

# Legacy



*"Every child should have someone, somewhere,  
who will do something for them that makes no sense  
but is absolutely magical."*

Guy Friddell

Robbie, his sister, and his parents met Captain Lewis, Bruce and Jerri Turnbull, and Bob Scott at Coach Scott's home in Baltimore.

"Robbie, Catherine, John, and Mary, thank you for coming today. Bruce, Jerri, and I wanted to present a special gift to Robbie and Catherine," Scott began.

He pulled out a handsome wooden box and opened it to reveal two photo albums, each decoratively covered with a United States flag.

Jerri began, "Catherine, I'd like to you to have this album. It is a collection of letters from Jack to Anne. She kept them all in a shoebox for many years and then put them into this beautiful album which Bruce will describe shortly."

Jerri handed the album to the girl with a gentle hug. Her heart glowed as she watched Catherine delicately flip through the dozens of letters. The girl's life, Jerri though, was about to be enriched

in ways she couldn't even imagine, like Robbie's.

"I think you'll see what a little sister means to a big brother—Jack let her know it all the time," Jerri added while offering Robbie a smile as a plea for him to tell his sister how special she was to him.

Coach Scott then addressed the boy, "Robbie, I have taken the liberty of soliciting each of the Turnbull Award recipients over the last sixty-five years to send you a note. I made a pretty simple request and got a fantastic response. I asked them to share some thoughts with you the 'old-school' way—a letter as opposed to an e-mail! I think this collection will have a nice, personal feel for you. About fifty have responded and they are included in this album."

Bruce added, "Robbie, Catherine, I'd like to point out the albums, themselves. You can see that the cover looks very much like a shadow box—though these are made of fabric—that might be used to house valuables and are often used to commemorate military service. Jack's sister Anne, who was quite a talented artist, made the albums herself. She designed a large plastic pocket to hold the flag and then sewed the pocket into the beautiful wood-colored fabric border and wrapped it around the album. The strings securing the album are the ones that actually held Jack's flags—the ones she sent to him wrapping many gifts. The first one, Catherine, was made from the flag Jack actually carried on a combat mission designated to honor Anne. She kept the album with the letters in it on her nightstand her whole life. She left it all to me in her will."

Robbie's parents felt a chill go through their

bodies.

"Robbie," Bruce continued, "your album was also made by Anne, but the flag in yours was the one carried by Jack on his fateful last mission and was later sent to his coach at Poly, Mr. Melosh. Several years after Doug and Anne presented the flag and note to him, he passed away. His wife graciously returned the flag to my father and he gave it to Anne to mount on this album. It had been empty all these years. When Coach Scott informed me of his intention to collect letters from all of the recipients of Uncle Jack's Award for you, I suggested that we use this album. We all hope that you will enjoy and learn from it."

Scott read the dedication page to Robbie and his family, "In life, Jack Turnbull was an inspiration to all with whom he came into contact. Even in his death, Jack continued to give to people, and now his Awards continue to represent excellence in the game of lacrosse. This collection of letters is offered to Robbie with great admiration and on behalf of scores of Turnbull Award recipients, Robert H. Scott. July 2014."

Scott then read his own letter to the group.

Robbie's parents, who thought they could not be any more overwhelmed than they had been in the previous year, reached yet another level of surprise and gratitude. Coach Scott invited the adults to adjourn to the kitchen area for soft drinks and snacks as to allow the children the time to enjoy their new treasures.

After about twenty minutes, the children returned to the group, a bit stunned and overwhelmed.

Bruce beamed at Robbie and Catherine, "I hope you'll enjoy those albums. What do you think?"

"I love it. But this is way too much for me to keep to myself. I have to think of a way to share this with other people," Robbie said gratefully. "Thank you, Coach Scott!"

"If you are able to do that, Robbie that would be a great gift from you to the Game. You know what? I may have an idea...."

[Author's note: For the benefit of the layout of this volume, the entire collection of letters in Robbie's album is presented at the back of this book.]

