



The Bridge



Connecting Members of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association

VOL. X NUMBER 1 NOVEMBER, 2008



Auburn Knights Friends & Family,

Hello and War Eagle! Football, tailgating and marching band music is in the air and I am very excited to join the AKA as President for the next two years. I have learned a great deal from my very good friend and predecessor Mark Belfast and want to thank him again for his excellent service and leadership to our organization.

So, how about that 78th Reunion??? I am constantly in awe of the song selection and amazing musicianship that we get to enjoy at each Reunion and am extremely grateful to all those who make it happen. Mark expressed his thanks to all of those who put in hours of their time and many of their personal resources into our AKO Annual Reunion concerts. I want to echo his sentiments wholeheartedly and encourage others of you who are new to our organization or would like to be a more active contributor to please get plugged in to one of our committees.

Feel free to contact Peter Blaise or myself for more information.

I want to also thank Craig Lunsford for serving as Treasurer of the AKA for the past several years. Craig is an extremely dedicated member of our organization and I look forward to his leadership in many other aspects of the AKA. I want to welcome Dorsey Tippet as she takes the reigns as Treasurer. Thank you both!

As we approach the U.S. Presidential election, I am eager to share my goals for our organization during my time at the helm. First, our financial leadership over the years has done an impeccable job ensuring that we have the monetary resources needed in order to sustain our organization. Seeing as expenses continue to rise, I would like to work with the AKA Board to discuss fundraising opportunities and a potential capital campaign to raise money for our organization and create a significant financial cushion so we can continue to share the timeless music that we all know and love for another 78+ years. I also would like to raise awareness across our state and region of our very special organization and annual reunion concerts. I plan to work with the Publicity Committee to get more "butts in the seats" at the Marriott each July to enjoy the music that is the heart of our organization. And finally, it is the mission of the AKA to support the current AKO and I plan to extend the resources and expertise within the membership of our organization to aid the current band in their pursuit of more gigs and retaining the talented musicians that they continue to recruit.

I thank you all for this opportunity

to serve and encourage you to contact me with any ideas you may have regarding how we can extend the great legacy of the AKA and Auburn Knights Orchestra.

God Bless,
Jana Calano 🎵

Sonny Harris Inducted into Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame

On September 26, 2008, Auburn Knights alumnus Alvon A. "Sonny" Harris was inducted into the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame.

Sonny played drums with the Auburn Knights from 1956 to 1960, and is also a longtime member of the SuperJazz Big Band in Birmingham, Alabama, but he has a long and impressive resume of working as a bandleader and sideman in numerous ensembles. Other 2008 inductees were Frank Davis, Jr., Gene "Mighty Flea" Conners, Roy Yarbrough, Harry Noble Simms, Grover Mitchell, Steve Sample and Bart Grooms.

Need a great band for your club or organization's next dance? Contact now:

Auburn Knights Orchestra
P.O. Box 1024
Auburn, AL 36830
www.auburnknights.com

Jay Anderson
(404) 626-2006
anderje@auburn.edu



Terry "Doc" Mosley

From its beginning in September 1930, the Auburn Knights Orchestra quickly gained popularity and began to search out good student musicians to join the group. In 1935 a fine young violinist was invited to join the band. He was Terry "Doc" Mosley, from Birmingham.

Doc was brought on the band to be the featured violinist, and he quickly fulfilled that role. He had completed two years of college at Birmingham Southern and had planned to pursue his college education in Medicine at Tulane University.

However, the invitation to join the Knights, and his deep love for music, changed those plans, and he completed his degree in Business at Auburn in 1937.

Before graduation Doc led the Knights from 1936-1937, as he succeeded "Yank" Friedman. Under his leadership the band played extensive engagements and was warmly received by a variety of audiences.

Doc was able to attend many AKA re-unions and his violin brought excellent music to the audiences. Between reunions he was active in a fine bluegrass music band in Hendersonville, NC, where he lived. He was a member of the Rotary Club, a Mason and a Shriner, and he enjoyed golf. Doc was truly a fine person and gentleman. His wife, Ethel, preceded him in death, and his passing was on Sunday, August 24, 2008, with his children David and Mary Ann with him.

The Bridge extends its thanks to Charlie Higgins for contributing this article about Doc. A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in Doc's name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Fritz Siler, 3110 Deer Chase Ct. SW, Snellville, GA 30039. Checks should be made out to the Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Terry "Doc" Mosley.

David Sibley

David C. Sibley passed away on September 17, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Deanne, his daughter, Joyia, and his brothers Francis and George.

