

Fairfield Museum

From: jwithersjr@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2013 11:53 AM
To: Wade Fairey; Wade B. Fairey; Pelham Lyles
Cc: John Withers Jr; ann ballentine
Attachments: NeilLetter.jpg; John Jackson Neil II (married Mary Grey Thompson).jpg; Charles Henry Neil.jpg; Ann Elizabeth Neil Ballentine.jpg; House.jpg

2013 October 23

TO: Wade Fairey Ms. Pelham Lyles

FROM: John Withers, Jr.

Further to your recent email messages, I have a number of pieces of information coming to me on the Neil, Thompson and Withers but as a start I am sending along some of the 1840 - 1965 generations of Neil's. This group is a good starting place as they tie to a news article on the family that ran in the January 7, 2001 State Newspaper. The State archivist has promised to send me a better scan of the entire article from their archives.

Photo 1 Neil Family Article
Photo 2 John Jackson Neil I USC Class of 1867 Born April 1, 1847
Photo 3 Charles Henry Neil USC Class of 1903 Born August 16, 1882 Died April 16, 1945
Photo 4 Ann Elizabeth Neil (Ballentine) USC Class of 1962 Masters 1965
Photo 5 Neil Home - Winnsboro

I hope to receive the additional material on the Walkers from Chester from two sources in Chester but I have not heard back from them.

Hope some of this material is of interest.

Best regards,
John Withers, Jr.

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Sent from Windows Mail

USC AT 200

FAMILY

FROM PAGE A1

interfere

It's a family history, interviewed with USC's. The thread is not continuous — there have been a few defectors to Clemson, for example, and the family suffers those with happy forbearance — but it is a history not unlike many across the state in this momentous year.

Today, almost 40,000 students attend the USC system, including 26,000 on the main campus in Columbia.

SAM AND HUGH BARKLEY

The S.C. Legislature authorized the creation of South Carolina College in 1801, but it would be 1805 before the first 30 students enrolled.

Sam and Hugh Barkley, the brothers of Eliza Jane Barkley, were among the college's first students. Their leather-bound books are battered and browned with age and bear-inked notations of the men's names as well as the dates they attended school.

Sam Barkley's mathematics book is two inches thick and needs its entire frontispiece to accommodate its title.

MATHEMATICS COMPILED FROM THE BEST AUTHORS AND INTENDED TO BE THE TEXT BOOK OF THE COURSE OF PRIVATE LECTURES ON THESE SCIENCES IN THE UNIVERSITY AT CAMBRIDGE. SECOND EDITION. BY SAMUEL WEBSTER, D.D. A.A. & S.P.A. SOC. PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE. 1808

The Barkleys' grammar book gives a flavor of the times, listing the conjugation of the verb "to love" as "I love; thou lovest; he loves; we love; ye or you love; they love" and says "a verb is a word which signifies to be, to do, or to suffer, as 'I am; I rule; I am ruled.'"

OSMOND R. THOMPSON

The husband of Eliza Jane Barkley, Thompson became a judge and lawyer in Wintonsboro. His college papers also show he was a member of USC's first debating society, the Euphradians.

WALTER LOWMY THOMPSON I

Walter Lowmy Thompson I, son of Osmond Thompson and brother of Mary Grey Thompson, also attended USC.

JOHN JACKSON NEIL I

Thompson's sister, Mary Grey Thompson, married John Jackson Neil, another USC grad.

Neil, too, became a lawyer after his graduation in 1897, studying under his uncle Osmond. His diploma bears the Euphradian Society ribbon and the date "Millennium octingentesimo et sexagesimo septimo."

At the time of Neil's graduation, students also received diplomas for each school or discipline they had studied.

Neil won parchment scrolls from the School of History, Political Philosophy and Political Economy, the



Mildred Neil has collected many items over the years that trace her family tree through USC.

School of Ancient Languages and the School of Natural and Mechanical Philosophy.

CHARLES HENRY NEIL

John Jackson Neil's son, Charles Henry Neil, graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1903, becoming an English professor and academic, mostly in Hawaii.

