



The Bridge



Connecting Members of the Auburn Knights Alumni Association.

VOL. VII NUMBER 1 OCTOBER, 2005



A Note From the President

by Fritz Siler

Now **this** was a reunion! The only way to describe the

2005 Auburn Knights is "Holy Cow!" All who were present were blown away. We owe a special thanks to Bob Sanders for his participation in the 2005 AKO's performance.

This reunion was one of the greatest of gatherings we have ever had. It was a time of reuniting with old friends who have either never been since being off the band, or others who have taken a leave of absence for longer than expected. Most notably in attendance for me was Teeny Mahaffey, who came from Texas, and Frank Buttenschon, who made a brief appearance with the Auburn Knights' record "Happy", donated it to the archives, then had to leave just as quickly as he appeared because of medical discomforts. We hope all is fine now. The entire trumpet section from the 1972 band showed up and had a reunion on the 70/80's band. Jane Drake and David Evans each had new recording projects they had done to share with us. The current Auburn Knights had a new CD that was unveiled. All three are fantastic! Steve Armour was able to come down from NYC instead of having to play a musical. In the words of Charlie Woods, "If you weren't there you missed a really swingin' affair!"

This was a year of new growth for us. The accommodations were first class, and the management and staff of the Marriott "Lodge" was very supportive of all that we needed. Our thanks go to them and also to our past President Jon Smith and the board for the foresight and courage in making the move to this beautiful facility. It was a hard decision to move there but it was worth it. If you missed the reunion this year, I hope you will put it on your calendar right now for next year. The dates are July 29-29. Some of us start gathering earlier to get things in order. Rehearsals with the different groups begin on Thursday, July 27. We especially need more rhythm section players to make it and play on the bands. Isn't it nice to be needed?

In growth, there is some pain involved. This year we found that our biggest pain was stepping on toes. I am among the guilty of doing this, and there were some who politely let me know that it was being handled. When you have a group of very capable people involved on doing projects this is bound to happen. So, if in the future you have some brilliant ideas about doing things to support and help the reunion, please contact the person who is responsible for doing that job and talk with them. It may have already been done, or is being done. There are already things in discussion regarding improvements for next year. If you have suggestions, please contact the appropriate person before acting on your own.

This may possibly bring to mind several questions for you. "Who do I contact?" I'm glad you asked! Historian – Charlie Kinzer, Archives – Jef Thurman, Publicity – Hank Elliott, Reunion Coordinator – Charlie Higgins,

Scholarships – Vic Atkins, Current Auburn Knights – Dorsey Tippet, and Alumni Library Archives – Tom Winstead, recording engineer – Rod Neis, sound reinforcement – Jeremy Leff. If I have left someone off the list please let me know. "How can I find these people?" Go to the new AKAA web site at www.auburnknightsalumni.org. There you will find links to what you need to know and more. Lyle Johnson is presently our capable and creative Webmaster, as well as in charge of our publication, "The Bridge". If you want to learn how to help with publications, contact him.

If you were not at the reunion this year, we missed you, and to make matters worse, people talked about you behind your back (usually at your expense). Make it your goal to be at the next one, defend your honor, and talk about somebody else who is not there.

Before I close this President's Message, let me sincerely thank some very hardworking, dedicated people who did who did so much to make the reunion a pleasure to be a part of: Charlie Higgins, Hank Elliott, Jack Dresher, A.J. Coleman, Lyle Johnson, Charlie Kinzer, Dorsey Tippet, Jana Burns, Jon Smith, Tom Winstead, Dale Quillen (in absentia), Jef Thurman and his spousal unit, Lisa Ray, Vic Atkins, Mimi Howell & THE LADIES AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE, Bebe Abner (who donated the money in her mother's name for the printing of the program), the past officers and board of directors who worked so hard to decide to move us, Don Culley, J. H. Owen, Nat Michelson, and the leaders of the era bands. We reunite each year for the love of each other and the love of the

music we play. This was indeed well done, my friends.

Now that we know how to do this, the next one should be even better. Please make the time on your busy calendar to come be with us next year. If you are not playing that much, get out your instrument and practice to be ready. It is only one playing set of 45 minutes + rehearsals. The rest of the time is yours to visit with friends and family. It is worth the trip. Make it. You may be surprised at the number of your friends that are there already. For room reservations call:

GROUP SALES AGREEMENT

**The Auburn Marriott Opelika at
Grand National**

3700 Sunbelt Parkway

Opelika, AL 36801

(866) 563-4389

Tell reservations you are reserving a room for the Auburn Knights Alumni reunion and receive the rate of \$75 per room. The place sold out with a waiting list this year. Make your reservations now to avoid the hassle of later. See you there! War Eagle! 🎵

Scholarship Winner 2005

When I first became part of Auburn Knights Orchestra, I never realized all the benefits I would receive. I never thought my involvement in the Auburn Knights Orchestra would help finance my education at Auburn University. Your selection of me to receive the Auburn Knights Alumni Association scholarship is well beyond what I could have hoped for.

