

Claremont McKenna College Alumni Association Past-Presidents Roundtable Discussion

Aug. 3, 2005

Attendees:

Richard Grantham '50 (1952-53); Thornton Hamlin Jr. '50 (1953-55); Eugene Wolver Jr. '51 (1959-60); Lloyd McHaley '59 (1965-66); Robert E. Long '52 (1969-70); Phillip Cutting '58 (1976-77); Dan Baker '65 (1977-78); Rex Heeseman '64 (1981-82); William Woods II '77 (1989-90); Darrell G. Smith '74 (1994-95); David Mgrublian '82 (1995-96); Cary Davidson '75 (1997-98); Lorraine Bains '88 (2002-03)

Moderator: The purpose of this discussion is to provide an opportunity for the sharing of stories in the oral history of the Claremont McKenna College Alumni Association. I'd like to thank Public Affairs and the Communications office for giving me the opportunity to meet and chat with you all. My name is Kate Shuster. I am the Director of Debate Outreach for the Claremont Colleges Debate Union. I've been at CMC for almost five years now. I would like to thank you all for your dedication to the life of the College and the Alumni Association. I want to begin by saying: Congratulations! It is a 50-year anniversary—almost—for the incorporation of the Alumni Association as an organization independent from the College and, through your strength and dedication and the strength of the alumni of the College, the organization really is one of the pre-eminent organizations of its kind in the United States, with extraordinary alumni involvement, giving amounts, giving rates, and other—all of the various tangible and intangible qualities that make up a vibrant alumni association. So, we'll be having a discussion this evening about the history of the Alumni Association, and I want to begin by posing the following question: Of course, as I've discussed, the CMC Alumni Association is a success, with high levels of alumni giving, and support—both tangible and non—to the College. So I want to begin by asking, What, in your opinion, has the Alumni Association done over the years to maintain interest among alums, and how does alumni interest and involvement benefit the College? So, Thornton, I'd like to start with you. What do you think? How does the Alumni Association benefit the College? And how does the Alumni Association maintain itself as a vibrant organization?

Hamlin: Well, unfortunately, in my day, back in the class of '50—I became president of the association in 1953—we really didn't have an association. We had a Los Angeles—what you might call a Los Angeles chapter, and the College sponsored dinners, what, three times a year or something like that. And Dick [Grantham] preceded me as president of the Alumni Association. I don't know whether he learned the same way I did, but all of a sudden they called me up and said: "We're going to run you for president of the Alumni Association." And it turned out that I ended up president of the Alumni Association. I had a vice president, Bob Olshausen ['51], who some people know, and he agreed with me that we ought to, maybe, write a constitution, and he brought the Sierra Club constitution to CMC, and I had this Tournament of Roses, and we combined the two, and that's how we put something on paper to call it an organization. And, fortunately, Gene Wolver came along about two years later, and legalized it all. In fact, he did a marvelous job establishing just what you said—why the Alumni Association today is such a unique body: it's because of Gene. He made us a California corporation. The motivation? We were just a small, alumni-fraternity type of group, but we knew that we had something good going, and President Benson had us well-convinced that we were on the right path. So we just got involved, and the friendships developed, and then we had, you know, people like Pete Welsh ['50], and Ted Hinkley ['50], and Pete Robinson ['51] came in as secretary—vice president, now, I guess, is the term, for the alumnus who is the College's representative—that really just realized, we had—and Benson of course was a marvelous leader, as far as convincing us that he knew where we were going and we followed him. The reason I happened to have two years as president was that Bud Craton ['49], when he was—he was scheduled to follow me as president—and we had a meeting out at the College [unintelligible] to put that action into order and Bud said: "You're right in the middle of this constitution, and you know where we're going, why don't you take it another year?" So that's how it happened to be that I happened to be unique in the fact that I was two years. That's pretty personal—what else do you want to know?

Moderator: You can pass it on.

Hamlin: Good luck, you guys. Glad you got here. [laughter]

Moderator: Thank you.

Wolver: Thornton failed to mention one thing: When I was alumni president, he was the alumni secretary for the College. And he was my aide de camp, and without whom I really would not have had any modicum of success as a president, if I had success.

Hamlin: It's true: I did join the staff for a short period of time.

Wolver: Let's see if I can respond to the question you have laid before us, in this way: I think the alumni—beside the uniqueness I mentioned to you before (we are on the air now) [laughter]—being a family. And it is, of very passionate people. You'll find that among alumni and alumnae, there is a passion for the institution that rivals or exceeds anything I know—a real sense of dedication. The alumni have—the organization, as it became an incorporated body, as we thought of it then, because it was step one in the progress—the progression from the fraternity, which it had been before. The idea was that this organization was going to serve alumni, serve the College, and serve the cause of education thereby. And in serving the alumni, what we wanted to do was to have ways and means of getting together, getting to know each other, continuing the relationships with the institution. We did this, really, on a chapter level, and we created more and more chapters, and we did this by various programs. Helping the College? Well, today the single biggest source of funds for the institution come from alumni. That started at a luncheon meeting at the Clark Hotel in 1955—Dick Grantham was there; I don't think Thornton was there, but I know Dick was there—where we started the Alumni Fund. And today that Alumni Fund is a significant factor for the College's finances. As I mentioned to you before, with very few exceptions that I know of, every program that today the College is handling that deals with alumni, deals with students, were all originated by the Alumni Association volunteers—from new student parties to the forums for prospective vocations for students, for their choice, etc. The alumni today constitute over three quarters of the Board of Trustees. In our day, there wasn't such a thing—voting trustees. There was an alumni president, who was *ex officio*—to be seen and not heard, basically. [laughter] Today, the trustees who are here and former trustees who are here can attest that we do speak up. Our educational contributions have been by supporting the institution, by supporting each other, and by programs that we have put on, by scholarships that we have created. The alumni scholarships today are a significant contributions, and alumni who have created scholarships and have gone out to assist, as volunteers, in fundraising, and alumni such as our distinguished John Faranda ['79], who joined the staff and are raising money—and Steve Siegel ['87], I want to mention. And this all came about through the Alumni Association being that strong, vibrant, independent body serving

alumni, the College, and the cause of education. So I think we've made a significant contribution to our school, and we'll continue to do so.

