

Holy Cross

SUMMER 2010

magazine

Duty & Honor

Stories of Holy Cross Alumni in Military Service



Reporting for Duty

Starting with the very first students to arrive on Mount St. James, Holy Cross alumni have a long legacy of military service

BY CHRISTINE HOFMANN-BOURQUE



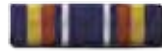
BEFORE FR. BROOKS was Rev. John E. Brooks, S.J., '49—respected president emeritus and Jesuit with a heart of purple—he was Private Brooks, a second-year student, who, in 1943 felt a call that was red, white and blue. “In those days, everyone wanted to go,” says Fr. Brooks, who enlisted in the U.S. Army during World War II like many of his classmates and spent more than two years overseas. “You were proud if you were a volunteer.”

Both in times of peace and war, thousands of Holy Cross students and alumni have raised their right hands and taken an oath to support and defend the U.S. Constitution as members of the military. Edward Scott, the very first student to arrive at the College in 1843, later fought in the Civil War, as did 27 other alumni. Three wooden plaques in St. Joseph Memorial Chapel list the names of every Holy Cross man who was killed in combat from World War I through the Vietnam War. Women, too, have made their mark. In 1976, 2nd Lt. Kelley McAvoy claimed two milestones on

graduation day: She became both the first woman to complete the Holy Cross Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) program, and the first woman in the United States to be commissioned into the Marine Corps through the NROTC “Marine Option.” This long legacy of military service continued in May of this year, when three Marine Corps officers and seven Navy officers—including two women—were commissioned through NROTC.

The call to serve something greater than oneself rings loudly on Mount St. James. To heed the call to military service requires acceptance of the dangers that come with active duty, a dedication to training and a willingness to sometimes face the vocal disapproval of one's fellow citizens. Despite those hurdles, many Holy Cross men and women choose the path, inspired by the Jesuits' daily reminder to be “men and women for others.” Exemplifying the selflessness demanded by military service, Holy Cross alumni have received two Medals of Honor, four Navy Crosses and 18 Silver Stars. These are the three highest awards given by the armed forces to those who act with exceptional bravery and valor, often at risk—and sometimes at the cost—of their own lives.





ROTC Trains Tomorrow's Military Leaders

SOME HOLY CROSS VETERANS enlisted (or were drafted) during wartime. Others enrolled in Officers Candidate School (OCS), a three-month, post-college class that molds officers quickly. (These new officers are cheekily referred to as “90-Day Wonders,” says retired Capt. Thomas Kelley '60, himself an OCS graduate who went on to receive the Medal of Honor.) But many prepared to be officers on campus through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC).

The Navy ROTC (NROTC) program at Holy Cross is an intensive four-year program that simultaneously trains undergraduates in the liberal arts and in military subjects such as national security policy and leadership. Students choose either the Navy option or the Marine Corps option; they can also join the Air Force ROTC program, whose detachment was at Holy Cross from 1951 until 1990, when it moved to Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Funded by the U.S. military, ROTC programs provide full- and partial-tuition scholarships in return for at least four years of active-duty military service.

“Our midshipmen are so patriotic,” says Cmdr. John Bishop, USN, who tracked hostile submarines in the Pacific before taking charge of the Holy Cross NROTC program—and its 65 or

liberal arts college in New England. During the Vietnam era, many schools—including Harvard, Brown, Yale and Tufts universities—ordered their ROTC programs to leave campus. Not that the Holy Cross program endured smooth sailing: It too was the target of protests, and in 1971 the Holy Cross student body voted to remove NROTC from campus. The College administration, however, overruled that decision.

One unusual campus legend from that tumultuous period involves the well-worn pool table that currently resides in the NROTC wardroom in Carlin Hall, where the midshipmen study. When the Harvard ROTC unit was booted from campus, so the story goes, the members bequeathed their game table to the Holy Cross unit. Nice story, but in reality, the pool table predates the ROTC shutdown in Cambridge. Many of the books used by Holy Cross ROTC students in the 1970s and beyond, however, were stamped as the property of the Harvard, Brown and Dartmouth programs.



New in 2009: Yellow Ribbon Program

TO MAKE PRIVATE EDUCATION more affordable for veterans and their children, the College joined the Yellow Ribbon Program, along with more than 60 Massachusetts schools, and many more countrywide. This program is part of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, otherwise known as the New GI Bill. Simply put, it helps bridge the financial gap between what the GI Bill covers—an amount pegged to the cost of a public education—and the cost of a private school. For qualified veterans, Holy Cross offers \$6,000 a year toward tuition, says Lynne Myers, director of financial aid; the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) matches that amount.

New in 2010: Marine Corps Grant

WITH AN IMPRESSIVE initial endowment of \$1 million, the brand-new Holy Cross/U.S. Marines Corps Scholarship Fund will offer its first grant to a student applying this year to begin Holy Cross in the 2011-12 year. The brainchild of Park B. Smith '54, the scholarship benefits a Marine veteran and/or a child of a disabled Marine veteran. Earnings from the endowment will determine the dollars available each year for the scholarship; the first scholarship will be enough to cover the full tuition, which is currently about \$39,300. As the endowment grows from additional contributions and from investment growth the Fund will be able to offer additional scholarships. “We’re constantly looking for ways fundraising can meet the needs of new populations like veterans,” says Myers.



