



# The Bridge



Connecting Members of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association

VOL. V NUMBER 2 MARCH, 2004

## A Note From The President



Happy Spring to you all. As we look forward to another reunion this summer, I wanted to take a moment to update you on some of the off-season action in the Alumni Association. Our annual February board meeting was well attended, and Charlie Higgins has everything in motion for the 2004 summer reunion, July 29 – 31. As usual, Don Culley has nailed down a complicated rehearsal schedule that starts on Thursday afternoon (details on page 3 of this newsletter). But you can also plan on some unstructured playtime starting as early as Wednesday night. ("Unstructured Play Time"? Do I sound like a modern parent of elementary school kids, or what?) The jam sessions are always hot on

Wednesday night, and the company is always good.

The Current Band has a new business manager, vocalist Dorsey Tippett, and I hope we'll all make her feel welcome and help her find the band lots of gigs! (She can be reached at 334-524-9801 or [tippesd@auburn.edu](mailto:tippesd@auburn.edu)) We should also be sure to offer thanks for the terrific job Jana Burns has done running the band for these last few years. She leaves a strong legacy—great players, great recordings and great memories.

There's nothing like hearing the fresh crop of Auburn Knights kick off their first tune on Saturday night. It always reminds me of how proud I was to be on the band, and to be playing music that survives the ages in American culture. In my life as a musician in New York I haven't come across ANY institution like the Knights, with such a long history of keeping a big band tradition going strong.

If you haven't been back in awhile, now's the time. If you're a regular, call some old friends whom you haven't seen in awhile. They'll thank you for it. See you this summer!



Ed Wadsworth, a member of the 1930s Auburn Knights, passed away on February 5, 2004. Ed's unique sense of humor and his outstanding violin solos were among the highlights of each year's Auburn Knights reunion. Be sure to read Dick Johnson's column on page 2 of this newsletter, which pays special tribute to Ed.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations (made out to the *Ed Wadsworth Memorial Fund*) to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805.



Dora Elizabeth Owen Callaway—better known as "Bubs" to her friends—passed away on January 29, 2004. Bubs' husband Bill played with the Auburn Knights in the late 1940s. Bubs retired in 1989 after some twenty years of teaching English at Butler High School in Huntsville, Alabama. In addition to being a well-loved and respected educator, she was an active member of the AKAA and will be sorely missed by all.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in her name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations (made out to the *Bubs Callaway Memorial Fund*) to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805.

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](http://www.auburnknights.com)**

Dorsey Tippett  
(334) 524-9801  
[tippesd@auburn.edu](mailto:tippesd@auburn.edu)

## Memories of an Old Friend



Ed Wadsworth, better known as Eddard and my old compadre of about 70 years died February 5, 2004. He was a most valued friend of my youth, middle years and of old age, which is where I find myself currently. I'll miss him less if I can talk to you some about him and in a rambling fashion Ed might have approved of.

Ed played piccolo in the Lanier High School band 1935 – 1937 and his flawless obligato on the Stars and Stripes Forever march would have made old John Phillip Sousa smile in appreciation.

Most of you remember Ed as a fine Jazz violinist and I think he was about as good in this genre as it ever gets. But I suspect that only a few of you know that Ed played trumpet (and violin) during his stint on the Auburn Knights 1938 – 1942 and after WW11 4th trumpet on the Bobby Adair - led Alabama Knights 1946 – 1947. Ed's tone and technique on the trumpet were at best undependable and the "E" in the treble clef staff was about the best he could manage even on a good day. Yet he played low register muted close-to-the mike jazz solos that were marvelously inventive and fun to listen to and, even if not always perfectly

played, sounded great anyway.

Ed was a most unique person and I have never known anybody quite like him. I always thought he listened to the beat of a distant drummer no one else could hear. He often seemed absent minded, distracted or detached and not fully attuned to life's immediate realities like arriving at an appointed time or not forgetting to bring his horn to the gig. Yet Ed, after appointment as Clerk of the 5th District Federal Court in the 50's (a big job) must have had an efficiency gear he shifted into because he was very effective in his duties as Clerk of the Court for all the years he served.

Ed was a sight to see at some of the reunions. Funny hats, real big glasses, T-shirts with bow tie and tuxedo stamped on, "undecided" stamped T-shirt during an election year. Much of Ed's stand-up comic routines were self-deprecatory and he didn't mind being the butt of a joke if it was funny. He once took a correspondence course in situation comedy writing. The final exam was a sitcom script that I never got to read but I bet he got an A.

During the 60's and 70's the 5th District Court held sessions for two weeks twice a year in Atlanta and Ed and I saw a lot of one another during these times. One afternoon Ed stepped off a curb and tore the plantaris tendon in back of his calf and when he got to my house for dinner his calf was bluish-red, swollen and very tender and painful and he

couldn't walk without assistance. So he spent the next six days at my house with his leg propped up, ice pack on, crutches on hand and enjoying the ministrations and concern of my family. He really was The Man Who Came To Dinner. I thought he would never leave. Over a 15 – 20 year period he knocked down my mailbox completely twice backing out of my driveway and hit it a 3rd time causing a precarious 45 degree lean from the perpendicular.

