

## Years later, a ring surfaces

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One view of a lost and found York Suburban High School 1960 class ring. (Submitted)

Call it "serendipity." Call it "fate."

Sometimes, it seems, things are just meant to happen.

A few weeks ago, I received a call from the York Suburban High School office. A man who was using a metal detector in Pontiac Lake in Michigan had found a 1960 York Suburban class ring. He contacted the school in an effort to find the owner.

The school office staff knows I am a member of the Class of 1960 and have been dabbling with a 50th anniversary reunion for 2010. Would I be willing to talk with the finder and help him locate the original owner?

Bob Grattan has been pursuing his underwater scavenger hobby for years. In fact, the Port Huron Times Herald recently wrote an article about him and his discoveries.

Bob and I



One view of a lost and found York Suburban High School 1960 class ring. (Submitted)

finally connected. He thought the initials on the man's ring were G. H. H. They are a bit difficult to read -- not because they have been buried in silt, but because of the script used at that time to engrave the initials. When Bob e-mailed me photographs of the ring, it was clear to me the initials were G. H. K.

Going to my trusty 1960 York Suburban yearbook and my reunion records, the only male with those initials was Garry H. Kessler. As fate would have it, I had received a message from Garry's wife a few months ago in response to a reunion survey that had been mailed out. She wrote that Garry had died in May of 2003.

Garry was a business education major at York Suburban, according to the yearbook. He was on the baseball and swimming teams. When he was at York Suburban, he lived on Ludlow Avenue, near the Grantley Fire Company, in Spring Garden Township.

Acting as an intermediary, I contacted Garry's widow, Carol, in North Carolina. Yes, she would very much like to have the ring.

I again contacted Bob.

What makes this all the more serendipitous/fateful is that this month is the fifth anniversary of Garry's death. Add to that, next September is the 50th anniversary of the opening of York Suburban High School and the Class of 1960 was the first class to graduate from the new school. That's why the shield on the front of the ring bears the likeness of the building and the date 1958. The class year --19 on one side and 60 on the other -- was designed into the ring.

(The style of the ring is a bit unusual. It does not look like a class ring for most high schools or colleges. In fact, from the time I first ordered mine back in 1959, I thought it looked like what I called a "cowboy" ring. I wore it for only four years, until I replaced it with my more substantial-looking college ring.)

How Garry's class ring wound up at the bottom of Pontiac Lake will remain a mystery. Neither Garry's wife nor his sister know, and his parents are deceased. What is known is that Garry did live in Chicago for a few years and could have traveled to Michigan and gone swimming in the lake.

This is not the first time Bob Grattan has reunited lost keepsakes with a family. He had found a "University of Maryland, 1951" ring a while ago. After some research, Bob was able to return it to its grateful owner in Clarksburg, Md.

The newspaper article said that Bob usually finds unmarked wedding bands, pendants or bracelets on his treasure hunts. But if he can track down the owner of a class ring, he does so.

And he is doing so in this case, too, sending it off to Carol Kessler's home in North Carolina.

It's nice to know the lost-and-found ring circle has been completed.

I am sure Garry's family will treasure the ring found by Bob Grattan

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