

Class of 1971 Website



Tutorial 50th

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Introduction

Hello, my name is Bob Oganovic, and I am both a 1971 Washington-Lee High School graduate **and** the developer of the Class of '71 50-year reunion website. Thank you for taking time to join me in this video tutorial. I will focus **mostly** on the tasks that involve sharing your story with classmates, but I will also highlight some points on the website which I hope you will take the time to enjoy and contribute to.

I will be demonstrating from a Windows 10 PC using the Firefox browser. However, the website is **responsive**, which means it will perform equally well (and look good):

- On various operating systems,
- On different platforms such as computer, tablet, and phone,
- On all major browsers – Chrome, Firefox, Microsoft Edge, and Safari.
- As windows are enlarged or shrunk.

So, let's get into it.

Main menu

Starting from my desktop I can open the browser and type either **wl71.net** or **wl71.oganovic.com** -- either of which will land me on the website **Home Page**. You may want to add this site to the Bookmarks or Favorites in your browser. You'll then see the little "favicon", as it's called, on the list.

All the website pages have the **menu and submenu structure** at the top linking you to other pages on the site. A **“+” sign** to the right of a menu label means there are submenu items to choose from. The **Home Page** also has graphics and verbiage with links to elsewhere on the site.

The website is written in WordPress, a popular website development software, and a companion product call BuddyPress. In simple terms, BuddyPress supports the personal profile and related content you will create, and WordPress takes care of everything else. I mention all this because when you are entering information or reviewing content on the website you will see a few idiosyncrasies along the way owing to this marriage of these two applications.

Exploring the home page and updating the website

Before going on I wanted to highlight two points regarding both the homepage AND the periodic update of the website.

1. First, as you can see on the home page there are these blocks with both graphics and links that can take you to the individual pages of the website – just like the menu choices above. Starting from this page and surfing around the site is a good way to familiarize yourself with everything we're presenting.
2. Second, keep in mind that the W-L '71 website, like any other, is by its nature dynamic. There will be periodic updates and additions. With that in mind we've created a page that summarizes the latest tweaks to the site. New posts will appear as warranted.

Registering as a user – name, address, and phone fields

So, the important first step is to get you registered. Click on **Your Profile** then choose **Register**. In the next screen enter a username, email, password, name, and any other names or nicknames along with the various address and phone number fields.

For username we suggest the format *lastfirst* – for example, *hankstom* or *streepmeryl*.

You may be scolded for picking a weak password, but you can proceed despite that warning. Because the software knows how old we all are (*just kidding*) you need to prove you can enter the exact same password a second time. Now, I don't want to get into the technical weeds here, but for those of you into computer security here are a couple of points:

- You may find the BuddyPress password strength algorithm somewhat mysterious (at least I do). The password I just entered is considered “weak”, yet that exact same password is considered “strong” on several other websites I regularly access.
- Furthermore, you aren't given any guidance how to make it “stronger”.
- The bottom line is -- **accept that this is as-delivered functionality** that cannot be changed and just move on from there.

For your **name** please also follow the **formatting convention requested** – likewise for the **phone number**.

You'll see the **address fields leverage Google Maps** to create a correctly formatted address as well as auto-populate the city, state, postal code, and country fields.

Note that these address & phone fields are **required for reunion committee purposes**, but they **WILL NOT be displayed by default**. However, to make them visible you can select the radio button choices that appear if you click on **Change**.

Click on **Complete Sign Up**. You receive a confirming message and can proceed with creating your profile.

Adding Profile Photo and Cover Image

Let's move on to where you can tell us your story for the last 50 years.

Navigate **Your Profile** → **Your Profile – Create ...**. Your first task should be to double click on **Change Profile Photo**. You can read the directions in the white square. Add a current photo that you like. This is your first media object upload for the website. The good news is all these media objects (image, music/audio, video) behave the same way as we'll see shortly.

You can upload the image by either:

- Clicking on **Select your File** and drilling into a desktop folder, or ...
- **Dragging and dropping the image** from your PC.

You can crop the image into a square shape. When completed click on **Crop Image**. There's no "Save" – just look for "... uploaded successfully".

Next click under **Media** on **Change Cover Image**. It's a kind of theme or "grab you" visual that expresses some aspect of your spirit. This object is a narrow and horizontal orientation, so select an image similar in shape and focus. The steps are the **same as for Profile Photo** except there is **no cropping step**.