Heeseman: Well, you know, I think Gene's right about having—setting up a lot of programs to get people involved, whether they're in Los Angeles, which is the obvious location, or elsewhere, but I think another area where the Alumni Association has been very helpful to the College was setting up the reunion—assisting in the reunion—which has led to a tradition, I think, that every five years, a fair number of people from each class come back to the College, see people in the class with all the bond that that has, but also come back to the campus. Because there are a lot of alums who, either because of where they live or what they do, don't really visit the campus as much as many of the people at this table do. And coming back every five or ten years—whatever the number is—on a reunion is a very good way for those people to renew their connection to CMC, but also to renew their connection with their classmates, as well as their tie to the College. All of which I think adds up to a very helpful situation, which, not completely, but in a fairly significant part of the whole reunion effort, was—at least 10, 15 years ago—was a lot due to the Alumni Association.

Cutting: If I could—and, Kate, you're going to through the—after Wolver, Cutting, and Rex, the verbosity will slow down a lot. [laughter] I think that a couple of words that stand out, as I recall. My period, which was about ten years after the College was done—they came out to Van Nuys High School and had one man there. And I peered in, and he checked my blood pressure, and I was accepted. [laughter]

Heeseman: We always wondered about how you got in! [laughter]

Cutting: But more than that, there's a couple words that I think have come out that have already been mentioned—we're fiercely independent and proud. When we got there, as our entering freshman class, one of the things—the only dorms in those days were what is now called the upper quad. And they had a rule, that at the end of each dorm were the seniors. And the put, in a suite of eight students, they put two freshman, which as you became a senior you hated, but the nice thing that I remember and perhaps is the genesis of a nice Alumni Association, is knowing the seniors in my suite. I met four years ahead of me and four years behind me and most of us all shared, whether we were a neophyte—and they were all diverse—and we had our own indoctrination within our suite, we had a fiercely loyal, proud feeling for our college. It was

young, it was vibrant—high expectations of a young school. You had these, and yet you had fun. It was a—somebody used the term “fraternity.” Perhaps it was, but I think there was a certain proudness, because we knew we were in a place that allowed us to be a fraternity, and yet standards of excellence were there. We talk about, just briefly, the big pushes for ethics today. In 1950, one of the core classes that you had to take to graduate, and I think you had to write the anachronistic—which is irrelevant now—comprehensive on ethics to get out of college, out of Claremont—you had to write on ethics. And somehow, that proudness and that fierce pride in what we were doing and moving through created a fellowship between Gene, and Thornton, and Dick Grantham, and people that were before me, and that I got to know over the years and through the seniors and through the people who came up. I don’t know that I was, as a “Peter Principle” person, I was never much of a role model, but I was there, [laughter] and the main point is that every one of us at this table is fiercely proud of Claremont for the reason that excellence, high standards, and, for the individual, growth. And, everyone, if there’s anything else that the school has done, in my view, in all the years that I’ve sat around in meetings like this, with friends like this, that’s sort of been the core for me. And that was our Alumni Association, and today this is our Alumni Association. Now it’s all downhill, Kate, because it’s going to go a lot quicker. [laughter]

Moderator: Well, I can’t imagine. There’s clearly something about the College, and the community of the College, that brings people together in a way that holds them together after graduation—well after graduation. Let’s hear from the end of the table. Please go ahead.

Smith: It’s the Athenaeum and the food there. [laughter] Well, actually, I believe that upon leaving as an undergraduate, and looking to give of yourself and community and allocating your time to something worthwhile, many of us stumbled upon CMC’s Alumni Association. There’s a benefit for an individual to get involved. A young person coming out of college—they find out that in the real world, volunteerism sometimes is not all that it’s cracked up to be. Getting into a well-run organization with bright people who are enthusiastic about a certain cause works well under the CMC banner. So it’s an—so it’s also an education for the alumni, and it’s a benefit to the College. That kind of environment creates a collective situation for an individual to grow and learn as well as benefit the school. And because the school itself—the College—has given itself to the Alumni Association to make it the kind of fraternity that one would be proud to belong to, and it allows an individual to grow further after college. I think it’s been a good marriage between people who have gone to CMC. I have seen other colleges, and that is not the case.

Davidson: I think that what's unique about CMC is that we have a mission, which brings many people who are interested in economics and government to the school. And then they study that, and then when we go out into the world, that tends to be some of the areas in which we engage. So, that keeps our alumni together, and wherever we might be around the world. And as the alumni population has changed, and the students have become much more diverse, the Alumni Association similarly has become much more diverse. And we have many more women; we have people of color. We have—you know, the exciting changes that have developed on campus have filtered into—and maybe even have been led—in the Alumni Association. And I think that's very positive and that keeps that bond that we begin in school and maintain as alums.