MATT ATANTIAN

so midshipmen—four years ago. “They love this country, and that’s why they’re doing it. We serve from the heart.”

At 69 years old, the NROTC program at Holy Cross is one of the oldest in the country and the only one at a small, private,

Why Liberal Arts Makes a Difference

THE HOLY CROSS men and women who have served in the military would agree that military might should not equate solely to brute force. It encompasses strength of body *and* mind *and* character. “I understand that with the sophistication of equipment the military needs people who are engineers,” says Fr. Brooks. “But I think it’s extremely important that the armed forces have leadership that’s been trained in the liberal arts. They have a sense of history and are able to articulate and have good moral judgment.”

The fact that more than 15 Holy Cross graduates have earned the high-level ranks of flag and general officers in the Navy, Army and Marine Corps (including one Secretary of the Navy) is proof positive, says Fr. Brooks, that the first-class liberal arts training at Holy Cross produces leaders: “That’s the result of this education.”



BEHIND EACH NAME, rank and number is a personal story of service to our country and fond memories of Holy Cross. Read on as alumni representing each decade from the 1930s through the 2000s share their journeys.

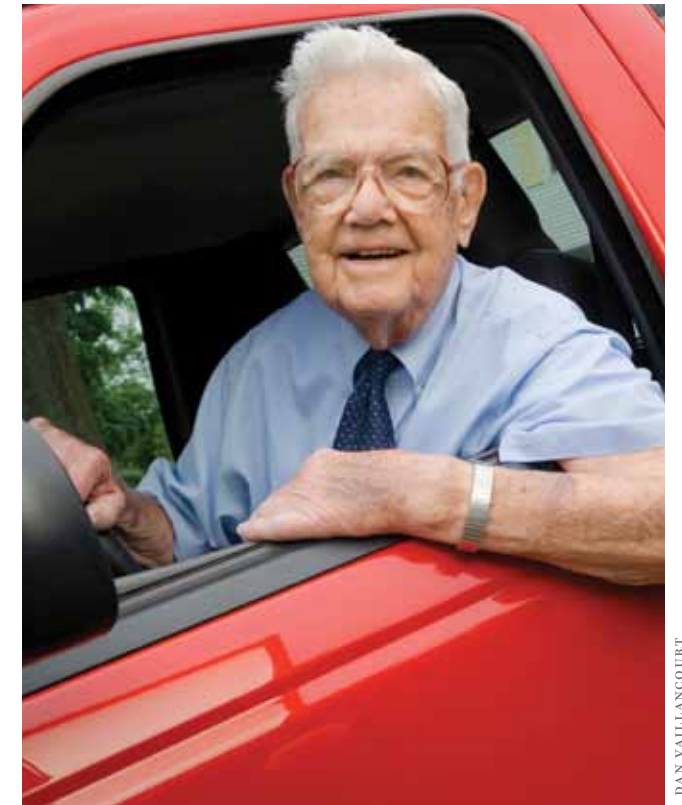
Lives Saved, Life Lived

WILLIAM T. SHEA '39, U.S. NAVY

IF YOU SPOT William Shea’s new, cherry-red Ford pickup truck tooling around Worcester this summer, you’d be forgiven for guessing there might be a freshly minted Holy Cross graduate behind the wheel, enjoying a cool gift from Mom and Dad. But look closer and you’ll see that the driver—a handsome man with snow-white hair—is 93 years old. He earned his degree from Holy Cross 71 years ago.

Knowing from an early age that he would join his father and brothers in running Shea Drug Company, the family’s pharmacies, Shea enrolled at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy after finishing at Holy Cross in 1939. He was drafted into the Navy in 1942, at the beginning of his senior year. Shea spent most of the next three years in Newfoundland, New Guinea and the Philippines as a harbor pilot, guiding incoming and outgoing ships safely to and from dock.

While in the Philippines, he received an official Navy commendation for saving a U.S. serviceman from drowning. It was the last in a trio of unusual events: When he was 14 years old, Shea came to the aid of a man who was having an epileptic seizure; when he was 22 and away on vacation, he encountered another man having a seizure, forcing Shea to run to a local pharmacy for medication. (The latter incident delayed his first date with his future wife, Irene. “My date was



DAN VAILLANCOURT

William T. Shea '39 can be spotted on the streets of Worcester in his red pickup truck.

at 7:30 p.m., but it was 8:30 p.m. when I got there,” he says. “I thought she’d say ‘Keep going!’ but she didn’t, and we’ve been married 65 years.”)

