586 Ashland, KY 41105-0586

Volume 26 August 2015



Where Are They Now?

Siblings' reunion with long-lost brother 65 years in the making

Faded childhood memories of a dark-haired two-year-old boy toddling around the house in Kentucky and a name scribbled on a scrap of paper have led to a unique family reunion this weekend, one 65 years in the making.

On the paper, found in a dining room drawer, was the name of the toddler, Stephen Patrick Tussey, a March 1948 birth date and this: "May have gone to northern Ohio."

From those slender clues, Sharon Horton, now 73 and living in Hilton Head, South Carolina, and her brother, Mike Tussey of Florence, Kentucky, set out to search for a long-lost sibling whom they never really knew.

The search began in the 1960s and was marked by decades of futility. But in May, the mystery was solved and the six and a half decade separation will come to an end this weekend in a small Georgia town just north of Atlanta.

There, Horton and Tussey will meet 67-year-old Rik Kurtz, formerly known as Stephen Patrick Tussey, who has lived in New Tampa for more than two decades, unaware he had a brother and sister.

"It's kind of surreal," Kurtz said this week. "I mean, I'm looking forward to meeting them, but my opinion is this: I think my brother and sister are putting more into it than I am, mainly because they knew I existed. I had no idea they existed."

He and Tussey and Horton have talked extensively on the phone and written back and forth online during the past couple of months, so they are not total strangers.

At two years old, when his mother and father were breaking up, Kurtz was put up for adoption. He was placed with a childless military family.

"My dad was a naval officer," Kurtz said. "We lived in Columbus, Ohio. That's where I grew up."

Over the course of his life, he joined the Air Force and has been married three times, this past week celebrating his 30th anniversary with his current wife. He worked as computer operator at a hospital on the Ohio State campus before moving to Tampa 23 years ago. Kurtz knew from early on he was adopted and tried several times to find out about his biological family.

"I had an aunt (related to his adoptive parents) who said she knew my parents or of my parents," he said. "But she would not tell me who they were. I heard the name Tussey come up, and I called the hospital where I was born, but they said all those records were sealed."

At that time, he was told, adoption was not a topic of polite conversation. His adoptive parents would tell Kurtz only this: "You're adopted. We care about you and that's about all you need to know."

In 1950, Kurtz left a home shared by his siblings, his father, his grandmother and two aunts and went to a home in which he was an only child. "It was a lonely life," Kurtz said. "You don't have a brother or sister to fight with or talk to."

For Mike Tussey, life came and went without his little brother around. It was not a big deal, he said. "One day he was there and the next day he was gone," Tussey said this week. "We didn't know what happened. Nobody

talked about it and my parents didn't tell me anything. And I didn't ask. I was 10 years old and he was gone out of my life."

Tussey has only one memory of his younger brother. "In Ashland, we lived in an old two-story house in the '40s and

'50s," he said. "All I remember about Rik is being in this big ol' house, in a huge dining room, and I can remember a little black-haired kid wandering around the table." That's it.

Years passed, and Tussey married his wife Jo in 1961, and she took up the search for her missing brother-in-law. Occasional tips always led to dead ends, Mike Tussey said. The 1960s slid by. So did the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s.

"We both were resigned to the fact that we had a brother," Tussey said, "but that we would never find out about him."

Horton picked up the search over recent years. With the help of the Internet and a group that helps people find lost relatives, she finally managed to track down her brother in May.

Only six years older than Kurtz, Horton has only one vague memory of her younger brother and it's not really of him, she said.

"The only recollection I have was one day walking down the street with my mother and she was pushing a baby carriage," Horton said. "I was not quite six at the time, and that is my only memory of him."

"Mike and I were aware of it all of our lives, but it wasn't something that was talked about," she said. "Down through the years, I got married and got busy raising my own family. The search for Rik pretty much was pushed to the background."

She said that over the years, she registered with several agencies in the search for her brother but was unsuccessful.

"With the onset of the Internet and what that brought to one's fingertips, it did make it easier," she said. But she still had to contact an organization that conducts such searches to help.

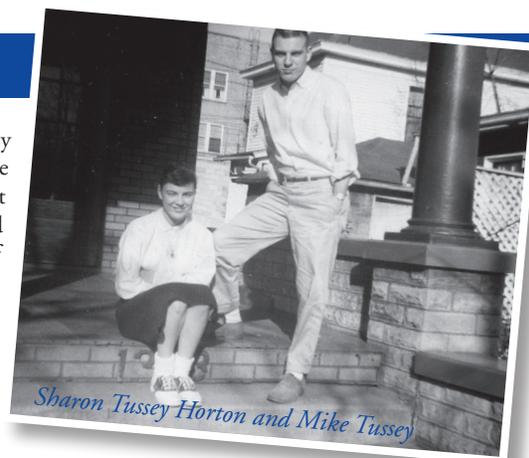
"They were successful overnight," Horton said.