Create Your Narrative

So, now it's time to tell your story.

We're in the "BuddyPress" space I talked about earlier with its own little menu structure – **Profile**, **Media**, **Activity**, and **Profile ~ HELP** – each of these with submenus. So, navigate **Profile** → **Edit**. You'll land on the page you just were on, and since presumably nothing has changed skip by this and click on **My Story**.

As you can see, most of this page presents "leading questions", most of which are answered in little text boxes with "word-processor-ish" features like bold, italics, bullets, hyperlinks, and undo.

You are encouraged to tell your life story, but at the same time **none of these fields are required**. It's all up to you. It is also **extremely important** that you **save frequently**. FYI, the **Save Changes** button is (*unfortunately*) at the bottom of the page.

You'll see some of the questions have cross-references to other pages on the website – for example, "**Who were your favorite teachers ...**".

Before going on a couple of points about these "word-processor-ish" boxes. You may already have a narrative in other places that you want to bring in here. That's perfectly fine -- copying and pasting is a wonderful thing. This might include postings on social media, verbiage in a résumé, highlights from a holiday letter, whatever. Just be aware that:

- The copied-in text will **inherit the WordPress font and size**.
- The completed C/P may require **adjustment of line spacing**.
- **C/P should bring in hyperlinks** provided "paste" -- rather than "paste text".
- You should probably check that everything looks fine by going to **View**.

Besides these narrative blocks there are two “exceptions” to this format.

The first exception is the **Sports ... extra-curriculars** section. Here you’re asked to select from multiple values in a drop-down list. Use your **mouse + control** key (Windows) or **mouse + command key** (Mac). If you find you flubbed your first pass in making selections click on **Clear**.

The other exception is the **Social media ...** section. Here you can **check off those sites you frequent** and then add your own URL in the box that follows.

And, as noted above:



So, after completing a portion of my data entry, saving, and going to **View** here is what you see.

Updating/Changing Your Profile

I can always come back to my profile and add to, change, or delete whatever I created previously (and that's in fact what already did here). I simply follow the navigation described earlier. If I'm on my desktop:

- Open the browser.
- Type either **wl71.net** or **wl71.oganovic.com** (or launch it from Bookmarks or Favorites).
- Navigate **Your Profile** → **Log In**
- Enter the **Username** and **Password**
- **Log In**
- Navigate **Your Profile** → **Your Profile – Create ...**
- **Edit**

Here you would most likely move onto **My Story**, but if, say my address changed, I might instead choose **Name et al**. And the same reminder to “*save early, save often*” still applies.

One final point around updating. Any changes you make **overwrite what is already there**. In other words, no history is retained.

Uploading Images, Audio, Video

We've already had a taste of working with media uploads, so let's close that loop. Under menu item **Media** you have the choice of **Photos**, **Videos**, and **Music** (which really means *any audio*). Just a few points you probably already understand intuitively from previous experience:

- As you saw earlier you can either drill down to a desktop folder or drag-and-drop the object(s).
- Larger media objects (like videos) will load slower than smaller ones (like photos).
- Assign these media meaningful names (for reasons you'll see in a moment).
- Multiple objects can be "dragged and dropped" at the same time.
- Although you can do minor edits of images on the website it's kind of clunky, so do this before you upload them.

Let's use the example of uploading Photos.

- Navigate **Media** → **Photos**
- Click on **Upload** under **All Photos**.
- Bring in the files. Notice a progress bar moving from left to right.
- There is **no save at this point**. The next two sub-steps are optional.
 - If you hover over the top of an image, you'll see an **Edit** icon.
 - A page will open that brings in the file name and shows a space for further description.
Click **Save**, **Back**, and **Photos**.
- If you then click on one of the photos, you'll see a gallery with forward/backward arrows allowing you to scroll through the gallery.

Additional Points Regarding Photos

- **Cropping**. With two exceptions (see below), **you don't HAVE TO crop the images you upload**. Although they are displayed as square thumbnails, if you open them they can be of any size or aspect ratio (and are visible as such).
- **Exceptions to the above**. The two exceptions are the **profile image** – which you crop to a square shape right on the WordPress page – and **the cover image** – which, yes, ideally should be long and narrow.
- **Image editing & upload anxiety**. Editing, uploading, cropping etc. digital images are tasks not everyone is experienced and comfortable with. I *reeeeeeeeeeeeeeeally* tried to find an online tutorial that could help here but without success. The combinations of variables -- computer platform, cloud upload options, operating system characteristics, differences in using a phone vs. a "real" camera, fancy vs. basic shooting -- means there is no set of instructions that can apply to everyone.
- **So...** If you need help – and there's no teenager around 😊 – go to the **Contact Us** page, send me a note, and we can work out the logistics for getting your photos – or any other media for that matter – onto the website.