I am personally thankful for your sensitivity to the needs of students in financing their education. Thank you for choosing me to be the recipient of the 2005-2006 Auburn Knights Alumni Scholarship.

Sincerely,
Dorsey Tippet

Dorsey is a vocalist from Opelika, Alabama and joined the Auburn Knights in August 2003. She is also the outgoing business manager for the band. She is a senior majoring in Elementary Education.

Reservations for the 2006 AKAA Reunion

AKAA Reunion Coordinator Charlie Higgins reports that the contract has been signed with the Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National for the 2006 AKAA Reunion.

The dates in the contract are July 25-30, 2006, thereby blocking out this time for us. Performances will be on Friday and Saturday nights (July 28 and 29) as usual.

Room rates are \$75.00, plus tax, during the contract period. Reservations can be called in beginning Tuesday, August 16, 2005, at (877) 563-4301 or (866) 546-4655. If you have any difficulty making reservations, please ask for Michelle Glenn, Front Office Manager. Be sure to identify yourself as an AKAA member to get our special rate!

Persons can ask for the same room they were in, and The Lodge staff will do its best to honor this. All other details (e.g. rehearsals, performances, etc.) will be arranged at the AKAA Board meeting in early 2006, and reported on our Web site and in The Bridge.

Charlie urges everybody to make reservation now, as we booked the entire facility this year!

New Marion Evans Scores Donated to AKAA Library

AKAA Library Archivist Tom Winstead reports that we've received eight new Marion Evans scores for the library. The charts are: "My Romance"; "Flamingo"; a medley of "Once in a While", "My Ideal" and "These Foolish Things"; "Christmas Medley #2"; a medley of "Be My Love" and "Would I Love You"; "Rain"; "I'm at a Loss for Words"; and "Just Movin'". Tom will make copies of these scores for the library, and place the originals in the Auburn University archives.

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

Ricky Callaway
(334) 750-3927
callari@auburn.edu



75 Years of the Auburn Knights

by

Dick Johnson

75 Years of the Auburn

Knights – Who would have thought it?

While I was not there in person to see it, all the reports I have received indicate that the reunion honoring the 75 year history of the Auburn Knights was carried out in fine fashion in all aspects – accommodation-wise, music-wise, crowd-wise and otherwise. And I hear that the current Knights were just awesome!

This Auburn Knight longevity blows me flat away! Since the Knights were formed in 1930 (I was 10), we have gone through a depression, twelve U.S. presidents, five wars, the demise of Hitler's Germany and Stalin's U.S.S.R., not to mention putting up with the younger generations infatuation with Rock and Roll, Rap, Hip-Hop and innumerable seriously gyrating electric guitar players – and yet the AKs persist and thrive. There certainly have been lean years, but for reasons not quite clear, the band has survived. How could a loose-knit organization as fragile as a college dance band with no university ties, managed by decades of rotating Auburn students, have survived despite a three year lapse during WWII? Logically and statistically this could never have happened, but it has happened and I have been trying to understand the reasons why. Some possibilities are listed below, not necessarily in order of importance (except for No. 1):

1. Start-Up of the Post-War AKs in 1946. Done by pre-war AK returnees Bob Hill, Shel Toomer, Charlie Wood, Chunky Barnes and Dilson Petrey. Without the efforts of the above group (which is a true sine qua non) there would most likely never have been an

AK band on campus after 1943, or an alumni association at all.

2. A K A A, Era Bands, Scholarships. Certainly, these have been big factors in recent years, but it should be remembered that the band functioned very successfully for about forty years before the A K A A was formed, scholarships given out or the era band format devised. The first era band to play was the early 30's group at the 1974 reunion.

3. Local Auburn Influences. The input and guidance given the Knights on campus by Bob (Fop) Richardson, jazz guru in the music department at Auburn and Tommy Goff, band director at Auburn High, can never be overestimated. But their tenure is over and has been for a number of years. Also it should be remembered that the band flourished for about 15-20 years with no music school at all. I can name three or four college campus big bands formed in the 30's and 40's that are no longer extant – none with a student-managed, gig-playing campus big band. And some of these universities have well established jazz programs.

4. Love of the Big Band Sound. Where else, other than with a big band venue, can you ever hear the reedy blending buzz of a fine sax section or a brass section that can knock you flat-out with four notes (like in Basie's "All of Me") and a rhythm section getting under your chair and carrying you along being felt as much as heard and with tasteful ad lib jazz solos spliced in between? And the answer is no way, no how, no where, no time – not in country, folk, rock, heavy metal, and certainly not in those popular modern sink-holes, hip-hop and rap. The love affair between musicians and big band arrangements has been going on for about 75 years and, not surprisingly, parallels the lifespan of the AKO. Bill Barrow, in his fine article on the Auburn Knights in the spring issue of Auburn Magazine, quotes Red Blackledge as saying, "For those who play it, it is a life-defining experience." So the above has to be a big factor in the AKO survival.

5. Camaraderie. You betcha! Big time! Good friends made for a lifetime.

6. Luck. Maybe, maybe not.

7. Money. Probably not. I doubt that anyone ever played with the Knights purely for monetary reasons. In my days we made enough for tuition with some left over but it always seemed to me that most of our money went to Meadows garage for bus repairs.