## Epilogue



*"Give a child a book and you change the world—maybe even  
the universe."*

Neil deGrasse Tyson

*"Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey"*

The Lacrosse Museum and Hall of Fame,  
Baltimore, Maryland

"What a great idea, Coach," Jim Lewis said to Bob Scott as they waited along with Robbie, his parents, and Bruce and Jerri Turnbull for several dozen guests to arrive at the Lacrosse Museum and Hall of Fame, adjacent to US Lacrosse Headquarters and Homewood Field.

"Well, Jim, I just thought it would be fun to get all of these guys and their families together in honor of Jack and Robbie—and the little treat we have in mind should be fun. It should be quite a night," Coach Scott smiled.

Some twenty five or thirty Turnbull Award recipients made their way into the Museum over the next thirty or so minutes with their guests—parents, coaches, wives, girlfriends, children—about one hundred people in all, each greeting Coach Scott, Captain Lewis, Bruce and Jerri, and Robbie as they

arrived.

It was an incredible sight. Players from seven or eight decades glowing in each other's presence, all genuinely thrilled and grateful to be there. The emotion in the room was palpable. People were glancing at nametags, erupting into joyful laughter, handshakes, hugs, and even a tear or two, and posing for pictures for their wives. Dozens of the greatest ever to play the game were simply enjoying each other. If it ever was about them—it wasn't any more. Tonight it was about the game, the friendships, the future. This event was about passing along their experience to young players, to each other, and the game itself.

Some of the greats were teammates with each other along their journey; some had played in the same recreation league, middle school, high school, college, club, or professional teams, and even on the same or different USA (or other nations') national teams—together or decades apart. Some had played with or against each other many times through the years. Coach Scott scanned the group, beaming with joy as he absorbed the radiance of the room. What a collection of talent, personality, and wonderful, hard-working, generous people, he mused.

The US Lacrosse staff was there to welcome everyone, guiding them to drinks and appetizers set up around the Museum. The staff had meticulously arranged a special exhibit about Jack Turnbull specifically for them. The area contained several scrap books arranged by Jack's nephew and Bruce's brother (also) Jack Turnbull and a video projector scrolling through scores of pictures from Jack's life, lacrosse

career, military service and, ultimately, grave. The beautiful album Coach Scott had presented to Robbie was also on display—drawing each contributor to inspect all of the letters it contained in addition to theirs, while also viewing the pictures of Jack and the other scrapbooks and mementos.

Of greatest interest to all in attendance, though, was Robbie's stick, which he held with him as he was introduced to the guests. As each Award recipient greeted Robbie, the boy instantly connected them to their letter. Without exception, each Award recipient graciously accepted Robbie's offer to inspect the stick. In remarkably similar and reverent fashion, each legend did nearly the same thing—they took the stick in their hands and felt its balance. They ran their fingers along the wood, twirled it ever so slowly, looked at it long ways, inspected the carvings and writing, gently cradled it, ran their fingers along it again, softly cradled it once more, and handed it back to Robbie. Each could feel the stick's magic they had heard about, and were instantaneously drawn back to the special feeling that had existed in their stick—a feeling that had captivated and driven them—during their playing days.

After about an hour of mingling and rekindling old friendships, Lewis announced to the group, "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for coming. We hope you will enjoy tonight's program and your particular role in it.

"I would like to thank US Lacrosse for hosting us today. Mostly, I'd like to thank Coach Scott for what he has meant to the game and all of us for all these years and particularly this event tonight."

Each Turnbull Award recipient immediately broke into applause. Scott attempted to wave off the recognition—but it continued for several minutes.

Lewis finally continued, "All of you know the main purpose of why we have gathered tonight—that part will come later. But we also have a little surprise for you out on Homewood Field—so please make your way out there. We'll meet back in here after the game. Enjoy."

