

I had a surprising encounter with classmate **Ted Coolidge** and his wife, **Joy**, at a family wedding in Walpole NH last August. The wedding was one of those modern, pondside-at-twilight, write-your-own-vows affairs in which the bright young bridal couple (my cousin's son a teacher, she a lawyer) as part of the ceremony had asked a number of family members and friends to reminisce about them and offer thoughts for their future together. Among the otherwise mostly youthful participants was Ted (formally, Edward C.) an Episcopal priest affiliated with the bride's family through a sister's marriage, who had known the young couple when they had first met years earlier as undergraduates at Wesleyan in Middletown CT where he lives.

I didn't immediately recognize or remember Ted, but a buffet-line comment about the vagaries of New Hampshire weather led to the uncovering of our Dartmouth connection, and in a subsequent telephone conversation I asked him about the role the College had played in his calling. He said he had been drawn to the Dartmouth Christian Union as much for its activities as a defender of civil liberties –then under the siege of McCarthyism – as its more conventional role as a nourisher of spiritual values. He also spoke of philosophy professor T. S. Scott-Craig and College Chaplain George Kalbfleisch as having been influential in his decision to enroll after graduation in Union Theological Seminary in New York and from there to a lifetime of ministry in a number of parishes in Connecticut.

My wholly unexpected meeting with Ted has led to several thoughts. For one, how our shared Dartmouth experience had provided an instant bond between – admit it – two elderly strangers who had spent their adult lives in entirely different worlds. More significantly, in observing the loving respect given to their Episcopal priest mentor by a young couple of Jewish heritage, I witnessed an inter-generational “connection” of far greater substance than that of the satirical humor of **Buck Henry Zuckerman**, of which I wrote – upon reflection, perhaps too flippantly – in my last column. **David A. Drexler, 100 Waters Edge Dr., Jupiter FL 33477 (561-747-3874; dave@drexler.com)**