Bains: Adding to that, I would say: I didn't stumble into the Alumni Association. I was actually kind of pulled in. John Allen ['73] found me out there on campus and said, "You can do something." And he came up with a couple of programs and that started it all. But what I found is that by working with alumni, there was definitely a sense of—again, going back to the pride and the commitment and loyalty—I wanted to really be a part of that, and I found that, you know, there were really good people who really wanted to help, and all you had to do was just tap into the network and be a part of it. And I found that—also, as Cary was saying—that the whole idea of commitment to keeping connected—that's a big part of all that we do. We've got programming, now, that is now evolving. We've got the family programs; we've got all kinds of trips that are going abroad. We're looking to make sure that everyone is a part of the Alumni Association, if they want to just reach out and join and be a part of it. We don't charge anything; it's free. [laughter] But, still, we want to try to make sure that the connection is there, and we are all committed to that. And I think that's the biggest part of it—to reach out to new graduates.

Mgrublian: Yeah, it's interesting. I've always looked at the Alumni Association as being a unique organization, but I really think it starts with the way we admit students. I know it's been refined over the years, but we admit students to CMC because we believe that at some point in their life after CMC, they're going to be leaders: leaders in business, government, or the professions, or leaders in their communities. So I think it's of no surprise that people who are interested in being leaders are interested in being part of organizations where they can have an impact. In the Alumni Association, you can have an impact on the College. And I think CMC as an institution—as a college—is unique from that standpoint because they allow the alumni to have an impact on the College. Very few colleges and universities would have the confidence in

their alumni to allow them to have the amount of impact that the alumni of CMC—and I'm not talking about the fundraising standpoint, I'm talking about from the policy standpoint—have had on the College. When the College has ever gone into a strategic plan, they have come and consulted with the Alumni Association. And they haven't consulted with us just to get our two cents and then put in a box—they have consulted and listened to what the alumni have to say. And there really hasn't been a major issue, I think, at the College that has come up, that has not had alumni input, and, frankly, alumni input that has been funneled through the Alumni Association. So, you know, a lot of times I think alumni associations can be viewed as glorified sororities or fraternities, or glorified social clubs, but that's not what this Alumni Association is. This Association, in large part, is the voice of the alumni on policy issues that come up at the College. And the College listens very carefully. The president of the College listens carefully. The president of the College always comes and presents to the alumni board every year. The chairman of the Board of Trustees comes and listens to what we have to say. The College has enough confidence to allow three alumni trustees every year on its board. I doubt there's another institution that, probably, has three trustees essentially selected by their Alumni Association, plus the president [of the Alumni Association] is *ex officio*, so there are four members of our board of trustees that, by default, are selected by the Alumni Association. So, I think when you're an alumnus looking to get involved, you say: "Here's a group that the College respects so much that they allow four members to sit on the Board of Trustees." If there's a major strategic planning—or any other issue that comes up at the College—they're going to come and talk to us and listen to what we say. That's more than just planning parties, that's having an impact on one of the finest institutions of higher education in the country. That's pretty heady stuff.

Hamlin: Well, Gene Wolver's the reason for that.

Mgrublian: Absolutely.

Hamlin: Not many alumni associations have had a Gene Wolver at the start.

Cutting: It still gets back to the quality of the incoming student to reflect the pride of those that went before them. The thing we have is that we're a young college. So we don't have eight million alums. We have a relatively small group, and we can demand—well, not demand—but we can look—the thing that made us so proud is that we got out of college, and we found leaders out there, from a little college, as we got along. Fifty years later, there's a lot of leaders out there,

and we're still relatively small, and people still, as you go out into the world, you're able to find people who are leaders around the world, and around the country, from our little college. It's a little college, but a [heck] of a small college. And that's the thing that we're all proud about. We sit around here being proud of our school because of it.

Wolver: One of the points that has been raised about the impact on the institution of the alumni and the new students: The Alumni Association, among other things—as Rex pointed out, the reunions—among other things the Alumni Association started out were new student parties, where students had the opportunity of not only meeting each other, but alumni, and getting a sense of the esprit de corps of the institution if they didn't have it before. Homecoming was an alumni-created event. Parents—Father's Day, on the football team, within the athletic department—was, again, an alumni sponsored event, bringing parents together, and so it went. But that's what I referred to earlier—that the Alumni Association, as an association, has done many things that today are embedded in the institution, by which the students have the enthusiasm—hopefully—to join the ranks of the Alumni Association and continue.

Moderator: It's pretty clear, based on the comments that we've just heard, in the first third of our discussion, that the Alumni Association has changed over time, as well as the College. And they're continuing to change and grow as the College changes, the student body changes, and the political or economic climate changes. So I guess I want to ask, to sort of follow up on that: What are some of the biggest changes in the Alumni Association and at the College over time, the changes that you've observed? I'd like to begin by asking Dick, what you think some of the biggest changes in the Alumni Association have been—and the College.

Grantham: Seems to me that they have come primarily from the opportunities presented as the Alumni Association grew. We were, at the outset, a very small group—not very many alumni at all. And we have recognized the need to attract others, and make it easy for others to be involved—that's another way to say it—so that we now have an international set of chapters, which all started really from just this L.A. chapter, which was where the nucleus of the graduates were. But we've since become an international organization and undertaken a series of programs that we've been talking about—remarkable in their contribution to the Association and to the College. It's a long list. So all these, I think, are the things that have changed, and many of them we've discussed.