Though she is a little apprehensive about the meeting this weekend, she's looking forward to it.

"Rik and I have had several online conversations and that's been helpful in trying to get a feel for his life."

Tussey said he has no idea what will happen when he sits down with his little brother face to face this weekend. "I don't know what to expect," Tussey said. "It'll be emotional, yes. Will tears flow? Probably."

**This story originally appeared in the Tampa Tribune July 31, 2015, and was written by Keith Morelli.*



Sharon Tussey Horton and Mike Tussey

UPDATE: The reunion went well and Mike and Rik are planning a trip to Ashland soon.



Editor's Letter

Greetings Holy Family Alum and Friends,



I was very sorry to learn of Pauline Appledorn's death earlier this summer. She and Juanita Oliverio were responsible for the wonderful table and wall decorations that appeared every year at the Athletic Banquet in the gym. They

went all out to make it a special event, and I still have many of those decorations packed away in my "shoebox" momentos from high school.

There is still time for the classmates from 1964 and 1965 to send in their reservations for the class reunion on October 10th in Lexington. Looking forward to seeing everyone, so send in your card today!

Invitation is printed on this page in case you did not receive yours in the mail.

– Stephanie MILLER Gallaher '65, editor



Sit up straight and listen!

WE WANT YOU!

Please join your
HFS Classmates 
for the

'64 & '65 Reunion
Saturday, October 10, 2015

Griffin Gate Clubhouse
1470 Sugar Maple Lane, Lexington

Cocktail Hour 6 -7 p.m. (cash bar)
Dinner Buffet 7 p.m.
\$50 per person

Spouses, siblings and guests are welcome with a paid reservation. Reservations due Aug. 21.

Make checks payable to: Carol Hood

*Mail to: Carol Stowe Hood
4125 Tradition Way
Lexington, KY 40509*



Remember When?

When Tommy Was Terrific submitted by Fred Simpson



Tommy Fitzsimmons

It seems only yesterday that my great friend and former teammate Thomas James Fitzsimmons '53 proudly wore the blue and white of Holy Family High. He was one of the finest forwards to ever play the game of basketball in the city of Ashland. I am cognizant of the fact that we have had other outstanding big men to grace the halls of our school and that of Ashland Blazer. Tom would always be near the front of that select group. He was a sleek-muscled 6'3" at a time in the early '50s when forwards ranged around 5'11" to 6'4". His quickness enabled him to rebound with the very best. He could handle the ball like a guard, clean the board and take the ball the length of the floor to score. He had a 15 to 20 footer that he hit with regularity and if you came out to guard him, he was around you - lightning fast!

Tommy came to mind on December 2, as he always does with me on this date, as this was when we lost him to multiple-myeloma in the year 2000. I watched him handle this death sentence with strength and grace, jovial as ever. This was how he handled this problem and this was how he handled life. He was quick witted, a major prankster, a born leader (although he

could lead you astray at times) and an athlete deluxe. This was "Pixie" – oh yeah – I nicknamed him "Pix" or "Pixie" in the 9th grade – it stuck! He often signed things with this moniker and many people called him "Pix" after a while. The name lasted forever.

Tom came from a large family. Mom Belva, Dad George, sisters - Jo Ann '50, Alfreda '52, Nancy '54 and Steve '61. A great bunch of cheerleaders and athletes. While in school, Tom had several leadership roles, but basketball was his forte. He made several all-tournament teams and in his senior year led the voting for the Eastern Kentucky all-conference team. We had 13 schools in the conference and nine schools in the 64th district. On Jan. 11, 1953, Tom erupted for 48 points against Ironton St. Joe, setting a new record for the school and the city at that time, only to come back to score 53 against Maysville St. Pat in our final game. It is to be noted that we had no three-point shot and no bonus free throw at this time in basketball.

Having missed three games with an injury late in the season, he still finished with 622 points with an average of 23. He was named to the Kentucky all-stars to play a two-game series against the best from West Virginia. Tom played four years of college ball in Tennessee where he met his wife Pat. They had two children while living near Dayton, Ohio, and later retired to Gilbertsville, Kentucky (Land of the Lakes).

As I take a look back on those days on the court for the Irish playing with old #33, I am sure it brings back wonderful memories of the history of Holy Family basketball. It was a joint venture – the parents, the fans, the students (nuns and teachers) and every guy that laced up for even one game. And let's not forget the many hours that the cheerleaders put in at practice, the Sunday afternoons against the other Catholic schools, the late dinners and hitting the books before and after games. These were the days my friend. I thought they would never end. (Someone should write a song – ha!)

I hope that in writing this about Tom Fitzsimmons, I have enlightened a few people who never came to know him or his wonderful family.

"Tommy Terrific" was so much more than I could put in words. I admired the way he handled life. He loved it and lived it to its fullest. You will always be with us, Tom.