Then, in 1945, the lieutenant was on a dock in the Pacific. “All of a sudden I look, and there’s a guy in the water,” he says. “So I dove in.” Shea dragged the man to safety, only to realize he was having an epileptic seizure. He knew exactly what to do. Coincidence? Not a chance, says Shea. “I think the man up above somehow tells you what to do. There’s no other way that I would be that lucky.”

That same year, he also helped bring into port the survivors of the torpedoed *USS Indianapolis*, the worst Naval disaster in U.S. history. In July 1945 the *Indianapolis* was heading for the Philippines when she was bombed by a Japanese sub. She took only 12 minutes to sink, leaving about 900 of her 1,196 crew in the water. Almost five days of exposure, shark attacks and dehydration, only about 300 men were rescued from the sea.

Back in the United States, Shea worked hard to send his seven children to college, including three—Timothy '70, Peter '75 and Rosemary '79—to Holy Cross. Shea shut down his pharmacies when he was 59, then went to work for the Veterans Administration until he was 76. Not content to be idle, he made deliveries for an auto parts store in a (what else?) pickup truck, retiring at 80. “I’m an old man, and I live day to day,” Shea says. “And one of these days I won’t be here, but we’ve had a wonderful life.”

The O'Callahan Society: Looking for a few good men and women



MATTHEW ATANIAN

Jim Delehaunty '67 (left) and Cmdr. Bill Dempsey '63 USNR (Ret.)

WITH A NEW NAME and new status as an official affiliate of the Alumni Office, the O'Callahan Society—formerly the O'Callahan NROTC Committee—is looking for new members to join the 1,400 Holy Cross servicepeople who are already on its mailing list. Are you a veteran, on active duty, an ROTC graduate or simply a supporter of the military? Then, just like Uncle Sam, the O'Callahan Society wants you. There are no dues or applications. All that's required is a shared commitment to the Society's three key missions:

Mission No. 1: Remember Fr. O'Callahan. The Society wants to make sure that new generations hear the story of its namesake, Rev. Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J. Not only was he the first Navy chaplain to receive the Medal of Honor in World War II, he taught mathematics, physics and philosophy at Holy Cross before and after the war. Fr. O'Callahan was a lieutenant commander in the Navy's Chaplains Corps, stationed on the *USS Franklin* when the ship was set afire by a Japanese attack in March 1945. He provided comfort to men of all faiths

about 70 midshipmen will participate in the NROTC program at Holy Cross this coming fall, that number has inched slowly downward over the years. The Society works to promote the value of the program, says retired Cmdr. Bill Dempsey '63, U.S. Navy Reserve, who is chairman of the Society and an NROTC graduate.

"A liberal arts education encourages one to think broadly and comprehensively," says Dempsey, who believes that thoughtful military officers are essential in this fast-paced, complicated world. "To deny access by the armed services to a source of liberally educated officers is to ultimately deny policymakers the benefit of that thinking, and that is probably not a good thing for the country. In this regard, the Holy Cross unit is particularly important because it is one of the few remaining at a small, liberal arts college."

The Annual Speaker Dinner is a key way for the Society to increase the visibility of NROTC and reinforce its contributions to Holy Cross and the military. Everyone in the campus community—including

onboard and manned a fire hose, cooling hot live bombs that were rolling about the deck of the injured ship. He directed the flooding of the magazine and the jettisoning of fuel, all through choking smoke. Fr. O'Callahan is the Society's symbol of service to his fellow man and his country.

Mission No. 2: Support NROTC and ensure its continued existence. Although

alumni—are encouraged to attend this year's dinner on Oct. 2, 2010. Cmdr. Bernadette Semple '82, U.S. Navy, will be the featured speaker.

The dinner is also the Society's only fund-raising event; ads in the evening's program raise a few thousand dollars each year. "The money is directed back to the NROTC unit in the form of recognition awards to the midshipmen," says Society member and NROTC graduate Jim Delehaunty '67, who was a Holy Cross NROTC instructor from 1971 to 1974. The Society offers two \$500 grants to non-scholarship NROTC students and presents all graduating seniors with their first rank insignia: ensign for those in the Navy or second lieutenant for those in the Marine Corps.

Mission No. 3: Respect the contributions of our military. "We honor and remember those who have served, are serving and will serve," says Dempsey. Special focus is paid to those from Holy Cross, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Worcester State College, the three schools in the ROTC consortium, sharing resources and students.

One event hosted by the Society in 2008 celebrated Lt. Frank Malinski '61, an NROTC graduate who died when the *USS Thresher* sank off the coast of New England in 1963. Malinski had no living relatives who could carry on in his name. Dempsey says simply, "People shouldn't be forgotten."

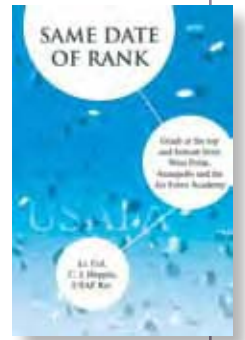
For information about joining the O'Callahan Society, email ocallahan@holycross.edu. And for the full story of Fr. O'Callahan's bravery on the *USS Franklin*, visit holycross.edu/HCM/ocallahan.