Heeseman: Well, I think the biggest change, in my mind, is the way that the reputation of CMC has grown since I graduated in 1964. In 1964, I believe that CMC was pretty well known in Southern California, and probably to some extent throughout the rest of the state, and to a slight extent throughout other western states. But the reality is, whether it's the rating by *U.S. News & World Report*, whether it's by stories in the media—for example, the *L.A. Times*—by the success of alumni in various parts of the—particularly in government and economics—in the United States, all those things have added up to what is, really, an incredible jump in the reputation of the College. And I think that jump has made a big difference in how people look at CMC, and, quite frankly, in how alumni look at CMC. Because it's much easier to feel very positive about your school when it has that kind of reputation, and I think, for most alumni, it's easier to have that view about a reputation and academics and success in the professions, etc.—that it fuels something I think makes a big difference for both the school and the alumni. I think that's the single most dramatic thing that has happened to CMC in the last forty years.

Baker: I'd like to say that I was part of the Alumni Association, and an alumnus trustee during some interesting times—when the College decided to admit women. I can remember Umberto Walker's impassioned plea that when you looked on the College brochures, and saw “Claremont Men's College,” that lots of people—certain types of people—didn't select that because they weren't a man. And, so, it was a very interesting time to be part of the Association. And then I was involved in the changing of the name, and I think that, in fact, the opening of the campus to women and the changing of the name have made a huge difference in the quality and the character of the alumni from CMC.

Grantham: I think the alumni, as a body, were resistant to that change.

Baker: In a big way.

Grantham: We're very concerned about changing what we do, and changing our school. I also think that Sumner Benson ['61] put his finger on it when he said: “We're really not concerned about women. We don't want to lose the name.” [laughter]

Heeseman: They didn't want to lose their identity, including the name.

Baker: Fortunately, McKenna showed up.

Cutting: I was right behind you, and one of the interesting things is, we were told that when the women came in, they had to change the name. And a lot of the women were polled, and they didn't want to change anything. They were happy being at Claremont Men's College because of what it stood for—and when I say 'what it stood for' I mean the name didn't bother them. They were proud to be there—it was their idea of the ideal playing field.

Baker: They actually signed up for a men's college, and wanted to graduate—and as you may remember, a number of them asked for diplomas after the name was changed, diplomas that said Claremont Men's College. And they actually got those.

Heeseman: I think everyone at this table will agree, at least in hindsight, that changing the name made a lot of sense. It was the right thing for the College to do. We're only looking at it from, you know, the transition period when the name was changed. I felt that very acutely because I happened to be president of the Alumni Association the year the name was changed, and there was a vortex of a lot of different views on that issue. But certainly, looking at it in hindsight, which is at least 20/20, almost everybody, to a person, agreed that changing the name made sense, so I don't think there's any issue here.

McHaley: The alumni body as a whole, I believe, actually supported changing from a men's college to a coeducational college. In fact, when I was involved with the Alumni Association [unintelligible] to the Board of Trustees, because that was the wish of the body of the Board and [unintelligible] they were a very small minority.

Wolver: To the credit of the College, and to the credit of our then-President Jack Stark ['57], who was an alumnus—and still is. [laughter] The alumni were polled, and I totally agree with Jerry that the vast majority of alumni were supportive of going coeducational, and I think probably, in numbers—although there were more vocal objections to changing the name—the majority were supportive of going to the name, McKenna. To the credit of the institution, the alumni were very much involved, as was pointed out by David.

Mgrublian: Right, and, I think, again, it's a good example: Rex was president of the Alumni Association and I was student body president at the time the name change came up. And I remember, distinctly, President Stark coming to the ASCMC and asking for us to give him a vote

on how we viewed the name change. And I think that's an example of solid governance, and how the College has always been about building consensus. It wasn't about: "It's our decision to make as an administration with the Board of Trustees," but, rather, they came to the Alumni Association, and they came to the student government, and they asked for our concurrence to that vote. Now, I knew there would probably be some horse-trading if we didn't vote in favor of it, but at the end of the day, we did vote in favor of it, as did the Association, and I think because the College and the Board have always been interested in building consensus, they've empowered students and they've empowered the Alumni Association, and it's benefited both.

McHaley: I think that that's—you know—that was Jack's style, and we had 25 years of that style, of bringing consensus to any major decision that had to be made. George Benson didn't use that style—that was not him. And I don't believe our current president uses that style to the extent that Jack did. But then, everybody's different, and everybody had a different responsibility in different times. George was a founder, and his style had to work to get the thing off the ground. Jack had to bring them all together, and build it over time, and he did it in his way. Everybody did their own thing in their own way, and they were very successful at doing it.

Bains: I think that another major change that the College has gone through is communication. We have, now, everything on the Internet, and that has definitely allowed us to reach out more to alumni and it's given us opportunities that we didn't have before. So, in the last five years we're sending out newsletters via e-mail, we're reaching out internationally, and I believe that that is definitely adding to the prestige of the College because we can share more information, and everyone knows that they can go to the Internet, and they can see what's going on, and they can stay connected. Again, going back to our mission—we just want to be connected, and we're now making it possible, and we're sharing ideas, so I think that that's a big part of our change.