1998 Ashland Reunion for the class of 1953 from Ashland and Holy Family. Tom, Fred, and Earl (brother) Adkins. Adkins was Mr. Basketball in 1953 and played for Adolph Rupp and on the 1958 National Champs at UK.

PUBLIC WELCOME! **HOLY FAMILY** **BENEFITS SCHOOL & CHURCH**

Septemberfest 2015

Sept. 25, 26 & 27

Fun for the Whole Family!

- FOOD
- RIDES
- RAFFLES
- ROCK WALL
- INFLATABLES
- ENTERTAINMENT



In Memoriam



Pauline Appledorn died May 30, 2015, at the age of 98. She was born in 1917 in Bluefield, West Virginia, and was preceded in death by her husband Herman Appledorn. Pauline graduated from St. Mary's School of Nursing in Huntington and worked in a doctor's office before she married Herman in 1942. She was an active member of Holy Family and served on the school board. Through the years, she restored the church's stations and statues and did sewing, along with adorning the Paschal candle. She also helped decorate for school dances and banquets. Pauline was an artist and a member of the local art club and participated in many art shows. Her greatest legacy is the family that she leaves behind.



Survivors include three daughters, Mary Jo Smith of Ashland '61, Margie (Seldon) Little '64 of Nicholasville, Kentucky, and Roberta James '69 of Lexington; a son John (Judy) Appledorn of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; five grandchildren, Missy Smith (Jerry) Miller '85, Gretchen (Kelly) Ward, Russell Smith, Christie (Todd) Frederick, and Beverly James; and five great-grandchildren. The funeral Mass was at Holy Family with burial at Calvary. Donations can be made to Holy Family School.



HFS Classmate Gatherings



Class of 1974 celebrating its 41st reunion



Gallion-Serey reunion



Alum get-together



Art McCullough '54, Jim Healey and Mike Dowling '55



The Blarney Stone

P.O. Box 586
Ashland, KY 41105

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
US Postage
PAID
Ashland, KY
Permit No. 51



HFS Class Notes

Perkins Named Distinguished Alumna

Ann BROWN Perkins, executive director of Safe Harbor, received the 2015 Ashland Community and Technical College (ACTC) Distinguished Alumna Award for her achievements and community service. In addition to her work at Safe Harbor, Ann and her family own Second Hand Rose Consignment shops in Ashland and formerly ran the McClure restaurant.

Perkins graduated from Holy Family High School in 1970 and attended Ashland Community College (ACTC's predecessor) from 1970-71 before transferring to the University of Kentucky.



Ann Perkins was honored during ACTC's spring commencement ceremonies as the school's outstanding alumnus. She is pictured with her husband Sam; sons Matthew, Michael and Nathan; daughter-in-law Heather; grandchildren Andrew and Libby; and niece Chelsea Reams.

UT names Ryan Robinson Senior Associate Athletics Director for Communications



The University of Tennessee Athletics Department has named Ryan Robinson as senior associate athletics director for Communications. Robinson previously was employed as director of Public Relations for the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars. In that role, Robinson coordinated local, regional and national media opportunities and worked directly with the head football coach, coaching staff, front office and players.

At Tennessee, Robinson will oversee media relations, public relations, internet operations and creative services. He also will be the primary communications strategist for football and the athletic department administration. Robinson replaces Jimmy Stanton, who accepted a position as vice president of Communications with the NFL's Tennessee Titans in May.

Prior to his 10-year stint with the Jaguars communications team (2005-2015), Robinson served as executive director of Peyton Manning's PeyBack Foundation (2001-05) and assistant director of Public Relations for the Indianapolis Colts (1999-2001).

Ryan is the son of Sherman COLEMAN '65 and Bob Robinson, who are both deceased.

XU Names Johnson Interim Dean



R. Stafford Johnson, Ph.D., has been named Xavier University's interim dean of the Williams College of Business as the university searches for a new dean. He has been a professor of finance at the university since 1982. He served as chair of the XU finance department from 1988-98, a fund professor of the Xavier Student Investment Bond and Equity Funds from 2004-10, and the director of the Fifth Third Trading Center from 2010-11. He has published more than 50 articles and six books. Staff is a 1968 graduate of HFS.

Thank You, Postage Donors!

Jim Mulvaney '63

Postage for *The Blarney Stone* is funded privately.
Your contribution is greatly appreciated.
Please send checks to:

Blarney Stone • P. O. Box 586
Ashland, KY 41105-0586



Stay Connected with Holy Family School

Go online at
<http://holyfamilyashland.weebly.com>

The Blarney Stone is published for the alumni and friends of Holy Family School.

EDITOR:
Stephanie MILLER Gallaher '65 - stephanie@thegallahergroup.com

Designed, printed, and donated by The Gallaher Group
P.O. Box 586
101 Armco Blvd.
Ashland, KY 41101
606-329-8383