Off the Shelf

MILITARY THEMES have found their way into fiction and nonfiction books by Holy Cross alumni authors with military backgrounds. Here are a few recently published works.

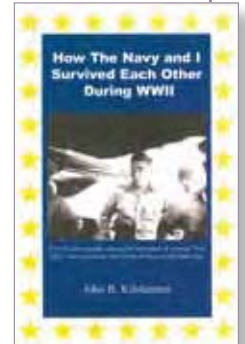
Same Date of Rank: Grads at the Top and Bottom from West Point, Annapolis and the Air Force Academy (Xlibris Corp.)
By Lt. Col. C. J. Hoppin, USAF (Ret.) '64

The last man in the class at West Point is called "the goat," and in 1942, the class goat was the first man in his class to be promoted to brigadier general. This is just one of the inspiring, sometimes quirky stories Hoppin shares in *Same Date of Rank*, a personal introduction to "active citizen patriots," who are products of America's service academies.



How the Navy and I Survived Each Other During WWII (AuthorHouse)

By John R. Kilsheimer '45
Kilsheimer describes this book as a "mini autobiography relating the adventures of a young free spirit during wartime with friends both good and otherwise." The book covers two invasions, but focuses more on the unusual happenings taking place during preparation and training periods.



The Carnival Diversion (AuthorHouse)

By Thomas P. Humann '93
A former Marine pilot for the White House, Humann brings insider details to his first novel about a terrorist plot against the President and First Lady. Humann's training as a contingency planner for the President informs this work of fiction, full of political intrigue and a fevered countdown to save Air Force One.



Prisoner of War, Warrior on the Field

THOMAS COSTELLO '48, U.S. ARMY

A YEAR AND A HALF AGO, Thomas Costello '48 was walking down a street in New York wearing a cap embroidered with the words "World War II veteran." A 19-year-old woman—a complete stranger—came up to him and said, "Thank you for your service to our country."

No one had ever said that to him before.

"It took me by surprise and uplifted me," says this 86-year-old Holy Cross valedictorian, who spent one year and one week as a German prisoner of war from 1944 to 1945. Costello was 20 years old when he was captured on the Anzio beachhead in Italy; his brother Joe was captured a few months later at the Battle of the Bulge.

"My poor mother went through hell," says Costello, who played down his own miserable POW conditions. His mother stopped answering her front door because it often foretold bad news. His father asked the postman to deliver all telegrams to the tavern he owned nearby, rather than the house. "Especially mothers, they suffer when you go off to war," he says.

After the war, Costello ended up at a port in Le Havre, France, with about 25,000 other servicemen waiting to head home. "And one day, I was standing in a field maybe 10 or 15 yards off an old dirt road, and who did I see walking at a very fast pace but my brother," he says. Their joyous return to New York kicked off with a welcome from their Catholic grammar school. "The nuns got word we were coming," he says, "and they were all hanging out the windows, waving at us."

While his war memories are still vivid, so too are recollections from his student days on the Hill. Costello, who entered Holy Cross after the war on a football scholarship, notes that some of his happiest days occurred on the playing field, and he likes to remind folks that his team beat a heavily favored Boston College in both 1946 and 1947.

Thomas Costello '48 (right) at a 2009 Memorial Day Parade



Two of my best friends came back from downtown Worcester one afternoon and

Costello, who went on to become a respected trial attorney, won the election for senior class president in 1947 thanks to an unusual campaign strategy. The morning of the vote, his election committee plastered “Vote for Costello” signs only in the men’s rooms: on the mirrors above the sinks, above the urinals and on the inside of each bathroom stall. Costello handily won the election, which earned a scatological nickname from his classmates. One of the students he defeated that day was his late friend William “Rocks” Gallagher ’48, who lost his vision and became well-known for his work on behalf of the blind, serving as president of the American Foundation for the Blind. “This man was so exceptional ... He made it a lot easier for blind people to become full members

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of society,” says Costello, who is currently seeking a publisher for the book he has written about Gallagher.

Costello has five children and 10 grandchildren with his late wife, Anne, an Army nurse in World War II. He says with a chuckle, “She was a second lieutenant, and I was private first class, and she insisted I had to salute her.”



Setting Sail

CAPT. JIM BALDES '57,
U.S. NAVY RESERVE (RETIRED)

GROWING UP in Minnesota—nicknamed the “Land of 10,000 Lakes”—it’s perhaps no surprise that Jim Baldes was drawn to the water. “I always wanted to be in the Navy,” says Baldes, who arrived at Holy Cross in 1953 as an NROTC student. “I enjoyed the classes and the Navy subjects, like gunnery, navigation and military science.”