Long: I think that, as far as I'm concerned, one of the major changes of the Alumni Association has been fund drive. When it first started out, I think, looking at \$15,000 or \$20,000—when I was running the fund drive, before I became president, it was \$100,000. Now, we didn't make it—we made \$75,000—but I thought even so, that was doing very, very well. And this was the result of a lot of organization by the Alumni Association and also by the staff of the College, who would get people to go down and make telephone calls, which is not the easiest thing in the world to do. But we had a lot of very dedicated people, and we really achieved a lot. Now, if you think about what \$75,000 was then and compare it to what's brewing now, there's been an

enormous change. And whether we like it or whether we don't like it, money does talk, and it is very, very important because we have a lot of students that are getting partial support from the Alumni Association. This is very important, I think, to our alumni group, who feel that they are connected to the College, and that they are really doing something for future generations—future generations of young people who are very talented, and, perhaps, a bit more talented than the early classes—I don't know. They are very talented and they are people of very good integrity. They fit into the CMC alumni family, and I've always felt like that's one of the greatest things about CMC and about the Alumni Association—the acceptance that you receive from all of the people in the alumni family. At any rate, I've always worked in fund drive. Another thing that's very important that's changed is publications. Austin Woodward ['49] was very involved in that, and he did superb work in getting the publications off of the ground. And also, he was one of the premiere scribes of the class of '50—'49 and '50. That's been a very important change, and people like to read those things, even some of the material that I write, they read, for better or worse. [laughter] That's been a big change too, and a very salient change.

Moderator: One of the challenges must be the corralling or corresponding with all of these thousands of alums all over the world. I think one of the things that has really impressed me about the organization—the Alumni Association—well, Lorraine's already mentioned the internet, which helps—but it seems like it must be quite a challenge for the Alumni Association to maintain such a strong and active network among diverse members that are scattered geographically and diverse in terms of age and careers. What is it that you do to keep track of those people, to organize them, and to maintain interest in the College among all of those people?

Hamlin: I can kick that off a little bit. Woody was the scribe for our class—we're the Pacesetters. That includes a few graduates in '48 and a few graduates in '49, and a balance of the graduates in 1950, which numbered 196 total. Through attrition and loss in death, we're down to 81 on the mailing list, and we had 20 show up for our 55th reunion, earlier, in May.

McHaley: I think another thing, too, that helped us know, and work with, and help keep track of one another was, up through the '40s and the '50s, we were still very small, and really only had four dorms through 1957—and then they built a fifth. Everybody knew everybody—you know, like [Phil] said—four years ahead and four years behind. And then you got involved in the alumni activities, and again you were getting to know the people before and after you. One of my

best friends is from the '48 class, and I still correspond with him all the time. It's that kind of camaraderie that was built when we were small that kept that portion of the Alumni Association strong and well involved with each other—knowing where one another was, and referring back to each other for whatever the purpose may be. That never changed. I think another thing that affected it was George's influence in the initial stages—and you guys could speak to that better than I. But here's a man who had the foresight to say, "We want a good Alumni Association in this organization," and to make it happen year after year—remember, he subsidized that baby year, after year, after year—until we finally got to the point where, through the alumni fund, we could raise enough money to cover the budget. [laughter] George stood out there and said, "By God, we're going to support these guys and make it happen." And I don't know, really, what happened in the early stages but I know he was heavily involved in the early stages.

Grantham: He dedicated some staff to the organization from the beginning, and that made it possible to communicate with one other and have our meetings and so on. As you say, there were a lot of years before we raised enough to pay for the staff.

Cutting: What I was interested in, other than the rhetoric of the questions—we have 19 chapters, I saw, and I said: Nineteen chapters. Where are they? And I asked Katherine and she was kind enough to provide me with the 19 chapters around the country: where, specifically, they were, and how many people, as best we could figure out. And there's about 7,300 [people involved], and there are 17 chapters in the U.S., and they're in a lot of the obvious places, and they serve about 7,300, according to the records I have here. And then we have London and Japan— not Hong Kong. And I think one of the big challenges, going forward—we got here, and we got here for a lot of reasons that aren't on this piece of paper—I think one of the bigger challenges is to network. I know I was always pounding and that was one of the nice things as we got to a more formal Alumni Association with our own office—then we could begin to work on chapters, because L.A.'s always going to be a big chapter, and San Francisco are always going to be a big chapter—the locals—but how do we reach the Chicagoans and the New Yorkers? Chicago, there's maybe 500 there and maybe 400 in New York. We've come this far, and we've got to keep moving. And I think this is a challenge for not only the Alumni Association but those of us who do outreach, because we're traveling—we've got time to stop off in New York, or stop off in Chicago, or Denver—we have a pretty—we have 400 people in Denver—and make a point to go to these meetings and fly the local flag, and then I, you know, London. No Hong Kong? We should have—I can't believe we don't have a chapter in Hong Kong. [laughter]

Heeseman: You're going to volunteer to go over there and set it up, are you? [laughter]

Cutting: I've heard how we got here. We got here because of all you people. Everyone here at this table has had something to do with getting to this point.

Heeseman: I think an important point was made a minute ago that a lot of help in that regard was from CMC itself supporting the effort, having staff people for those of us 20 years ago. Someone like George Van Tubergen ['91] sticks in your mind—people that made a huge effort of getting things going. And let's face it—to a large extent, how local chapters do is a function of how much support the school gives and who's involved with running the local chapters. Not that many years ago, 25 or so years ago, there were maybe, you know, three or four or five viable chapters throughout the whole system. Now, the idea that we have 19—that we look at a list and we say to ourselves: “How come we don't have one in Hong Kong?” or whatever. That shows a lot for what's, I think, made a big difference for the Alumni Association. Which, I would have to say, that the school itself has helped a lot by having the staff support that. Because, you know, volunteers are volunteers. They have a day job, so to speak. It's important to have that staff support, which the school has been very good at providing—which, let's face it, is seed money and things like that. But it has worked out well, and that, I think, has made a big difference in this Alumni Association.

Long: I think what Phil's said is very, very well taken, because that area has not been as strong as it could be. Probably people don't realize that it would be a very worthwhile and interesting experience for people as they travel throughout the world. As we go along, the alumni are going to be doing that—like it or not, this is a global economy now, and probably eventually a global society.