David attended Auburn and played bass with the Auburn Knights. He also served in the U.S. Navy on the USS Hugh Purvis. He went on to a highly successful musical career, performing and touring with an incredible roster of musicians and bands, including Paul Anka, Woody Herman, Buddy Rich, Joe Williams, Elvin Jones, and countless others. As his brother George noted, David was one of the greatest bass players we will ever hear.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Fritz Siler, 3110 Deer Chase Ct. SW, Snellville, GA 30039. Checks should be made out to the Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of David Sibley.

Jef Thurman

Mortimer Jefferson (Jef) Thurman, Sr. passed away on October 8, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Joyce; son, Mort; daughters Marti and Sandi; brother, James; and his grandsons, granddaughter, nieces and nephews.

Jef played bari sax with the Auburn Knights in the 60's, but is perhaps best known to the Auburn Knights alumni as our archivist, a position in which he has faithfully served for many years now. He also served as Dadeville High School Band Director for eight years, a Juvenile Officer for Tallapoosa County, and a Warden for the Alabama Dept. of Corrections.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Fritz Siler, 3110 Deer Chase Ct. SW, Snellville, GA 30039. Checks should be made out to the Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Jef Thurman.

Tommy Goff

Tommy King Goff passed away on September 25, 2008. He is survived by his brother, Kenneth; daughter, Kelley, and sons, Dan and Rick; and a number of grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Tommy played trumpet with the Auburn Knights in the 50's, but he is best known to the Auburn Knights family as the long-time band director for Auburn High School. Under Tommy's direction, the Auburn High School bands won countless awards and honors, including the Sudler Flag of Honor. Many of Tommy's former students went on to become professional musicians and music teachers, not to mention Auburn Knights! It is impossible to convey the legacy that Tommy has left behind.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Fritz Siler, 3110 Deer Chase Ct. SW, Snellville, GA 30039. Checks should be made out to the Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Tommy Goff.



**2008 Reunion
Photos
Provided by
Mary Kate
Gach!**



Keith McPheeters

Edwin Keith McPheeters passed away on September 21, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Mary Louise Marvin-McPheeters, sons Kevin and Michael; grandson Adam, step daughter Julia and stepson William; a sister, Dorothy, and several nieces and nephews.

Keith was a veteran of World War II, where he completed fighter pilot training and he continued to serve in the Air Force Reserve after that. He received degrees in Architecture from Oklahoma State and Princeton. Keith played sax with the Auburn Knights while a member of Auburn's architecture faculty in the 50's. He later returned to Auburn to serve for many years as Dean of Architecture and Fine Arts.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Fritz Siler, 3110 Deer Chase Ct. SW, Snellville, GA 30039. Checks should be made out to the Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Keith McPheeters.

Bob Ware

Robert E. Ware passed away on July 8, 2008. He played saxophone with the Auburn Knights from 1949-1963, provided vocals for the band from 1949-1959, and served as front man from 1955-1959. He is survived by his wife Melanie and sons Robert and Patrick.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Fritz Siler, 3110 Deer Chase Ct. SW, Snellville, GA 30039. Checks should be made out to the Auburn Knights Alumni Association – Scholarship Fund. Be sure to designate on your check (or in a cover letter) that your donation is in memory of Bob Ware.

Recognition of Charlie Higgins

Longtime AKAA Reunion Coordinator Charlie Higgins was recognized by the AKAA at this past reunion with a plaque that reads:

“Presented to Mr. Charlie Higgins: For his lifelong devotion, service and freely given professional advice to the Auburn Knights Alumni Association, Inc.;

“For his single-handed and tireless success as the sole chairman of arrangements for the Auburn Knights Alumni Association, Inc. Annual Reunion for many decades;

“And above all, for the love he has demonstrated for each friend who joined with him in serving these great organizations since the 1930's.

“Presented by the Auburn Knights Alumni Association, Inc. July 26, 2008.”

In response, Charlie sends this message:

“At our last reunion, I was totally surprised and shocked when I was presented the beautiful plaque, in front of the ballroom audience. Needless to say, I was really stunned, and at a loss for words.

“I don't recall what I said at that unusual moment, but I would like to express my deepest appreciation and sincere thanks.

“While the plaque contained my name, our reunion could not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our beautiful AKAA registration ladies, our AKAA Board of Directors, the era band leaders, coordinators and players, and the generous audiences who attend each year, and all of this group deserves my deepest appreciation and heartfelt thanks.

“Many thanks to all of you!”

OUR LEADERS

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VICE-PRESIDENT

Peter Blaise
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SECRETARY

Nat Michelson
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Fritz Siler, Chairman
(770) 978-1287

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Charlie Higgins
(334) 288-5001

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Lyle Johnson
(256) 289-9598 or lyle@lylejohnson.name

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Mark Belfast

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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