Heading into service at the beginning of the Cold War, Ensign Baldes quickly discovered that one of the staples of Navy life—frequent deployments—had an upside and a downside. On a positive note, he adventured around the world to places both exotic and dangerous. As an officer on the *USS Robert K. Huntington*, he followed the legendary *USS Intrepid*, an aircraft carrier that is now a historic landmark and docked in New York City as part of the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum. “We were her permanent plane guard,” he says. “Wherever she went, we were there.” And, Baldes was aboard the last Naval squadron—the Destroyer Squadron Six—to sail into Cuba’s Havana harbor. Noting that he also made his way around the United States, he observes:

“I’ve been under almost every suspension bridge in the U.S. on a Navy warship.”

The not-so-great angle? The toll deployments take on the family left behind. “Those damn deployments,” says Baldes, who took a seven-day leave from the *USS Steinaker* in 1958 to hop from Crete to Germany to marry his sweetheart. “It’s nothing that the Navy’s not doing today. These long deployments, that’s normal if



Jim Baldes '57 served in the active Navy Reserve for 25 years.

said, 'We just signed up for the Navy.' I went down the next day and signed up.

—Capt. Thomas G. Kelley '60, U.S. Navy (Ret.)

you’re a seagoing naval officer. That’s part of the deal.”

After three years on active duty, Baldes joined the active Naval Reserve. He moved to the Seattle area, where he retired from the military in 1976 after serving 25 years. He retired entirely from paid work in 2000 from Weyerhaeuser, a forest products company where he was a director. Of his time in the military, Baldes says with typical Midwestern understatement: “There’s a sense of duty, but I wouldn’t say I was sad about it.”



The Highest Honor

CAPT. THOMAS G. KELLEY '60,
U.S. NAVY (RETIRED)

VIETNAM VETERAN Capt. Thomas Kelley makes one thing clear: He “received” the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest military award given for valor in combat. He did not “win” it. Even though the history books will forever honor his actions on June 15, 1969, Kelley says he was simply serving his country—and fulfilling a promise to lead his men and bring them home safely.

Kelley had arrived in Vietnam eight years after joining the Navy. “Vietnam was just heating up, and they were looking for volunteers for what they call the Brown Water Navy—the boats that go up and down the canals in Vietnam,” says Kelley. One June day, while in command of eight boats, he and his men came under attack after one of their boats broke down. Kelley put himself in the direct line of enemy fire in order to protect his vulnerable men. Despite receiving severe head wounds that left him unable to speak clearly, he maintained command and brought all his men to safety.

After recovering for months in a series of hospitals—in Vietnam, Japan, the Philippines, and finally, Hawaii—he had to fight once again, this time to stay in the Navy. Because of his injuries, the Navy declared that he wasn’t fit for duty, and it wanted to release him from military service. “I lost an eye and a good bit of my skull, but fortunately not my brain, so I fought it,” Kelley says. He was eventually allowed to continue in the Navy, where he served another two decades.

Kelley’s 30-year career in the military is all thanks to his roommates at Holy Cross. It was his last year, graduation was looming, and he possessed neither a job nor a plan. “Two of my best friends came back from downtown Worcester one afternoon and said, ‘We just signed up for the Navy,’” says Kelley, who was intrigued by the idea of spending the summer in



BOB CARLIN

Medal of Honor recipient Thomas Kelley '60

Newport, R.I., at Officers Candidate School with roommates Domenic Sica '60 and Donald Vasconcelos '60. “I went down the next day and signed up.”

Today, Kelley, who retired from the military in 1990 and lives in Somerville, Mass., with his wife, Joan, heads the Massachusetts Department of Veterans’ Services (mass.gov/veterans), which works on behalf of the Commonwealth’s 400,000 veterans to help with everything from job searches to the effects of post-traumatic stress disorders and traumatic brain injuries.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of his graduation from Holy Cross, and one memory from Kelley’s student years still burns brightly: going to Mass every morning. “It was a good thing to do,” Kelley says with a laugh, “but we did a lot of complaining about it at the time.”



All Ahead Full for New Adventures

REAR ADM. ARNOLD LOTRING '78,
U.S. NAVY

DURING THE MID-1970s at the Holy Cross NROTC unit, there must have been (pun intended) something in the water. Three of the midshipmen whom Rear Adm. Arnold Lotring trained with—Vice Adm. Bruce MacDonald '78, USN (Ret.), Vice Adm. Pete Daley '77, USN, and Rear Adm. William McCarthy '76, USN (Ret.), plus Lotring himself—went on to become “flag officers,” the highest ranks in the Navy. Flag officers are so called because they can fly flags on their vessels or at their shore-based command showing their ranks.

Not bad for a bunch of liberal arts graduates, jokes Lotring. “There’s a great quote I like to use: ‘We’re trained for nothing, prepared for everything.’”

Growing up near the submarine base in Groton, Conn.—and inspired by his Navy father, whose sight was damaged

Rear Adm. Arnold Lotring '78, applauding the newly commissioned officers of the NROTC unit in 2009



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in a kamikaze attack during World War II—Lotring always wanted to be a part of the military. He entered the Holy Cross NROTC program in 1974, when the wounds of the Vietnam War were raw; the library was still spray-painted with an anti-war slogan.