Heeseman: Bob, now you're going to volunteer to go with Phil to Hong Kong? [laughter]

Cutting: I also would call your attention—and I have the list—that there is no Texas chapter. I mean, no one has come—no Texan has ever gone to Claremont? I'm stunned. I would say Dallas and Hong Kong are two areas we should look toward.

Smith: There's another factor that plays into the connectivity of CMC that makes us unique, and that's our Phone Night. What did you call it, fund night?

Long: Fund drive.

Smith: Unique to CMC is a Phone Night a couple of times a year, where alumni gather together and call friends across the country, and talk about other things beyond fund-raising or giving to the College. But they talk about family, and they talk about the old days, and it's a way to stay connected, and it takes place a couple of times a year. I don't know of any other college that does that—it's kind of old-fashioned, and it's a lot of work, but I think it's been critical to our growth, given our peer institutions are 100, 200 years old, and here we are trucking along just over 50 years. We compete quite well, thank you, against those bigger institutions, and I think a lot of that has to do not only with the things we're talking about, which is a collection of everything, but some of the unique things we do. And that can only be done because of the esprit de corps of the individuals who are part of the alumni, who come out of the College, who have something unique going in that they take with them into the afterlife after College. [laughter]

Davidson: I think that Kate, 'though—what you're asking—is how are we keeping people still involved. And we're actually trying to figure out, as the alumni population grows: How do we do it? We target young alumni. We target older alumni. We target alumni at various phases of life, and we design programs that meet their needs. We actually look to see what is going to attract people. Going in, we have many shared interests. So, we send professors around the world, and a lot of us have had those same professors, whether we went to school in the '60s or we went to school in the—until recently. Those people have been around, and they bring us all together. And as alumni chapter events, it brings folks out—that's who we want to see. We stay connected that way. And then we meet other people at those gatherings who, because of our being alumni, we stay connected with those folks—and that's multi-generational. And, as everyone has said, because we're so small, we can identify each and every alum. John Faranda knows them all. [laughter] And that's pretty unusual out there. And so, we have a lot of benefits—and we in the Alumni Association offer all kinds of opportunities for alumni, be it through admission, or through careers. We can offer internships and we can offer jobs, and we can do career seminars, or participate in the athletic program. And we can—I could go on and on with our different programs that we offer, but they afford opportunities for alums. And I think, yes, we get a lot of

staff support, but it's the volunteers out there who are the army of people who make it happen and that's a very special thing.

Bains: Another important piece is that we actually have a strategic plan, and that plan is something that we go back to, year after year. We're looking at all these issues that have been discussed, and we're trying to decide in which ways can we best address them—and as a family, we try to do that. I believe that's part of being a CMCer—you get a direction, and you start moving forward towards that direction, and I think that's a big part of helping us continue to meet the needs. We have the Mentor Café now, and that mentoring program is just an incredible program, and that's also going to help us bring in that next generation, because they're going to want to go back and give. And that's part of all of these issues that we've raised, and, now, we've got it on paper saying we're going to keep our direction, and we're going to keep moving forward.

Long: That's a good program, I think—the mentor thing—and it hasn't really been emphasized much over the many years since I graduated. And I think another thing, maybe, that could be improved, is the—whatever you call it—the class agent system. It would seem to me, because of my experience, it would seem to me it would be helpful to, when a class graduates, to have them elect maybe 10 people to form a nucleus of a class agent system so they can bear the burden one by one or whatever. I've done it in my class for quite a few years now, maybe in the reunions, we've been together probably 30 to 35 years—something like that—putting on reunions. And we have 10 people now—we had 11, but one classmate passed away. But we've all worked together for all of these years, a every time we have reunion, a couple of years before, we get together and have lunches, and talk about it. It works out exceedingly well because we all know how to put the reunion on, and we've had a very good time at our reunions—and probably the class of '50 is the same way, I don't know. But we have a group that does that. If you have a group that does that, then you tend to get cohesion in a class, and you know your people very well, because you went to school, and you know very well it's always a pleasure to get together. Everybody knows who the committee is—and incidentally, there's only one way you get off the committee.

[laughter]

Moderator: Oh, dear.

Baker: When we decided we were going to have this dinner, I wanted to try to see what it was really was that we were trying to accomplish. And, so, I asked for copies of the goals and accomplishments of the Alumni Association, which I received, 2004-2005, and also the strategic plan from '98 with the 2004-2005 revisions. And I read through all this, and I said: "These guys are really good!" [laughter] What are we trying to accomplish? And then I said to myself: "Are we benchmarking against anybody?" And I didn't get anything about that. And I don't know—is the College—is the Alumni Association trying to benchmark? Because then I went online and picked out a bunch of what I think are pretty smart colleges, and looked at the stuff that they're doing in their alumni associations, and we're doing a lot of that stuff. Are we benchmarking? Is there any organization...