Charles Neil was in Honolulu when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, ducking into a doorway. He later suffered a heart attack and had to be evacuated back to the mainland. A journey that took 11 days because of wartime security concerns.

ROBERT BRUCE NEIL, CHARLES MCKEOWN NEIL

When Robert Bruce Neil, a nephew of Charles Henry Neil, graduated from

USC in 1940, his 267-member graduating class was the largest in USC's history. Still, all of the names still fit on a 5-inch-by-7-inch trifold commencement program.

A newspaper article noted the size of the class and said President J. Rion McKissick "spoke briefly to the graduates, reminding them that 'each and every one of you is under heavy obligation to serve South Carolina in her rebuilding.' The state has a right to expect from you the leadership for which you have been trained here."

Neil earned a bachelor's of science in commerce, which sister-in-law Mildred Neil says "qualified him for duties for the highway department for the first summer after he graduated." Neil then entered the military. When he left, he took two more

courses and headed for medical school at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston.

Charles McKee Neil, another nephew of Charles Henry Neil, took classes at USC after World War II but did not earn a degree. He and his wife, Mildred, however, produced three Gamecocks. They were:

ANN ELIZABETH NEIL BALLENTINE, REBECCA FRANCES NEIL ABRAHAM, AND CHARLES JOHN NEIL SR.

If you ask Ann Ballentine to remember one standout day at USC, she'll tell you about the day when she had to catch the city bus from home, carrying a fetal pig she was dissecting

for biology class. She remembers distinctly having no trouble getting a seat to herself that day.

Ballentine began her stint at USC in 1959 and finished in 1962 — after two years and eight months — with a teaching degree, a Phi Beta Kappa key and a new husband, Charles Ballentine Sr., who'd graduated from USC in 1967. Ann Ballentine also received her master's degree in education from USC in 1965.

She and her husband, Charles, have gone to USC football games "religiously" for 41 years.

Ann Ballentine's sister, Rebecca Neil Abraham, received a bachelor's in education in 1972. She, too, married midway through her college career — her boyfriend went to Vietnam, and she quit school.

"My dad said he would pay for any school I wanted to go to, as long as it was Carolina."

— Chip Ballentine, who graduated from USC in 1989

"When he came back, I finished," she says.

Among Becky Abraham's memories: the tennis courts, hamburgers at the Dairy Bar and food in the Russell House, which she ate only if she had to.

"I was there when Scotty Ward was shooting baskets in the old field house," she recalls. "He was blind in one eye and he never missed." Brother Chuck lived at home and worked his way to a degree in mechanical engineering in 1980. He married Susan Mann, who earned an associate's degree in secretarial science from USC in 1974.

When the two weren't studying, Mann would watch Neil tinker with his car.

Neil remembers some of his professors but says he would just as soon forget others. One odd moment he recalls occurred when he was ushering a Jackson Five concert at the Carolina Coliseum.

"I almost tripped over Michael Jackson, because he was coming out of the dressing room when I was going down the hall. He was about 6 or 8, and his brothers were chasing him."

CHARLES WILLIAM BALLENTINE JR., ELIZABETH NEIL BALLENTINE GIERHART AND CHARLES JOHN NEIL JR.

Chip Ballentine, the son of Ann and Charles Ballentine Sr., earned an accounting degree from USC in 1989. He married fellow graduate Claudia Beck, who earned a bachelor's degree from USC in applied professional sciences.

"My dad said he would pay for any school I wanted to go to, as long as it was Carolina," Ballentine says.

Ballentine's sister, Elizabeth, also earned an accounting degree from USC — in 1992. Her mother says that since Chip, Beth and her husband all earned accounting degrees, she's the family's "no account" member.

John Neil, the son of Susan and Charles Neil Sr., is a freshman at USC this fall. Though he loves the school, he isn't really sure he has "gamet and black disease" yet.

And he doesn't remember receiving any long, rah-rah speeches in tended to persuade him to choose the school.

"It just seemed the place to go," he says. "As his Aunt Becky would say, 'We just grew up with Carolina.'"

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He's an eighth-generation Gamecock

John Neil represents the eighth generation of his family to attend USC.