Post-graduation, this chemistry major was accepted by Adm. Hyman G. Rickover into the competitive Navy Nuclear Propulsion program, which trains officers to work on nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers. When Lotring took charge of the *USS Minneapolis-St. Paul* in 1995, he became the first Holy Cross graduate to command a fast attack nuclear submarine.

Currently Lotring is in charge of all Navy advanced skills training, making sure sailors are well prepared in everything from how to rig parachutes and build bridges to fix engines. Lotring is especially encouraged by the young people he meets. “Nobody should have any doubt this is a generation exceptionally dedicated to service to their country,” he says. “There is a war going on, and they’re still coming forward.”

This year, Lotring will retire from the military after 32 years of service. “I’ve had a great career, well-formed from Holy Cross,” he says. “The Jesuits, they’re the greatest teachers. There are far too few of them, even when I was there.”

Lotring and Kathy, his wife of 28 years who was also in the Navy, don’t have definite post-military plans. He says simply, “The adventure will continue as civilians.”



A Family Legacy

CMDR. BERNADETTE SEMPLE '82,
U.S. NAVY

ARRIVING IN THE VIRGINIA COLONY in the 1600s, the Semple family forged a storied history. One of its members has served in almost every U.S. military conflict in the past 234 years. Civil War Navy Capt. James Semple, who married President Tyler’s daughter Letitia, inspired *The Rebel and the Rose*, a 2007 book that delves into Semple’s connection to lost Confederate gold. Another relative had to pass for white in order to serve in the Spanish American War as a gunner’s mate; several others could only serve as mess cooks because of their race. Cmdr. Bernadette Semple earned her own chapter in the family lore: She became the first woman in her family to serve.

“Service has always been ingrained on both sides of the family: Semple, Lenningham, Barnes, Rice and Howe,” she says. “It’s military and faith and the rule of law.” Still, she didn’t embark on a military career from the get-go. After receiving her degree from Holy Cross in 1982, Semple took off a year before heading to law school, or so she thought. But while auditing a postgraduate class on national security at Columbia University, she felt the call to serve in the military.



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Cmdr. Bernadette Semple '82 also serves as a Holy Cross Trustee.



“I originally signed on for an eight-year commitment, four years active, and four years reserve,” says Semple, who graduated from Officers Candidate School in Newport, R.I. “I had no intention of staying more.”

Four years on active duty turned into 20, and this summer she will retire from the military. “Time just went by so fast,” says Semple, who is a noted expert in computer cyber security with two masters’ degrees, one in information resource management and one in national security affairs, which included a double major in nuclear strategic planning and international negotiation. In one of her recent positions she was the commanding officer of Naval Communications Security Material System (NCMS) in Washington, D.C., where she, with her team, ensured that military communications could be securely sent and received worldwide.

Semple, who is a College Trustee, credits Holy Cross for fostering a solid moral and academic foundation that has influenced her life tremendously. “One of the best decisions I ever made in my in life was going to Holy Cross,” she says. “Holy Cross impacted my approach to leadership and how I treat people. The Jesuits train you to think critically. The training I got at Holy Cross allowed me to see that it’s important to step back, be very thoughtful and stand up for what is right no matter the cost.”

Semple’s post-military future is full of possibilities, but she would like to focus on cyber security law, policy and technology. “To whom much is given, much is expected,” she says. “I remember when my mom died about 12 years ago, the Monsignor said that life is always about service. Money, fame and station in life are unimportant. God wants to know, Did you serve? Did you try to help someone? It’s always about giving back.”

What Do They Mean?

U.S. SERVICE PERSONNEL are awarded citations for exemplary service and other career highlights. The accompanying ribbon is worn on one’s uniform as a point of pride. Below are just a few of the ribbons earned by Holy Cross alumni.

-  GLOBAL WAR SERVICE
-  KOREAN SERVICE
-  WWII VICTORY
-  HUMANITARIAN SERVICE
-  FLEET MARINE FORCE
-  PRISONER OF WAR
-  VIETNAM SERVICE
-  LEGION OF MERIT
-  ARMY ACHIEVEMENT
-  DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
-  KUWAIT LIBERATION
-  PHILIPPINE DEFENSE
-  KOSOVO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
-  NATIONAL DEFENSE
-  BRONZE STAR
-  ARMY DISTINGUISHED SERVICE
-  DISTINGUISHED PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION
-  SILVER STAR
-  DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS
-  AIR FORCE CROSS
-  COAST GUARD MEDAL
-  COAST GUARD SPECIAL OPERATION
-  COAST GUARD COMMENDATION

RIBBONS PHOTOGRAPHED BY ADAM KOHUT

The Future of Service

TWO RECENT graduates, Capt. Laura Bridge '06, U.S. Air Force and Ensign Conor O'Neil, U.S. Navy, exemplify the gifts that a liberal arts education from Holy Cross will bring to the armed forces in the future.

