

## SUNSET REUNION

Back here in hometown Hayward at my folks', to spend the day,  
I went to pay respects where Sunset Falcons used to play.  
I thought I saw one flying, circling down above the place  
Where football warriors skirmished, and our track teams ran their race.  
But, no, I was mistaking for our mascot in the sky  
A lonely, wind-worn seagull where so many used to fly.  
Then standing by the fence that they put up when we were here,  
The strength of reminiscence somehow made it disappear.  
So, crossing field to blacktop where we played our volleyball  
I went past gym and locker room, and on through every hall.  
A sudden hall-bell sounded! Every door burst open wide!  
I found myself caught up within a student-ocean tide!  
Young faces floated round me, each familiar, some well-known,  
And some had see-through bodies, apparitions, white as bone.  
Inside the empty classrooms there were teachers, just the same:  
Some fading, others ghostly—and then one called out my name.  
“Hey, David, you remember that small book you gave to me?  
You know, it made a difference, though it took me time to see.  
Already it's been years since I departed, but I cried  
The ‘sinner’s prayer’ your booklet urged me pray before I died.  
There’re others with me whom you warned and left when still unwon.  
Your Gospel seeds grew into faith they placed in God’s dear Son.”  
With throbbing heart I dashed back in the hall to look around,  
To see if any of my friends among the ghosts were found.  
But, there we were, in caps and gowns, all marching out the door.  
A well-loved teacher caught my hand and shook “good-bye” once more.  
Again sank in, through *déjà vu*, the stark reality  
That time brings all our human ties to sure finality.  
And at that thought, my dreamy vision ended as it would  
With me still peering through the fence where those old buildings stood.  
The years flow swifter now, it seems, than back in high school days.  
I doubt I’ve grown much deeper in the realms of prayer and praise.  
But one hope in my heart remains as strong as in my youth—  
That you will come to know the Son: the Way, the Life, the Truth.  
And when our last alumnus slips beneath life’s final sigh,  
May you march in Reunion with all saints from Sunset High.

— David L. Hatton, 10/28/2000