

**50 Year Class Reunion
The Class of '64
A&M College of Texas**



**Remembering and Updating Our Time at A&M
Presented at the Class Banquet**

By Stan Wylie, Class Historian

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HOWDY!

Wait a minute...wait a minute...wait a minute!

Remember back to May 16th, 1964

Duncan Dining Hall before the Ring Dance.

You were young, you were virile, you had a sweet young thing looking at you admiringly... in your uniform and boots. Even you non-regs took a shower and put on a suit. Some of you had problems getting a date. Not Dresser. He did have a problem: he had to remember who his fiancé of the month was.

You did a lot better 50 years ago. Let's try it again – HOWDY! That's a lot better!

Now it is wonderful to see so many faces – some familiar, some barely recognizable.

Women look younger than you guys; I think some are! All looking good – way to go, Guys.

Well, it's 50 years later! Many of us have children / grandchildren who have been Aggies's or are Aggies's now or soon will be. But we do have one member who is a little different---Veselka is the only one who had to get a babysitter so he and Brenda could be here.

Hey, Shelly, you out there? - Any more news for us??

Oh, this is going to be fun!!

FIRST, a few ground rules...I will try to keep it clean. But not politically correct. I will be talking about some guys who are no longer with us. It won't be irreverent, but it will be Good Bull. LADIES, if you don't understand that term, have him explain it to you later.

NOW, a few thanks...

I want to thank Jim Olson was warming up the crowd for me.

MUSTER COMMITTEE – Thanks for all your work in planning the Muster. Sarah Tankersley, I forgive you for stealing many of my good lines last night. Josiah Bezet, great working with you, man. When, Josiah attends his fiftieth in 2065, he is going to tell them how neat the Class of 1964 was. And they are going to look at him like...those old guys...what the?

Thanks to the ASSOCIATION OF FORMER STUDENTS staff, Josh and Barb, especially. Appreciate all your help.

CLASS AGENTS – thanks for allowing me to participate. Of course, when I told them this, they said, “You didn’t have a choice, we elected you. What, I ran for Historian for a year; didn’t realize that it was a lifetime job”.

FUNNY STORY – I talked to the AGENTS – I thought it would be neat if we all got a fish haircut in honor of our first days at A&M. LEE said Nope! My hair is so thin - not sure it would ever come back!

NICK said “I’ve got one of the best heads of hair in the class and I’m going to show it off.”

GEORGE said, “Sure”.

So we went over to the MSC to look for an old Army barber in the basement of MSC. Man, we could hardly find the basement. Boy, that place has changed...for the better. So we got Fish cuts.

You know George; he tends to get carried away about everything. George, we did not shave our heads back then. But I got it right - look at the sides – perfect fish cut. I just don’t remember it being this thin on top. Guess barber got a little carried away.

Oh, last and most important. A belated Thank You to a guy that is no longer with us. A guy who really helped me write the original History 50 years ago. Mike Marlow knew everything, everybody and had a wicked sense of humor. The Aggieland called our talk, "A fairly frank document dealing with the many trials and tribulations of the Class of 1964". Chancellor Harrington came up after that History and said "Good speech – I think". I believe we got it right, MIKE. Thanks

Ok. Let's move to the Fall of 1960 – our beginning.....Do you remember that day in September 1960 when we first set foot on the A&M campus as frightened Texas Aggie Fish? Many of us were with our parents at the time when we first entered our plush dormitories and met our CO.s. My, how we were impressed by his shiny medals, boots and friendliness. He seemed especially friendly to our parents as he called us by our first names and assured our parents that we would be in good hands. But, oh, when our trusting parents drove away!

How about the first time you walked across the quadrangle grass and said "Hi, there!" to the friendly looking cadet with the black braid on his hat? Well, over the next few weeks, we learned to be fish, how to march, wear uniforms, and behave. We learned the Aggie War Hymn and the Spirit of Aggieland. We learned a new language, the language of the Corps and the Mess Hall. Some adjusted well, some struggled. But whether we realized it or not, we were all growing up. We were learning individual responsibility and accountability. We learned to say "No excuse, Sir", when we screwed up. We learned to balance the discipline and regimentation of the Corps of Cadets with the need to go to class, study, prepare for tests, and make our grades.

We were assigned duties like Whistle Jock, Laundry Detail, and Phone Duty. In each dorm, 200 of us shared one phone in the lounge. And it was not a 16 gig cell phone. It was a nickel a call pay phone. What duty was more stressful than being the fish manning the hot corner at chow? Don't let any food or drink container run out. Don't short-stop an upper classman. Answer campusology questions while trying to eat. And what about the most dreaded meal of all: the weekend open tables where you are likely to be seated with cadets from other outfits? Whip out, call the roll, run the hot corner. Call the roll again in the middle of the meal. Get up and whip out again for the names you missed. Hopefully, the upper classmen would be in a hurry so you could eat after they left. Some fish lost weight because of the mess hall stress, while others gained weight because it was the best food they had ever had.