CAPT. LAURA BRIDGE '06, U.S. AIR FORCE

By the time you're holding this magazine in your hands, Capt. Laura Bridge '06—fresh from graduation at Georgetown University School of Medicine—will be one of the newest members of the U.S. Air Force: She will have been on active duty for about 10 days.

"My grandfather, Charles Bridge, was drafted into the Army in World War II," says Bridge, who lost her personal hero this spring. "I spent my whole childhood in awe of him and all the people of his generation who served, the men who made this huge sacrifice. And I wondered if I had what it took to do that."

She is proving that she does. Bridge attended Holy Cross as the only Air Force ROTC cadet in her 2006 class. (The Air Force ROTC

Catherine O'Neil '77, flanked by sons Patrick '06 (left) and Conor '09, wears a special pin for Navy mothers (inset).



detachment was a part of Holy Cross until 1990, when it moved to Worcester Polytechnic Institute.) This June, Capt. Bridge, M.D., reports for duty at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, her first active-duty assignment.

Bridge is more than ready to begin her military career. "I cannot wait," she says. "I want to get back to my Air Force family. I feel like that is where I belong."

Of course, like any 18-year-old, she had brief moments of *What was I thinking?* Bridge vividly recalls her first semester at Holy Cross when she was living in Clark Hall. "I remember the first time the alarm rang at 5 a.m. for PT [physical training], and I thought, *I can't believe I'm going to do this two or three times a week for four years.*"

She persevered, inspired in part by the ideals of her schools and instructors. At Holy Cross and Georgetown, well-known mottos are "men and women for others" and "care of the whole person." In the Air Force, a core

value is "service before self."

"They all overlap and intersect," says Bridge. "What I was learning at Holy Cross, what I was learning through Air Force training and what I learned in pre-



Capt. Laura Bridge, M.D. '06

med has been that the focus is not on yourself. It's on your community and your world and using your time and talents and energy to make that whole community better."

ENSIGN CONOR O'NEIL '09, U.S. NAVY

During his NROTC commissioning ceremony last year, Navy pilot-in-training Conor O'Neil was sure of his immediate future: "I thought I was going to charge out of Hogan and jump in the cockpit." Instead, the military put him in a holding pattern of sorts while key training equipment was being repaired. He was put on funeral detail in Massachusetts for five months.

Every day, O'Neil and two other servicemen would crisscross the Boston area from Weston to Revere to Dorchester to play "Taps" and ceremoniously fold the American flags that were draped over veterans' coffins. Then this young man would hand the families the flags, accompanied with

the solemn words, "On behalf of the President of the United States of America, a grateful nation, and a proud Navy ..."

"It almost transcended the military," says O'Neil, who was an altar server at Holy Cross and has trained to be a lay leader of prayer in the Navy. "It's in the spiritual realm." Although most funerals were for World War II, Korean, and Vietnam veterans, two were for sailors on active duty. When one of those sailor's bodies arrived at Logan Airport, O'Neil was there to make sure he had a proper, respectful welcome home.

"It makes me appreciate more what I'm doing," says O'Neil. He saw firsthand a common thread at every funeral, whether the veteran had been in the military for one year or 20, and whether that vet was a mechanic or millionaire: "They loved the Navy, and they loved their country," he says.

O'Neil comes from a long line of Navy men. Just ask his mother, Cathy Lyons O'Neil '77, about the legacy of the pin she often wears. In World War II, the Navy gave these pins—which feature the Navy insignia above an ensign bar—to the mothers of newly commissioned officers. Conor's great-grandmother received the pin in honor of her son, Capt. John O'Neil, USNR (Ret.). After he married, the pin was handed down to his wife, Carmel, who wore it while her two sons—Conor's dad, Capt. Sean O'Neil '76, USNR (Ret.) and Conor's uncle, Lt. Owen O'Neil '86, USN—were ensigns. Cathy was given the pin to wear for her oldest son, Lt. Patrick O'Neil '06, who returned in June from a six-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Today, she wears it for Conor.

The delays in Conor's pilot career are now over. He is six weeks into his training program in Pensacola, Fla.. Soon, he will transfer to nearby Whiting Field. Conor says simply, "I don't know a life without the Navy in it."

Marine First, Lawyer Second

MAJ. KURT SANGER '93, U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE

NO MATTER WHERE in the world Maj. Kurt Sanger roams with the Marines, a fellow alumnus is nearby. "I run into a lot of Holy Cross people in the oddest places," he says. "I was in the middle of Afghanistan and met a Holy Cross guy running out of the bathroom." How did Sanger figure out there was purple beneath the camo? Hint: A Massachusetts accent was involved.

Sanger joined the Marine Corps in 1999 at the age of 27. He was knee-deep in classes at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in New York City when he felt the call to serve. "I wanted to serve the right kind of clients and do the right kind of work, and the United States seemed like a pretty good client to me," he says.