The group moved out to the field where each Turnbull recipient received an index card with a young player's name and number on it and was directed by the US Lacrosse staff to either end of the field where teams were meeting for a pregame ceremony—half on one end, half on the other. Most of the recipients noticed the special arrangement of players and parents, so they edged in eagerly. Each group was conducting their own ceremony. Robbie's coach began by addressing his team.

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming tonight. We think we have a very special evening planned for you. We will begin here with a 'Play to Honor' recognition for our team. Then we'll have a game with the Tigers. After the game, we'll ask you to meet us in the Hall of Fame right over there for another short ceremony.

"Our boys were encouraged to invite a person who has impacted their life in a positive way to be their guest of honor tonight. This gesture was initiated by one of our own players—Robbie—to model a story of which he had learned recently. Robbie and I visited the Tigers a couple weeks ago and asked them



to consider conducting a similar ceremony for their team, which they are doing on the other end of the field. We picked the Tigers specifically because their coach and I were teammates many years ago.

"You may also notice that the referees are also holding a similar ceremony with their group at midfield. They are calling their part, 'Referee to Honor.' We hope you will agree that this is a remarkably simple—but, hopefully, powerful gesture that gives our boys an opportunity to formally thank someone special in their life, and play a game in someone's honor. We'll invite each boy to recognize their 'Play to Honoree.'"

The boys introduced their honorees, one by one, with a sentence or two to convey the nature of the relationship they had with their special guests.

Robbie began, "My 'Play to Honoree' is Captain Jim Lewis. Jim played for Navy back in the '60s and is in the Hall of Fame. He has shared a very special old stick with me and has supported me more than I can believe over the last couple years."

The boys continued by introducing themselves and their honorees.

"I'm Bobby and my 'Play to Honoree' is my grandfather, John Rowe, who has been to every one of my games since I can remember."

"I'm Bill and my 'Play to Honoree' is my math teacher, Miss Dempsey, who helped me every day on my free period."

"I'm Scott and my 'Play to Honoree' is my mom, Arlette, because...well, she's my mom."

"I'm Andy. My 'Play to Honoree' is my uncle, Joe Drost, who taught me a lot about how to play and comes to all of my games."

"I'm Danny and my 'Play to Honorees' are my athletic trainers, Antoinette, Julie, and Lauren, who helped me recover from and rehab my injury last year."

"I'm Dave and my 'Play to Honoree' is my football coach, Mr. Snyder."

The rest of the boys continued in similar fashion.

Most of the guests and parents had no idea that they were to be so honored—the e-mail Robbie's coach had sent out said only that they were invited to attend a "Short, but Special Ceremony"—and were clearly moved by the gesture. Coach Scott had not briefed the Turnbull Award recipients (except one) on this part of the program and they also watched in joy as the young men publicly thanked their special guest. Their thoughts quickly flew back to their life at age fifteen and chuckled at themselves that they were hardly able to tie their shoes at that point—no less speak so well and with such genuine gratitude.

After each boy and coach had honored their guest, Robbie's coach concluded the ceremony. "Thank you all for coming. I hope you see why we are so proud of these boys. Thank you for what you have meant to these players. I hope the boys will find just a little extra energy to put forth for their team and will do you appropriate honor. Enjoy the game. We'll see you after the game in the Museum. Let's get to work, boys."

The teams played a spirited and hard-fought

game. Each coach made it a special point to ensure a good amount of playing time for each player and they were thrilled by the terrific effort from each boy.

All of the people in attendance knew that the actual outcome of the game was important—the Tigers ended up winning 7-6—but that the most important part of the evening had already happened—the tributes to the honored guests—or at least that's what they thought.

After the players had taken off their gear and washed up they convened in the Museum.

When all had finally gathered, Roddy Marino addressed the crowd, "Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming tonight. I am Roddy Marino, and I have the honor of welcoming you here. I hope that you all enjoyed the pregame ceremonies and the game itself. We gather now to enjoy each other and for one more special part of tonight's program. You see, tonight's entire event was inspired by Robbie in very large part due to his relationship with Captain Jim Lewis, Navy '66, who has passed down a special stick to him. Jim, would you wave? Robbie has learned quite a bit about the game and some of the players who had the stick before Jim.