To freshmen, the most important things were: “sleep or ‘sacking out;’ mail; and getting the heck out of this place as often as possible.” The only contact most of us had with the outside world was by letter. Therefore, we faithfully checked our post office boxes at least twice a day. If we found a letter in our box, even if it was just advertising, the trip was a success. And if the letter was from a young lady, the day was made, unless it was a “flush letter.” A “flush letter” was A&M’s version of a “Dear John Letter,” and these letters started arriving shortly after the fall semester began. On reflection, there must have been a book somewhere that prescribed the proper “form” for a “Flush Letter” since these letters all said the same things, including the writer’s declaration of “respect” and “promise of undying friendship” for the unfortunate fish.

Football season had its own routines and drills. Yell Practice at the Grove was another hazing opportunity for upper classmen. The first Midnight Yell Practice before a home game was a real treat. The Band formed in the Quadrangle of the New Area about 11:30 and marched out with the Drum Majors and Yell Leaders leading the way with torches. The Corps fell in behind the Band. We marched completely around the campus to near Sbisa Dining Hall where the old dorm outfits fell in. We marched to the Grove for a boisterous and rowdy Yell Practice. Some were lucky enough to have dates.

Yell Leaders competed for the best “Fables”. I think they just recycled them every four years. Fables always depicted the opponent of the week in an unflattering light, and the best fables were always a little racy. WELL OLD ARMY, ARMY, (rolling up my sleeves).... I always wanted to do that.

Who can forget the first Corps Trip to Dallas for the SMU game? Over 3,000 cadets magically showed up downtown in uniform for the 9:00 AM Corps of Cadets parade down Main Street. Some fish had to wear white socks over their hands for the parade because they forgot their white gloves. Seniors from the lead parade outfits found open bars along the street and watched the rest of the parade standing in the crowd with a beer in hand.

Fights had broken out in recent years, and we were warned at the Yell Practice not to travel around Dallas after dark in uniform and to always travel in groups of 3 or 4 hundred. There were the outfit parties after game where upper classmen tried to hit on the fish’s dates. The goal of every cadet was to get a great date for the Corps Trip and get lucky. Well, getting lucky was really a dream from 1960 to 1964, and there was a lot more talk than luck.

The things you can't forget; or that I never forgot:

Sir, not being fully informed, I hesitate to articulate for fear that I may deviate from the true course of rectitude. In short Sir, I am a very dumb fish and do not know, Sir.

How to carry matches.

No wonder, many almost flunked out....we had too much else to learn.

FIELD JACKETS – remember what they were for. Storing light bulbs. You wore it while riding on your buddy's shoulder stealing the bulbs from the stoop above yours.

PINKY L. DOWNS (Interesting thought guys; Pinky was only 77 our first year at A&M. Just a few years older than we are now. Frightening!!)

We all remember Tripod –But, remember Ranger (President Rudder's bull dog. I think he liked us better than he liked the General)

FROG SHANNON – Howdy, my name is Frog Shannon, Sir. He even sounded like a bull frog.

Well, our class was blessed from the start with an uncanny knack for organization. Illustrating this ability were several very elite groups. One, under the code name "Rangers," had the objective of beautifying our campus with little white fish. Another civic group decided that our campus needed more monuments. So, under the direction of an insignificant fish named Dresser, they obtained a World War I trophy, compliments of the City of Caldwell. Besides being constructive, we also proved very effective in the demolition of the TCU Vigilantes' cannon after the game in Kyle Field.

Of course, there was our first Fightin' Texas Aggie Bonfire. In keeping with good Aggie tradition, we hauled logs for a mile knee deep in mud because the trucks couldn't get into the cutting area. It was kind of like building the pyramids, minus the whips. Well, maybe some wetheads did carry whips. But, Oh, that trash can coffee!

How about 1960 Football

Remember our first home game – TEXAS TECH (their first SWC game). It rained – and it rained – and we were hazed- and we were hazed. What did we get ourselves into? By the way, attendance at that game was 13,000. The times have changed.

We won one game that year (TRINITY). But we tied three others. I'll bet you don't remember that by the 9th game, the yell was "TIE THE HELL OUTA RICE!"

I almost forgot. Sooie Pig Pig Sooie Sooie. That training won me a bottle of champagne on a cruise one time.