After Ed's retirement we kept in close touch. It was rare for a month to go by without a phone call or two or letter or postcard being exchanged. Ed, not wanting to waste space always wrote on the address side of a postcard as well as the back. He wrote over, under, sideways and obliquely around the address but was always careful not to write on the stamp. Anyway reading a card from Eddard was always a potential health hazard, vertigo-wise.

I can think of no better way to wind down this article than to retell a joke told by Eddard three or four years ago at an AK reunion. Ed asked a friend if he believed in reincarnation and got a firm "no way" as an answer. Then Ed said, "I didn't believe it either until I came back the first time."

And if Ed did get himself reincarnated it would make a lot of folks happy if they could only know about it. But for me, I'd recognize old Eddard right off no matter who or what he came back as.

*The Bridge* is the official newsletter of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association. Letters and articles are welcome. Lyle Johnson, Editor, 108 Millsford Drive, Madison, Alabama 35758.

**2004 Auburn Knights Orchestra Reunion  
July 29-31, 2004**

**Rehearsal Schedule**

<i>Era</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
30's	1-3 PM Ballroom	12-2 PM Ballroom	1-3 PM Pub
40's	6-8 PM Ballroom	10-12 AM Pub	
48/49	8-10 PM Ballroom	12-2 PM Pub	
50's	4-6 PM Ballroom	4-5:30 PM Pub	1-2:30 PM Ballroom
60's		2-4 PM Pub	2:30-4 PM Ballroom
70/80		2-4 PM Ballroom	
90's		4-6 PM Ballroom	
Current	1-10 PM Pub	10-12 AM Ballroom	3-4:30 PM Pub

**Band Coordinators**

<i>Era</i>	<i>Coordinator(s)</i>	<i>Phone</i>
30's	Charlie Higgins (haubtiger@aol.com)	(334) 288-5001
30's	Terry Mosley	(828) 697-8604
40's	Lyman Mitchell	(256) 764-8655
48/49	Don Irvine (knight4849@aol.com)	(251) 666-4720
48/49	Bob Hurston (bhhurston@aol.com)	(901) 755-4567
50's	Don Culley (dculley@gulfel.net)	(251) 980-1362
50's	Al Norman (almarnorman@mindspring.com)	(404) 237-5916
60's	Steve Means (auknights@hotmail.com)	(256) 549-4646
70/80	Lisa Ray (lisahray@charter.net)	(334) 887-1544
70/80	Fritz Siler (dogsiler@aol.com)	(770) 978-1287
70/80	Tim Chambliss (tchambliss@mindspring.com)	(334) 821-5300
90's	Jebb Long	(205) 324-4056
90's	Craig Lunsford	(919) 870-1906

**Performance Schedule**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
7:30 PM	70/80	30's
8:30 PM	40's	60's
9:30 PM	90's	50's
10:30 PM	48/49	Current

**OUR LEADERS**

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Jon Smith  
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jonsmith@pobox.com

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Snellville, GA 30039  
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Auburn, AL 36830  
(334) 887-1544

**TREASURER**  
Craig Lunsford  
2608 Crofton Springs Dr.  
Raleigh, NC 27615  
(919) 870-1906

**HISTORIAN**  
Charlie Kinzer  
1101 Fourth Ave.  
Farmville, VA 23901  
(804) 392-1731

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We need a volunteer!

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**LIBRARY ARCHIVIST**  
Tom Winstead, (256) 852-0138

**PUBLICITY**  
Jack Dresher, (334) 887-5452

**AKAA MEMORIAL  
SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**  
Vic Atkins, Chairman

**REUNION COORDINATOR**  
Charlie Higgins, (334) 288-5001

**EDITOR, AKAA NEWSLETTER**  
Lyle Johnson  
(256) 837-5540 or lyle@knology.net

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**Auburn Knights Alumni Association**  
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Number	Event or Item	Cost	Total
_____	2004-2005 Dues (Members & Associates)	\$ 10.00	_____
_____	Concert/Dance, 7:30pm, Friday, July 30th	\$ 6.00 (\$7.00 @ Door)	_____
_____	Concert/Dance, 7:30pm, Friday, July 31st	\$ 6.00 (\$7.00 @ Door)	_____
_____	Saturday Jazz Brunch, 11:00am		_____
_____	BBQ Beef or chicken, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Bread & Drink	\$ 6.00	_____
_____	Hamburger or Hotdog, Baked Beans, Slaw & Drink	\$ 4.00	_____
_____	Hamburger or Hotdog, Chips, & Drink	\$ 3.00	_____
<b>Contribution to the AKAA Scholarship Fund</b>			_____
<b>Total Amount Enclosed</b>			_____

If you have reserved a room and have not received a Room Confirmation or to check availability, please contact Jennifer @ 1 800-AUBURN-3

**Send form & Payment to:**  
 T Craig Lunsford, AKAA Treasurer  
 2608 Crofton Springs Dr  
 Raleigh, NC 27615