"One of those people was none other than Lieutenant Colonel Jack Turnbull of the World War II Army Air Corps. Jack was a three-time First-Team All-American here at Hopkins—playing on that very same field these boys just played on—and Hall of Fame member. He was a pilot who lost his life in the war, but is remembered today in several forms. One is the Turnbull Award which is presented annually to

the most outstanding attackman in each of the three college divisions. The actual trophy is housed here in the Museum." Marino gestured to the US Lacrosse staff member standing by the five-foot-high glassed-in trophy case, as the guests looked on in deep admiration.

"I am proud to say that I am one such recipient—all the way back in 1986 at the University of Virginia," Marino offered a bit sheepishly as he was normally impeccably modest, but since Coach Scott had asked him to emcee this part of the program there was no escaping a bit of self-reference.

"The ceremony that you witnessed on the field was very much modeled on a gesture by Lt. Col. Turnbull, who carried a flag of the United States in honor of people who had supported him. He called it, 'Fly to Honor.' The recipients of those tributes received them after Jack's death in 1944. Though these boys are not able to dedicate an actual combat mission, we hope that you enjoyed the similarity of their offering to you.

"Gathered around us here tonight are dozens of my fellow Turnbull Award recipients—or family representatives—going back all the way to 1946. Some came from great distances to be with us—so we thank them for the effort to be here. You can identify them by their nametags. You may also be able to identify them by their picture on the wall in the Hall of Fame around that corner—or maybe not," Roddy joked in regard to their old age, drawing more than a few chuckles from his brethren.

"A few could not make this event, but have

offered their support to these players. If your Turnbull Award recipient is not here—please meet with Jack's nephews Bruce and Jack Turnbull and their wives Jerri and Jane right there," Roddy nodded. "They will be glad to provide you some information on your person.

"In tribute to the wonderful relationship that has arisen from Jim's kind gesture in passing his stick to Robbie, Coach Scott has asked each of us to bring one of our sticks to pass down to these youngsters here tonight and we are genuinely thrilled and honored to be able to participate."

Everyone in the room began to look around in disbelief and amazement, wondering what was about to happen and who all of the great players might be.

Roddy addressed the young players, "Boys, your coaches have prepared a list of 'connections' between you and a Turnbull recipient. We would ask you, your parents, and your 'Play to Honoree' to please introduce yourselves to the Turnbull recipient I will name. We will not have a formal close tonight—so please just take a few minutes to get to know each other. Let me quickly introduce each Turnbull recipient and we would ask you to make your way to them. Thank you all for coming tonight. Enjoy!"

The young players and their parents beamed with excitement as Roddy read off the list and then they hurried to meet their new friends.

Lewis and Scott scanned the introductions and discussions taking place around the room. The joy on both sides—the youngsters and parents as well as the Turnbull recipients—was overwhelming.

Most of the discussions followed a similar line—the legend providing a brief—and far-too-modest—biography, including their hometown, college, year they received the Award, etc.

But the legends diverted the discussion away from themselves as quickly as they could and asked the boys to tell them about themselves, their families, their "Play to Honoree," and their team. From the cards handed to them, each knew in advance the player with whom they would be connecting so they had carefully watched them play and spoke with detail—starting with their jersey number!—about how well they played during the game. The boys and their parents were overwhelmed with pride, joy, and gratitude for the connection with these men.

At some point in the discussions, each legend handed their player a stick they had once used on the field. The sticks covered the entire range of the history of the game—from sixty-year-old wooden ones to the modern day plastic versions, custom dyed with school, professional, and even a few USA, Canada, Australia, and Wales national colors. The legends also provided their young men with a copy of the book they had recommended to Robbie, also on Scott's request. They handed the parents a card with their contact information. Most wrapped up the discussion with a pledge to follow up and stay in contact.