Reviewing the Profiles of Other Classmates

So, at this point you've put all the effort into completing your profile. How do you see what others have contributed? It's simple.

- Click on **Your Classmates** from the top menu.
- You can either type a name in the **Search Members** block and then click on **Search** or simply scroll through the list of names to find someone. I should note: BuddyPress does not by default sort alphabetically, so you may want to change the **Order By** to **Alphabetical**.
- Click on the person you want to see. In this case I'm selecting my fellow classmate Ethan Thorman. Notice that I can **view** what he's written **but not update anything** (and vice versa). I can also look at media he's uploaded.
- After you've checked out what others posted you may want to follow up with comments, questions, or just the desire to rekindle old friendships. We tried out several different approaches in this regard, but at the end of the day we found that the easiest way to reconnect people is through good old-fashioned email.
- With that in mind we created a separate page that you can reach from either the **Home** page or the **Main Menu**. It's called **Contact Classmates**.
 - When you land on that page, you can scroll through the records OR search from your browser to find a person. You'll see the name, email address, and vintage photo of everyone who has been on the website.
 - The email addresses are already hyperlinked, so if you click on the link it will open an email to that person and you can be on your merry way.

How to Get Help

So, thanks for hanging in there. We're almost done. Four quick points before we wrap up:

First, if at any point you feel stuck and want to revisit either this video or its script you can:

- From the top-level menu navigate **Your Profile** → **Profile 101 ~ How-To**, or ...
- From the "BuddyPress space" – where you worked on your profile and media – click on **Profile ~**
HELP

Other Pages on the Website

Second, I want to **encourage you to look at the website pages** under the high-level menu choices **Our Heritage** and **More to Explore**. The subordinate menu pages are all self-explanatory, and there's a lot of stuff I think you'll find interesting:

- A digitized, searchable copy of our yearbook.
- A list of the teachers who were there for us.
- A memorabilia site which I encourage you to not only review but also contribute to.
- Classmates we are trying to find and ask your help in doing so.
- A special page for our deceased classmates. You can leave your own personal tribute by sending an email to me. You're welcome to include any photos of the individual. What you provide will then be formally posted on a separate page as you see here.

Searching Across the Entire Website

Third, you already learned how to search for a classmate. There is another search tool that's differentiated by both color and placement. It's the red **Search** box connected to the menu at top. Here you can search for **both classmates and other content** around the website. For example, the director of the choir in our senior year was Dr. Robert Baxter. So, if I search on his last name, I'll find multiple references for him. I can click on those results and go to the page where his name appears.

There is one caveat here: **you can only search on a single keyword**. This is a technical limitation of the software. The red box has been customized to remind you about the one-keyword limitation.

Changing/Resetting Password (or User Name)

Finally, if you forget or want to change your password the drill is a bit unintuitive but straightforward **IF you follow the instructions**. *For any men out there, I repeat – IF you follow the instructions.* 😊 And those are:

- Sign onto the website URL and, from the top level menu, navigate **Your Profile** → **Log In**, then ...
- Click on the **Lost your password?** link at the bottom
- As it says, enter your **Username** or **Email Address** and then **Get New Password**.
- You'll receive a Byzantine-looking email. If you don't see the email, **check your junk folder**.
- **You MUST click on the link in this message**. It will return you to the sign-on screen.
- You'll be offered a strong password. As before **you can select a weak(er) password**, but this time you'll be asked to **Confirm use of weak password** in the check box.
- Click on **Reset Password** then the link to **Log In**.

As long as we're mentioning change of **password**, there may be a circumstance where you want to change your User Name. That is **do-able by me as the webmaster** – just go to the Contact Us page and send me an email with your *current User Name*, *new User Name*, and **Password**.

Thanks!

I hope you have found this tutorial helpful. If you have any questions at any point, from the main menu of the website click on the [Contact Us](#) page and send me a note. Thanks!