

REUNIONS AFTERMATH

Interplay, Compassion, and the Old School Tie:

A Convocation Unforgettable

Two dozen thousand flood the campus quads,
Alumni-day parade in wild school colors,
Celebrated up in heaven
By resounding thunder rolls,
A convocation unforgettable,
A world of future-oriented revelers
Intent to mark the past at present
In a tried and tested school
Of ivy, older than the USA.

The ghosts of residential-presidential Madison
And Wilson whisper approbation,
Hovering over all the happy clans
High-fiving total strangers on the route,
From young idealists to alums of striving midlife
To Establishment's aged icons,
Ignoring unlike age and race and politics
And faith and animosities—
Ecstatic interactions brimming with euphoria
In Alma Mater's bailiwick.

At once this fast-evolving mini-world
Unites in boundless joy.
The bars of rigid heritage are blown asunder;
Other bars start serving lip-smack nectars
Oiling up alumni's vocal cords
As on they stride undaunted by a deluge.

No one here is side-tracked as outsider:
Not the furrow-browed protesters,
Nor the onetime bookish nerds,
Nor marching bands of LBGTQs
Once shunned and sidelined.

Group exuberance is resonating
With effusive-pealing college belfry bells
Announcing tolerance and unity
In clarion calls
That rattle classroom, sky and playing field:
These bells, one hopes,
Bellwethers of the ever warmer-hearted
Googlers, grads and guilds to come.

—Paul Hertelendy '53, June 2, 2018, New Jersey