After all of the guests had drifted out of the Museum, Scott could still feel the electricity in the air. He had attended hundreds of events similar to this one but this had been different, he thought. His heart glowed, perhaps more than it had in quite some time, its warmth slowly seeping into his imagination.

Knowing so many of the Turnbull recipients personally, and the players they were and the people they had become, he already had a clear vision of what the next phase of Jack's legacy might look like.

"Thanks, Jim," he whispered to Captain Lewis.





## Special Thanks



Once again, this project would not have been possible if not for the gracious and positive support of many people. First and foremost, CAPT Jim Lewis, USNA '66, and MAJ R. Bruce Turnbull, USMA '57, who were gracious in offering information, support, and latitude with their lives as well as the lives of their relatives.

Bob Scott has continued to be a source of inspiration and support of this project for fifteen years.

I would like to thank my high school coach, Don Holmes, for the positive impact he has had on my life.

It was extremely gratifying for me to receive the support of Dick Szlasa and Dr. Bryan Matthews, my coaches at the Naval Academy.

I am grateful for the friendship and support of all of my teammates at the United States Naval Academy, and I am particularly grateful for the career service of scores of them (attempting to list them all here will almost certainly result in an error!).

I could not be more honored to have Army Lacrosse coaches Jim Adams, Peg Pisano for Al Pisano, Dick Edell (2010 "*Spirit of Tewaaraton*" Award recipient), Jack Emmer, and Joe Alberici – 56 straight

years of USMA coaching - provide the Introduction. Incredible! Thank you!

Once again, Mike Gottlieb provided inspired artwork and layout for the cover. Jonathan Gullery did another excellent job with the layout of the text. And thanks to Jacki Lynch and Ron Pramschufer at BooksJustBooks.com. Kelly Jackson Higgins provided invaluable editing assistance at a critical point.

I am also grateful for the assistance of: Lynn Paul of Norfolk Academy, Joe Finn of US Lacrosse, John Spring of the USILA, Neil Grauer and Ernie LaRossa of Johns Hopkins, Fred Rasmussen, Steven Goldberg, Wayne Johnson, Chris Davis, my fellow lacrosse coaches—Tom Duquette, Michael Via, Jack Gibson, Witt Borum, Steve Monninger, Trent Blythe, J. Sills O’Keefe, Greg Barton, Hannon Wright, and my many colleagues at Norfolk Academy.

I continue to be grateful for the support of Steve Stenersen of US Lacrosse, Bob Carpenter and John Jiloty of *Inside Lacrosse*, and Sarah Aschenbach of the Tewaarton Foundation.

A number of college coaches and athletic directors also provided crucial assistance. In particular, I would like to thank for their kind words: Dom Starsia (Virginia), Sid Jamieson (Bucknell) (2005 “*Spirit of Tewaarton*” Award recipient), Mike Hanna (Hobart), Mike Murphy (Colgate), J.P. Stewart (Virginia Wesleyan), Steve Koudelka (Lynchburg), and Ray Rostan (Hampden-Sydney), and Erin Quinn (Middlebury).

Thanks also to Richie Moran (2012 “*Spirit of Temeraaton*” Award recipient), Mark Johnson and Eric Steffen (Wisconsin), Jim Berkman (Salisbury), Chris Bates (Princeton), Greg Raymond and Jerry Fisk (Hobart), Jeff Long (Ithaca), Jason Archbell (Bowdoin), Tom Gill (USMMA), Dave Webster (Dickinson), Jonathan Thompson (Amherst), Mike Daly (Tufts), Jake Coon (RIT), Steve Beville (Cortland), Rob Randall (Nazareth), Hillary Fisher (Johns Hopkins), J.B. Clarke (Limestone), Dan Sheehan (LeMoyne), Chris Ryan (Mercyhurst), and Bill Pilat (Roanoke).