Davidson: Well, we're currently engaged, at the request of the Board of Trustees, actually, in a best practices survey. And we are identifying schools throughout the country in various areas, seeing what they do, and we're comparing it to what we do, and then we are putting together a compilation of what we have found. We're presenting that to the Trustees, to the Alumni Association, and we're giving it, actually, out to all the other schools with whom we've had these conversations. So, I think we're doing exactly that. And, while we haven't concluded the process, I think in doing it what we have discovered, and what Elenor Taylor suggested at its inception, was—we're going to find that CMC is right at the top in many of the areas. And that's the way it appears to be. At least for our College. Certainly, we've talked to many of the larger institutions, and they may have larger programs, but that wouldn't really work for CMC. We do really well with very limited resources. We could do phenomenally well with a few more resources. [laughter]

Cutting: I would just reiterate, based on my experience—we do have a good relationship with the College. Better—and I haven't seen your survey—but at a lot of colleges the Alumni Association is seen but not heard. I mean, they're there, but colleges don't want them, really, into their business that much, in general. A lot of major colleges and a lot of colleges in our area. I like to hope that our institution will listen to us because of the interest we have in our College, which isn't any less than other ones, but our administration appears to be listening to us, and we are a factor, for whatever reason or whatever we can do, that is not found in a lot of schools. I don't know if your survey found that, but I think there's a lot closer relationship with the administration.

Heeseman: I think that that gap is kind of closing. As a couple of people have pointed out, over the years, I think, the leadership of CMC has been very willing to listen to the alumni—not necessarily always do what they want, but to at least listen to it and take their suggestions and implement some or all of them. On the other hand, I would say, based on my limited experience, other universities and colleges are getting more into this area, so the idea that we are somehow unique is not quite as dramatic now as it was a few years ago. Now, what does that mean? It's hard to say. I guess it means, at least in my mind—and maybe that's something we should talk about—that the leadership of the school, as well as the leadership of the Alumni Association, and other constituencies in the College has to keep revising what we're doing and not doing, because things are changing, and I think a lot more schools are paying attention to alumni, in part because they want to raise money—maybe in large part—but, on the other hand, for other reasons. So we shouldn't, obviously, rest on our laurels, and I'm not suggesting that we do that, but the world's changing, obviously, in a whole bunch of areas, and I think in this area schools are becoming much more sophisticated in how they deal with their alumni. They're kind of catching up to us.

Wolver: We led the way, Rex.

Heeseman: Yes, I think in many respects we did, Gene. We did. And, you know, the lesson might be: How do we keep leading the way? Which is easier said than done, of course.

Baker: When you go online to look at the other colleges, many of the other colleges, there are lots of the same programs, but there are one here and one there and one there that are interesting things that we should look at and study that are kind of interesting next steps. But it looked to me like we are doing a whole lot of the right things.

Moderator: I've got to say, the Alumni Association has a strategic plan, it has a network in place, and it has an unbelievable array of offerings for current students, prospective students, ex-students, students to be returning later, and this whole unbelievable smorgasbord of opportunities available. There are so many brilliant and talented students who are now at the College, and brilliant and talented students who we haven't even met yet, who will be at the College—many of whom may be related to you in some way, in the future. Now that we've reached the sort of final portion of our discussion, I'd like to maybe end by asking people to offer some words of advice that you might have for students at CMC. What is it that you would say if a student asked you for your advice about how it is they should proceed in college, or how it is that they should

proceed in the world? Remember—these are the future members of the Alumni Association. So, I'd just like to go around the table, maybe, and have everyone offer some sort of advice, and maybe a closing thought before we end our time here together, on that issue or on some other issue we've brought up. So, Thornton, can we start with you? Do you have any advice for the next generation?

Hamlin: Keep it up! [laughter]

Long: Well said!

Wolver: I think the advice I would give really stems from my own biased, prejudiced mind, when I was at CMC, and that was a broad liberal arts education. Classes that we had that today may be somewhat out of vogue, but hopefully not, were literature, philosophy, history, the humanities, have stood the test of time for me personally. So I would advocate any student not just focus solely on what they're going to be doing when they graduate, for their education, but rather concentrate on a broad, general education while they're at CMC getting the benefit of truly talented minds that we have on the faculty. And, also, secondarily, get to know the Alumni Association and be involved out of CMC.

McHaley: I think I want to second what you said, Gene, and add one other aspect. When you look back on your college experience it was probably one of the happiest and most enjoyable times of your life. I would say, have a good time in college at the same time that you're enjoying getting a good education, whatever that might mean to you as an individual. Do your best at it while you're there, both the educational part as well as the fun part.

Cutting: I'm not qualified to give advice, so you know. [laughter] But I would only say, take advantage of what the College has to offer, and all the resources there. I was talking to Lindsay, who came here interested in economics and now she's a pre-med. And that is what we have. And enjoy and—as he said—don't lose sight of the fun and the rest of your life.

Heeseman: [pause] Well, I didn't realize I was next. [laughter] Now that I've been awakened from my slumber, let me say, I was listening to the prior comments, and I certainly echo the idea that your college experience is unique and you should take advantage of it, etc., etc. But when I was thinking about how to answer this, I was thinking about an article I read in a well-known

publication not long ago. It was kind of a parody of what life was like in 1992, which is almost 15 years ago. There was very little e-mail, there was very little voicemail—a whole host of things that was talking about life in 1992. When I was reading that article, you know, I thought to myself, well, this must have been quite a while ago. And then I was realizing it was just 13 years ago. So the dramatic changes that have happened in the world—just a whole bunch of areas. So if that can change in the last 13 years, what's going to be the change in the next 13 years? That's the challenge for everybody in this room. But even more so for people who are in college right now.