I suspect that we have come up with most but not all reasons behind the 75 year survival of the AKO, but one does not always have to understand everything about everything in order to appreciate them – women, MRIs and twelve year old single malt Scotch immediately come to mind as examples. We can only hope that whatever the fortunate forces are which have kept a current AK band on campus and the A K A A a vigorous organization will keep on doing their thing, at least long enough to reach the 100th anniversary in 2030 and a sure slot in the Guinness Book of Records.

My current fantasy plans include practicing more and returning to the 2030 reunion as a trombone player. Highly improbable, but not entirely impossible, so keep an eye out. Just so you'll know me, I'll be the real old guy in the 3rd trombone chair in one of the era bands, having to take a breath every two bars but with a very good tone, what there is of it, and, hopefully, sitting next to a lead and bass trombone player I might have known from the last reunion I attended – back in the summer of 2004. 🎶

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.

O. Edmund "Ace" Martin

O. Edmund "Ace" Martin, 78, of Atlanta, died July 16, 2005. Ace was an alumnus of Auburn University and played sax with the Auburn Knights Orchestra in the late 40's and early 50's. He received his Master's Degree from Emory University. He retired from Lockheed as an engineer, and also had a career as a professor and later retired from Georgia Tech. He is survived by his wife, Faye; children, Stewart Martin, Anne Henderson, Sally Elder, and Kathryn Jamroz; step-children, Andy Weems, Lisa Boatwright, and Elaina Ramey; nineteen grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. 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 "Ace" Martin.



Francine Miles

Francine Miles was an associate member of the AKA for over 25 years. She passed

away on August 6, 2005. Starting in the late seventies when she and husband, Earl, moved to Anniston she had attended the reunion annually. She was the featured singer in the "Joe Noojin and Friends" Brunch by the pool jazz band and an avid follower of any and all after hours jam sessions. In her early career, Francine sang professionally in cities such as New Orleans and Chicago and in various jazz clubs along the Gulf Coast. When she was not singing, Francine was busy earning a degree in correctional counseling and education, just in case she needed a "day job". She worked for the state of Alabama until retiring early due to health problems in

the late 80's, Francine, Earl (Miles), Bill Dunnam and "whoever was available" found no shortage of work in and around Anniston and worked both the Anniston and Birmingham country clubs for years. Fortunately, her voice and style appealed to many local club owners and musicians and she was able to do what she loved to do -- SING JAZZ!! Her voice, smile, and sense of humor will be greatly missed at future AKA reunions.

If you would like to make a memorial contribution to the scholarship fund in her name, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. 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 Francine Miles.

Wayne Rosebrough

Wayne Thomas Rosebrough, 66 of Pensacola, passed away Monday, September 5, 2005. Wayne was an alumnus of Auburn University and was a member of the Auburn Knights Orchestra in the late 50's and early 60's. He was a member of Marcus Point Baptist Church and played the trombone in the Marcus Point Orchestra. He retired from K-mart as a store manager after 31 years. He is survived by his wife, Lanice; children Dennis Rosebrough, Susan Rosebrough, Jenny Wasden, Beth Ollom, and Lisa Rosebrough; two brothers, two sisters, and a grandson.

A memorial scholarship fund has been set up in his name. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send donations to Vic Atkins, 22 Berkeley Road, Selma, AL 36701-6805. 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 Wayne Rosebrough.

OUR LEADERS

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Fritz Siler
3110 Deer Chase Ct. SW
Snellville, GA 30039
(770) 978-1287

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Mark Belfast
500 Webster Rd. #193
Auburn, AL 36832
(334) 887-9384

SECRETARY

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82 Surf Dr.
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HISTORIAN

Charlie Kinzer
1101 Fourth Ave.
Farmville, VA 23901
(434) 392-1731

ARCHIVIST

Jef Thurman, jeft@wwisp.com

LIBRARIAN

Don Culley, (205) 668-6321

LIBRARY ARCHIVIST

Tom Winstead
(256) 852-0138

PUBLICITY

Hank Elliott, (334) 826-1054

AKAA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Vic Atkins, Chairman

REUNION COORDINATOR

Charlie Higgins
(334) 288-5001

EDITOR, AKA NEWSLETTER

Lyle Johnson
(256) 837-5540 or lyle@knology.net

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Announcing the AKA Web Site!

At the February 2005 meeting of the AKA Board of Directors, Fritz Siler recommended the establishment of an official Web site for the AKA. We're pleased to announce that the site is now up and running at:
<http://www.auburnknightsalumni.org>
The Web site currently features the latest news of interest to Auburn Knights alumni, general information, and past issues of "The Bridge." Over the coming months, we hope to add even more content and features to make this a useful site for all Auburn Knights Alumni. If you have questions about or suggestions for the Web site, please send those to webmaster@auburnknightsalumni.org

Archive Room Photos?

AKAA Archivist Jef Thurman would appreciate getting copies of any photographs you may have taken of the Archives room at the reunion in July.