We also learned a new theme "WAIT TILL NEXT YEAR".

A TRADITION DIED...we attended the last midnight yell practice in THE GROVE.

Basketball was better – finished 2nd in SWC

We returned from the Christmas holidays, hit the books and got through our first final exams. After the semester ended, some of our fish buddies never returned. Some dropped out because the Corps life was not for them. Others did not make their grades. But for those who returned, the second semester was generally easier. We knew the rules. We had learned to balance study and Corps life, and in 4-1/2 months we would become upper classmen. We were bolder with "Good Bull". Drown outs of sophomores and floating dorms increased. We were sent on good bull details in the mess hall such as crawling under tables at the direction of a senior to light another senior's paper napkin on fire.

Then, spring hit the campus and all the fish were puzzled by water fights, shining Sully, and the fact that our C.O.s had 3 birthday parties in one semester, each in a different city, or down on the shores of the Brazos.

But, finally came the big day that we had all waited so anxiously for—Final Review! Our esteemed senior class president David Anderson watched the review from a Henderson Hall window with all the other "thicks". He remarked that we looked rather hot down there on the drill field.

Remember how much pleasure it gave us after the first time around to throw our fish caps high into the air? Old Army Lou looked happy as the little kids he hired picked up our hats.

2nd YEAR AT A&M

Then after a summer that passed all too quickly, we came back to school as mighty sophomores—only to have a midnight session in our First Sergeant's room the first week to learn just how mighty we actually were.

Our other activities throughout the rest of that year consisted of mustering grade points that were lost our fish year; assembling, mimeographing, and distributing old bull-text poop sheets; and trying either to obtain contracts, get our beloved D&C papers, or even more diligently trying to join the beard and shower shoe fraternity at Law Hall.

FOOTBALL improved. We won 4 games. But I missed the TRINITY game on the road – 55 points! Man, what a lot of kissing (16 times, as a matter of fact).

Our classmate DAVEY JOHNSON played basketball and baseball and was drafted by the Baltimore Orioles.

THIRD YEAR at A&M

Finally, however, another year came to an end and we became recognized as adults. By the way, for those of you who don't know, the Aggie definition of an adult: A person who no longer has to put a pass on his door to go down the hall to the rest room.

As juniors, we proved our courage with a mighty yell of "Beat the Hell out of the class of '63" as the seniors performed their half time can-can in Kyle Field. But, alas, because of that originality, we lost our coveted white belt and braid.

That year also, many a Friday night was spent with the civilians at home, the Air Force cadets drinking beer at Nezzies, and the ground-pounders wandering hopelessly lost in the mud at Teague training area with Cyril Durrenberger standing atop a hill yelling "Follow Me!"

But our combat training paid off later when the "corps of gladiators" traveled to Austin to engage the teasips in a friendly match of basketball. By the way, the Daily Texan still thinks we should be abolished as a menace to society.

In the spring there came a memorable occasion. It was the first time that the corps had been given a free weekend on a Splash Day. Upon arriving at the beach, however, we found only boys - as it seems that all the girls were in College Station registering for the fall semester.

What else happened that year?

The President's house burned, but we got most of the furnishings out.

ANIMAL 8 won the GENERAL MOORE AWARD – Whoohah!!!!

SMOTHERS BROTHERS performed at Town Hall.

FOOTBALL – we won TWO games. But we only scored a total of 51 points in all 9 games. Mike Clark scored 23 of those points kicking. It got so bad a new tradition was started: we kissed after 1st downs. Some of us even tried to stretch it so we kissed every time we touched the ball! If you are beginning to think we were obsessed about this kissing tradition, we were.

BENNIE LENOX led us to a much better basketball season. He scored 530 points leading us to a record of 12 and 5.

SENIOR YEAR

After a summer of jobs, tents, dust, Camp Eagle, quotes for the day, nightly beer busts and yell practices at the P.X., we returned to dear old A&M to don our boots and senior rings and to listen to "Mach-Buster" Railston's tales of filling the white bag in his maiden flight of the X-15.

To greet us we had a “New Corps,” a new commandant, the smallest fish class since the depression, and the resounding notes of the hit tune “I could care less”!

But we were all happy in our new positions in the corps. We had a 4-F DMS for a 3rd Brigade Commander. We had the only corps Chaplain who could stand at attention and see the sun set between his legs, and “Lizzie” Marlow even made Corps Staff.

The Agricultural & Mechanical College of Texas became TEXAS A&M University. Our rings are the last to say A&M COLLEGE OF TEXAS.....because that is where we went to school!!!!

Who performed at Town Hall our Senior Year?