Special thanks also to Shannon Revell, USNA '04, and Giovanna Kastrubula, USNA '95, and their wonderful initiative, “Run to Honor,” as well as Buddy Garland, USNA '84, Sam Dorrence, Ryan Mita, Jacklyn Sassa, and Callie Oettinger.

*The Lacrosse Story* by Alexander M. Weyand and Milton R. Roberts, H. & A. Herman and the Garamond/Pridemark Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 1965, was extremely helpful in providing historical detail.

I am immensely grateful to all of the Turnbull Award recipients who participated in this project, including: Stewart McLean, W. Brooke Tunstall and his wife, Peg, and their daughters Tricia, Paige, and Leslie, Bill Stutt, USNA '49 and the family of J.H.L. Chambers '49, Don, Pam, and Tobin Hahn, Jeff Shepard, Bill Tanton, C. Rennie Smith, the family and friends of Percy Williams, USNA '55, Jack Williams, Lee Hual, CAPT Shannon Heyward, USNA '57, CAPT Jack Renard '55, my former coach Dr. Bryan Matthews and the family of Dr. Hezzy Howard, Jack

Daut, Dick Corrigan, Bill Morrill, Bob Miser, USMA '60, Tom Mitchell, USNA '61, my former coach Dick Szlasa and Olga Schmidt, Ray and Janice Altman, CAPT Jim Lewis, USNA '66, Joe Cowan, Tom Cafaro, USMA '71, John Kaestner, Jack Thomas, John "Jake" O'Neill and the family of Eamon McEneaney, Michael French, Michael O'Neill, Bob Boneillo, Mike Buzzell, USNA '80, Mrs. Anne Lee Huether, Craig Cook, Tim Nelson, Roddy Marino, Tim Goldstein, John Zulberti, Greg Burns, Mark Douglas, Darren Lowe, Matt Riter, Terry Riordan, Michael Watson, Jon Hess, Casey Powell, Ryan Powell, Matt Danowski, Rob Pannell, Steele Stanwick, Bob Engelke, Rob Grella, Mark Mangan, Gavin Chamberlain, Nick Carlson, Greg Cerar, Jack Harmatuk, Jack Venditti, Brian Scheetz, Rick Gilbert, Bob Griebe, Terry Corcoran, Roy McAdam, Jeff Kauffman, Paul Goldsmith, Marc Van Arsdale, Ray Gilliam, Tom Gravante, Bill Miller, Tim Hormes, Marty Kelly, Cabell Maddux, Jason Coffman, Dave Maguire, Darren McGurn, Joe High, Jon Fellows, Josh Bergey, Michael Saraceni, Ryan Hotaling, Dan Boyer, Jon Mason, Ryan Heath, DJ Hessler, Matt Cannone, and Brian Cannon.

As always, I owe an eternal debt of gratitude to my wife, partner, and best friend, Jennifer, who for many years has patiently indulged my passion for the game of lacrosse and no less a passion for my students. It continues to go without saying that our children, Catherine and Drew, are the central source of hope and happiness in our lives.

As with *The Spirit in the Stick*, this project could have easily withered or died at many points. I

was heartened and buoyed by the overwhelming and timely acts of kindness by all of these wonderful people. The completion of this project is as much a tribute to the generosity of others as it is to any of my humble efforts.

This journey continues to be its own reward. The fact that you have now taken it makes it all the more special.

Thank you.



## About the Author



Neil Duffy is a native of Massapequa Park, Long Island. He is a graduate of Alfred G. Berner High School, the United States Naval Academy, and Old Dominion University. He is a teacher, coach, and advisor at Norfolk Academy in Norfolk, Virginia and he is the author of *The Spirit in the Stick*. He resides in Virginia Beach with his wife, daughter, and son.

Please share your thoughts and criticisms with the author at [nduffy@norfolkacademy.org](mailto:nduffy@norfolkacademy.org).