At first, he thought he might break ranks to attend a private church-supported school. But he changed his mind — largely on the strength of the experience he's hoped to have as part of USC's South Carolina Honors College.

The State asked Neil to reflect on his choice and the experience he has had during his first semester.

LIFE AT A BIG SCHOOL

"My experiences here thus far have been nothing but positive. My initial fears of attending a large school — I guess 26,000 counts as large — were mainly of basically being lost within the masses of people. I guess that is true to an extent. It seems like everywhere I go, someone asks me if I know someone also attending USC, who is a freshman, and of course I never do."

"However, from my first day on campus, I began carving a niche for myself in different areas. The entire adjustment process basically consisted of narrowing myself down to a smaller family of people that I hang out with on a daily basis. Whether it was getting to know the girls up the hall and going to the cafeteria to avoid waiting alone, or attending a student organization meeting... the whole point was to narrow myself down to a smaller group of people that I could relate to."

"Now, as the weeks pass, I find myself really feeling at home. There are activities for me everywhere. The only time I really spend by myself would be my early-morning breakfasts or my afternoon/weekend epic bike rides."

WHY CHOOSE USC?

"My main reason for picking USC was the opportunity factor."



John Neil of Columbia, 19, is a freshman at USC.

Here at USC, not only did I have access to a much larger research-based science department, but I also had the opportunity to pursue another of my great interests: engineering. So now, as an engineering pre-med, I've got the engineering college, the college of science and math, and the honors college supporting me.

Another reason was that as competitive as med schools are... I know

that I'd have a higher chance of being accepted as an honors graduate.

On top of that, I'm now an engineering major. Engineering majors have higher acceptance rates into med school than do single-science majors."

LIFE ON THE HORSESHOE

"I do like the USC campus. Living on the Horseshoe is great. Living in Maxcy is really great."

"The Horseshoe is really peaceful. It's like this barrier of peace and silence that separates out dorm from the rest of the campus — except for the... squirrels, of course."

"It's almost like they are a different breed than the squirrels back home. I think the story of USC can be summed up by the... squirrels that rule the Horseshoe. And the leader of the squirrels is a vegetarian. They

"As far as moving in, it was definitely the biggest transition that I've made in my life."

— Freshman John Neil, who was considering a small, private school before entering USC

plant cabbage in the flower beds in front of the President's House, so that the ruler squirrel will have something to eat.

"I never fails. Every morning, I see the ruler squirrel sitting up in the same tree, with a big old leaf of cabbage. Apparently, he's too good for nuts, or maybe he's watching his weight."

ENGINEERS GET MORE EXERCISE

"The only part I hate is that as an engineering student, I have this walk down to the engineering buildings (on South Main Street). Also, since my engineering class is at 8, I have to leave way early to get there on time. It's not an incredibly big deal, but it gives all of the engineering junkies something to complain about, since we walk more than any other major in this dorm."

"The only thing that makes it worse, is when it rains... Then I (shove up) cold, wet and tired... I guess that's the joy of college life."

"I do like campus, and I do like the big aspect. It's like each area of campus has its own personality. From the liberal arts area, to the Horseshoe, to the women's quad, right down to the science block and engineering, it's all unique."

GETTING ACCLIMATED

"As far as moving in, it was definitely the biggest transition that I've made in my life."

"For about the first week, I was the most stressed person I knew. Some of the people I met that week must have thought that I was a lunatic because I was really uptight about a number of things. From the roommate, to my family and making friends, none of it came naturally. It took a few days to realize that it was supposed to be way different; and to just let go of any expectations that I had."

"I'll never forget the first day of class. It was a Thursday, so I had to be in the engineering building at 8 o'clock. My alarm was set for 6:50, but it didn't go off because I had set it — a new alarm clock — for 6:50 at night. I rolled over by the grace of God at 7:48, and realized where I was and where I had to be. I put on clothes, brushed my teeth and hair, got my running shoes on, and ran to class. I made it, with two minutes to spare. Sat there, surrounded by sophomores (Engineering 200) in my class, my first class of my college career, incredibly stressed and about to pass out the whole time because I couldn't stop breathing heavy from my morning run."

"Luckily, things have gotten much better."