Brothers Four

Kingston Trio- Dave Seay had all the albums.... (I sing) Scotch and soda, jigger of gin, oh what a mood... Hey, let's have a talent show. My talent! I do a mean Satchmo imitation....(I sing again) Well Hello Dolly, this is Louie, Dolly...Ok, Ok, Put the hook down, George.back to Town Hall

Peter Paul and Mary. They started with.....I am Peter, but I am not an apostle. Then, I am Paul, but I am not a Saint. Then the best, I am Mary, but I am not a Virgin. Boy, we knew we were going to enjoy that performance. I think I fell in love....oh, that long blond hair.

FOOTBALL – well, we won a couple of games – actually 3. We beat TU! Remember the final score: Aggies 13 – tu 9 - referee 6.

But BASKETBALL was great. We won the SWC! And guess what? We also won SWC championship in BASEBALL. What a way to go out – ON TOP, WINNERS.PRESIDENT KENNEDY was assassinated on Friday, November 22, 1963. We all remember where we were and what we were doing when we heard. BONFIRE was canceled. As Mike Marlow said, “It's the most we have; it's the least we can do”.

However, the most fun we had our senior year was liberating those Southwest Conference mascots:

That paper mache owl from Rice

Then the live ones – HORNY TOADS from TCU

Peruna- that runt of a horse from SMU

Then the real horse from TEXAS TECH. Is it really true? Did she deliver a little Aggie foal the next year?

And then the “Major Coup”. I was awakened by honking horns, flashing lights. I looked out my corner room on to the quadrangle – saw a pickup with a trailer and a big steer driving around and around in the quadrangle. Well you know the rest! BEVO. The Sips sent in the Texas Rangers. Warrants issued. But oh no! When the original Bevo nappers went to the farm where they left him, HE WAS GONE. Another group sub-kidnapped BEVO again. Boy, were the original snatchers concerned. You know the penalty for cattle rustling in Texas? By the neck! Don’t want to name names (B-2). Well, all worked out. But we still had fun when we found out the Rangers had Bevo at a local vet office. We rushed over – threw sand in the gas tank of the pickup taking Bevo away. Tried to follow them out of town, but the Highway Patrol blocked the middle of the Highway and Bevo made it to Austin.

There was ELEPHANT WALK

At MUSTER – Dr. KING GILL – the original 12th Man - spoke to us in front of the Administration Building.

BUDDY BROCK ORCHESTRA played at the Ring Dance. I was Banquet Chairman, but I don’t remember doing much except, I had to return the artificial grass that was under the big Aggie Ring. Return it to the funeral home. At midnight. Caskets, vaults. Creeeepy

I was talking to some members of MUSTER COMMITTEE – told them back then we were divided and David Jones video on the snowball fight brought it all back.

There was the CORPS vs. The Band. Ground pounders vs. AIR CRAPS. Class of '64 vs. '63. Class of '65 vs. '64. Even the outfits - Animal 8 vs. P 7. How about that, Zatopek?

Seriously Guys, the Class of '64 was united. We remember an awful lot about our 4 years. We had the smallest largest marching band in the world, and according to President Rudder's computation we were the first fish class since the war to retain 57.329

(turn page and take a breath)807645 % of our fish class.

Tonight we are all feeling pretty proud of ourselves, and I am sure that none of us regret becoming an Aggie now. We have long forgotten those times when we thought "what in the hell am I doing here?"

Well, I think I've hit many of the high spots of our four years. There were many good and bad times for all, but the most important thing is that we made it all the way together. I imagine we'll always remember such things as drown outs, water fights, and some weekends at Uncle Ed's and Uncle Jimmy's.

I do want to recognize a few guys in our class. I could spend hours talking about what you all have accomplished, your service to our country and your communities. So, I will just limit my recognition to a few of you who have who have served A&M in a very significant way.

Richard Adams was Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine

Bubba Woytek was Director of Development for College of Veterinary Medicine

Wally Groff was Athletic Director

Royce Hickman has been President of Association of Former Students.

Jerry McFarland and George Nelson were on the 12th Man Foundation Board.

Arno Krebs has been Chair of 12th Man Foundation.

and, Butch Gregory is current Chair of Texas A&M Foundation.

Oh, I want to mention our two flag officers from the Class of '64. No, they are not Dresser and Railston (like we expected). Our utmost thanks and respect to Terry Scott and Ron Grey.

Well, all I can say in closing is "Thanks"! It was again a very great pleasure to record the history of the Class of 1964 –

THE BEST DAMN CLASS EVER TO HIT THE FIGHTIN' TEXAS AGGIE CAMPUS.