Mgrublian: When I look back on my college days and think about what I would advise people today going into it, the thing that strikes me the most is I made my closest and dearest friends in college. My closest and dearest friends today are people I went to college with. I don't know if I recognized it at the time, that I would be sitting here in my mid-forties, and the people that I now e-mail (maybe not write or phone) but e-mail back and forth with, and commiserate on raising teenagers [laughter], and the people that I'm by far and away the closest in my personal life are the people I went to college with. And I think that I would tell people, a student going in as a freshman, that when you go in there, there are going to be people there when you come out—that 30, 40, 50 years later are going to be your closest and dearest friends. And cherish building those relationships while you are at CMC. The residential, small nature of the College fosters those type of relationships. And I think some students take advantage of it—I'm not so sure that all of them do. And I think we're a little bit jaded, here in the Alumni Association, because we tend to be the ones that did, and the ones that aren't involved with the Alumni Association, I think to some degree are the ones that did not. If I look back on what I value the most, it wasn't the great education and all the other things, it really was those deep and lasting friendships. And I would probably advise a student going in to look for those and build on those. Those are the ones that have been the most meaningful and the most important to me personally.

Bains: Let's see. For me, again, I would certainly echo everything that's been said. Some of my dearest friends are certainly from CMC, and it just warms my heart to know that I met them there, living on campus, which was just such a fabulous experience—initially, you know, you had to grow into it but it definitely was a great experience. I guess I would say the word “indulge” comes to mind. I say that from the sense of, indulge in the uniqueness of CMC—past, present, and future. CMC is a wonderful place, but you have to go in, and dig deep, and just savor it.

Davidson: I'm not sure I knew it at the time, but what I've realized is, after going to CMC, going to law school, and then practicing—basically, what I do and what I've done with most of my life, is attributable to what I learned at CMC. My way of saying “thank you” to the College is by participating in the Alumni Association. I think it's probably not an adequate way of saying thank you, but it's been something I've done for a long time, and so, is that advice you give to students today? Well, I'm not sure, because I don't know how they'll turn out, but if it happens that you end up doing something that is actually just another step beyond what you learned at CMC, I think that's a pretty good thing to do.

Smith: I would say to the students that out of the three or four thousand applications, there are about a couple of hundred that are selected. You can call it luck, you can call it fortune, you can call it whatever you want, but it is precious to have an opportunity to attend CMC. I don't care if you're a 4.0, or a 2400 on the new SAT score—I don't understand that very well. [laughter] Nevertheless, it is a lucky opportunity, and in life you get lucky opportunities from time to time. More importantly, 'though, not only is that that fact. Going there leaves you with an obligation or an opportunity—and that is to be a pathfinder for others to follow. If you go to CMC, whether your chance was luck or whether you were just smart enough—whatever your story is—the opportunity lies in your ability to share that with the next person that follows you. Being part of CMC, being part of the alumni, creates that precious gift that you can give to someone else, through advice, through relationships on campus, knowing something especially at CMC that you can share with another person, whether it is your own child or a student who's coming through high school looking for an institution to go to. And I think that is an obligation for those of us who were lucky enough to go to CMC, that we now have before us.

Woods: I would echo again all the sentiments I've heard so far, and maybe I can take just a little different tack on a couple of them. As I have served as an interviewer for candidates for employment at various firms, I would run into CMCers, and I would notice (for example) double majors and I'd ask them about this. And they'd say: “Well, I wanted to show you that I had really mastered a topic.” What I'd say to them is, don't worry about what you learn. Learn how to learn. All the information I picked up at CMC is now out of date. What isn't out of date, I forgot. [laughter] So it really doesn't matter. And in my own life, I've had to re-invent myself four, five, six times. And each time, I can look back at my experience at CMC and think I picked up the skills to see that my life was changing, that different demands were being placed upon me,

and I was able to be nimble enough to see where it was going, and adjust to that, and move with that, and hopefully, sometimes, take advantage of it, go places where maybe I shouldn't have been able to go. So what I'd say is, don't worry about what you learn. Learn how to learn, and take that away. CMC has that culture that is challenging all the time, and is open to new ideas, and interesting ideas—certainly to the extent that you can support them. So figure that out—figure out how to learn.

Baker: I'd like to focus on the Alumni Association experience. After I got out of college, I went into the Army, then I went into a family business—my family business—and got involved in the Alumni Association not much thereafter. And, actually, I learned that you get a lot more out of being a part of an organization like the Alumni Association, probably, than you put in. I've been involved in a lot of nonprofits and other related-type entities over the years. I would strongly suggest to students that they take advantage of the opportunity to be involved in something like the Alumni Association, because of what you'll get from it.

Long: I think, probably, I would certainly recommend, and I think this is consistent with what CMC does now, that all of the students there work very hard at learning how to write, and how to express oneself in a written form of whatever language is selected, and also in speech. In that respect, I think it's very important to be able to stand up on one's feet and express oneself, and to answer questions and all the rest of it that goes along with it. I think that's very essential, and it's been a devotion of CMC ever since I went there. I think one of the best things they have there is the senior thesis, which everybody must take regardless of their professorial ambitions or abilities, to learn to put together a cohesive analysis of whatever question they address. So, I think that is very, very important. I think it is ongoing, and I certainly hope so. To me, that's very, very essential, because whether we like it or we don't like it, leaders are communicators, leaders are speakers, leaders are writers. You don't have to agree with it, but you have to live with it.

Moderator: Dick, we'll end with you.

Grantham: We've had a lot of very salient points that have been brought out here, and it's hard to say that I disagree with any of them, because I don't. I think in short, if I were advising a student, I would say in addition to what you're going to get in your classroom, be a part of the

whole, and enjoy it, and carry that on in your life into the Alumni Association and other things like that. Enjoy yourself, in a broad social sense, as well as doing the best in your classes.

Moderator: Well, I'd like to thank everybody for coming. It's been, really, a pleasure to moderate this discussion, and I hope to see you at the 75th anniversary. [laughter]