A military attorney in Europe, Africa, the former Soviet Union and Romania, Sanger taught at Camp Lejeune, N.C.; served as the aide to two generals; and deployed twice to Afghanistan, where he mentored Afghan lawyers. Sanger left the Marines in 2004 but returned to active duty three years later. He missed the teamwork and camaraderie that he says were tough to find outside the military and his rugby team at Holy Cross. "I had never really had a professional experience that made me happy outside the Marine Corps," he says.

Silent retreats, Wednesday night Masses and especially his political science professors at Holy Cross steered Sanger toward this path. "They gave me an emotional connection to the world," he says. "I learned that the things we did in America had an effect on every place else."

"The service culture is so ingrained in me," continues Sanger, who is currently stationed at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida, and who added "newlywed" to his life experiences this spring. "At Holy Cross you're taught to be a person for others, and when I learned that at Holy Cross, it felt like it's something you should do," he says. "But really after I've been out of Holy Cross for 17 years, I realize it's something you are. It's not something you can fake."

Maj. Kurt Sanger '93 in Afghanistan with students in his criminal investigations class.



Wherever the tip of the spear was, I wanted to be there. I loved every minute of

the Marine Corps, and it's certainly a conflicting feeling to get out.

— Capt. Mike Buckley '03, U.S. Marine Corps



MATTHEW ATANIAN

Alumni Linked Through the Years

CAPT. MIKE BUCKLEY '03,
U.S. MARINE CORPS

MIKE BUCKLEY entered the Marine Corps in the same way he played defensive end for the Holy Cross football team: passionately, full-force, no holding back. “My original plan was just to do four years, and live it as intensely as I could, see as many deployments, as much action as I could,” says Buckley, an intelligence officer who will leave the Marine Corps this fall after five-and-a-half years, two intense tours in Afghanistan and Iraq and a Bronze Star Medal for service. “Wherever the tip of the spear was, I wanted to be there. I loved every minute of the Marine Corps, and it’s certainly a conflicting feeling to get out.”

Buckley decided to become a Marine about a year after graduation from Holy Cross. While sitting at a nice desk at an investment firm in Boston in 2004, he felt a call to do something more. “The country’s at war, and I said to myself, regardless of the politics of the whole situation, it will be young Marines implementing our foreign policy and ultimately out there fighting and dying,” Buckley recalls. “And I think I have something to offer these Marines.”

His 2008–09 tour in Afghanistan was particularly brutal. But, he says, “We kept our humanity intact in spite of many bad

situations.” When his team’s commander Maj. Rocco Barnes of the U.S. Army Special Forces was killed in June 2009, Buckley took command of the unit. Shaken, the Marines got to work on a fitting tribute: hosting a free medical clinic in Barnes’ honor. Ten days after his death, they treated more than 400 impoverished villagers, giving away \$50,000 worth of medicine. After the clinic, they held Barnes’ memorial service. “That was a good way to bring things full circle,” Buckley says. “Being able to give back was cathartic. We were certainly living up to that Jesuit ideal of being men for others.”

Buckley even got a helping hand from fellow Holy Cross alumnus and Marine B.J. Cassin '55, whom Buckley considers a mentor. Cassin emailed Buckley to ask what he needed in the remote, ungoverned part of Afghanistan where he was working. Buckley asked for one soccer ball; Cassin sent 200. “You often hear the news media talk about the battle for hearts and minds, and what that means in real terms is winning over the trust of the local population,” says Buckley, who will start an M.B.A. program at New York University in the fall. “When you jump out of your Humvee and hand a child a soccer ball, the Taliban propaganda falls away.”

Journalist Christine Hofmann-Bourque is the daughter of James Hofmann '62. She is also an Army spouse who founded thestrengthbehindthetstrong.com, which supports friends and family of military personnel.

Capt. Mike Buckley '03 surrounded by Afghan children and teenagers



Three Brave Men

THE HOLY CROSS family counts three Medal of Honor recipients among its ranks: Lt. John V. Power '41, Capt. Thomas Kelley '60 and Rev. Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J. (Fr. O'Callahan's medal, *right*, is part of the Holy Cross Archives.)

Graduates of Boston College High School, Fr. O'Callahan and Kelley were recently honored by fellow Holy Cross and Boston College High alumnus Phil Byrne '62, who was instrumental in

creating a veterans' memorial at the high school.

In his speech at the dedication, Byrne recounted: “As a wise man once said, ‘If a nation does not educate both great plumbers and great philosophers, neither its pipes nor its arguments will hold water.’ To paraphrase that thought, in the dangerous world in which we live, we will need both the peacemakers and the peacekeepers.”

To read the rest of Byrne's moving speech, visit holycross.edu/ magazine and see Web Exclusives.



JOHN BUCKINGHAM

TELL YOUR STORY

Are you a Holy Cross graduate with a military background? Please help us collect the stories of Holy Cross alumni service personnel by visiting holycross.edu/HCM/military. There, you will be able to share a memory of your time in the armed forces. Whether your designation is ROTC, OCS, V-12, enlisted, officer, retired, active duty, reserves ... please consider writing in, and read submissions from other alumni who have served.