



1955 AUSTIN HIGH REUNION

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 10 ISSUE 2 SPRING 2014

www.austin1955.org -- reunion@austin1955.org

HAPPY SPRING!! -- NO APRIL FOOL-IN'!!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!

This newsletter helps keep us connected as classmates, and we enjoy creating it. If you like to receive it, please remember to send your \$5 or more newsletter donation each year to help defray the costs associated with publishing: paper, ink, database and website maintenance, and **especially** postage. If you are currently receiving printed newsletters and would prefer to read them on-line (or print them from our website), please use the form on page 4 to give us your email address. If you no longer wish to receive printed newsletters at all, let us know. We are happy to send them, but don't want to add to your "junk" mail. If you opt out of newsletters, you will still continue to receive reunion invitations.

We are grateful to the following classmates for their recent generous gifts. Many thanks to: Gloria (Castiglione) Cicero, Robert Haslam, Donald Heitzman, Androniki (Sitaras) DeMet, and Sandra (Stackpole) Kirchhoff.

Please make donation checks payable to "Austin 1955 Reunion Ltd.", and mail them to our Treasurer, ***Irwin Magad***: 2100 Sanders Road, Suite 200; Northbrook, IL 60062-6141. **Thank you, Ladies, for writing your maiden name on your checks.** It saves your editor lots of time.

LAST CALL FOR LES MISERABLES RESERVATIONS!!

Don't miss this opportunity to have a "mini-reunion" with your old friends and classmates, enjoy an excellent lunch, and see a Tony-winning musical. Those who attended our 2013 Drury Lane outing gave it rave reviews. Come join us again this year on **Wednesday, June 4**.

Check-in is at 11:00 A.M., lunch at 11:30 A.M., show begins at 1:30 P.M. Our special discount price for the lunch and show is a **FLAT \$45** per person. This includes almost everything! Free parking, easy access with a minimum of stairs, beautiful surroundings, congenial company, all taxes and gratuities. Adult beverages are extra. Lunch will include a salad, choice of entrée, dessert, rolls and butter, and one non-alcoholic beverage. Wheelchairs are available upon request. Friends, family, and other Austin class alumni are welcome to join us. The more, the merrier! Sign up now with the form at the bottom of Page 4. **Reservations and payments MUST be in by May 1.** Your cancelled check is your receipt.

IN MEMORIAM:

We extend our sincere sympathy to classmate **Sandra (Stackpole) Kirchhoff**, whose husband Richard passed away on May 19, 2013. Richard was a social studies teacher with the Moline, IL School District for 30 years, and also taught in Crystal Lake, IL. Richard was a Korean War Army veteran and a World War II historian. In addition to his wife, he leaves his daughter, Kristy (Bob) Unruh, and grandchildren, Kloe and Austin Unruh.

We are grateful to **Paul Abramchik** who wrote: "Hello to all classmates. Although Abe Woodson was not in our graduation class, I'm sure most will remember Abe's talent as a superior football player. For those who are not aware, Abe passed away February 8, 2014 in Las Vegas at the age of 79." Classmate **Mike Pasquerelli** writes: "I can add my own compliments about Abe Woodson. He practiced running hurdles in the basement of the Old Building and sprints and relays on the track in the old gym. When it came to meets on the Track & Field Team, he led the way. We all know what he did as a football player on Bill Heiland's teams. I also remember him when I was a freshman and sophomore at U of I in Urbana. I watched him play halfback at the U of I before he graduated. All of his athletic performances were superb. But most of all he was always a good guy."

For more biographical information about Abe Woodson, see:

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2014-02-16/sports/ct-abe-woodson-spt-0216-20140216_1_bears-nfl-pro-bowl-ronnie-bull and <http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/Former-49ers-Pro-Bowler-Abe-Woodson-Dies-at-79/e9703fbd-f31a-423f-a20a-b1ef5c859e88> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abe_Woodson. Rest in peace, Abe.

MORE STROLLING DOWN CHICAGO AVENUE WITH CHUCK MEYER:

As promised, here is a continuation of the stroll we started in the July 2013 newsletter.

In addition to all the buildings, there were two other types of structures on Chicago Avenue. But they were not unique to Chicago Avenue; they were on many streetcar streets. First, we had the “safety islands” along the streetcar lines. These were always on wide streets like Madison, North, and parts of Chicago Avenue; never on narrow streets like Division and Cicero. They were allegedly there to protect waiting and alighting passengers from car traffic. That’s an urban legend. They were there to separate the drunk drivers from the sober; and were almost as effective as the “L” pillars were on Lake Street. Safety islands also provided a place for passengers to stand in rainy weather, so they could be sprayed on both sides simultaneously by traffic. I think those safety islands were air-hammered out the day after the last streetcar clanged down Chicago Avenue in the early 50’s.

The other structures that lasted a little longer than safety islands were the corner newsstands. Every CTA transfer point had one; a few really busy intersections had them on more than one corner. They were ramshackle, tin sheds that opened wide to reveal many newspapers and magazines – even in rainy or snowy weather. Lighting was either a Coleman lantern or a 100-watt bulb on a 50-foot extension cord from a nearby store. Altho’ the newsstands were mainly for pedestrian use, the owner also responded quickly to a yelled “Trib, please” from a car. The guy (always a guy) always wore a dirty white apron for money changing, and sometimes this was over a winter coat. Winter also meant he had a ski hat, gloves with a few fingers missing so he could make change quickly, and a punctured 55-gallon drum containing a fire for warmth. Occasionally, he would stir the fire with a long iron poker, sending a big shower of sparks into the air. The newsstands usually were open both rush hours, plus evenings, up thru the first or second edition of the next day’s Trib (about 9:00 P.M.). And I don’t remember seeing any graffiti on any of them.

Grocery Shopping (or not-quite-Super Markets)

Of the three grocery chain stores in the area, the first was a National, on the SE corner of Lavergne and Chicago. It was a standard 28-foot store front. Into that width, they crammed three aisles of cans of peas and mushroom soup, boxes of cereal and Jell-o, and packages of Wonder bread and Twinkies. In the front of the store were two huge NCR cash registers with about six hundred buttons. “Click, click, click, barunkachunk” and magically, the drawer opened, showing us all the money; not just singles, but even five and ten dollar bills – Wow! It was the first “big” store I could go to by myself, since it didn’t require crossing Chicago Ave. A few years later, National moved to a new, much larger, store across the street. It had a doorless entry with large overhead ceiling fans that blew down through the grated floor. Everyone’s hair looked like they had just visited a horror house (maybe that was true).

Just west of Lawler Avenue, we had an A&P (always pronounced like the 3-letter acronym “ANP”; never “A AND P”) that was two stores wide – one side a grocery store, the other side a butcher. There was a Jewel around Pine Avenue which was too far away for us. But after the National got uppity and expanded, Jewel put up a new store on a vacant lot across from the Symphony Theater in 1953. It was at the time of Queen Elizabeth’s coronation and the Jewel had a tie-in contest. I won a cast iron replica of the coronation coach - too bad I didn’t know what “re-gifting” was back then.

With three chain stores (and two bakeries) in two blocks, we still had room for three more grocery stores. The first was forgettable – it was just west of LaRocca’s and on one of my visits there, when I asked for a bag for the groceries, he gave me a snippy answer about kids wasting his precious bags. I never went back there again. When I was finally allowed to cross Chicago Avenue alone, I became a regular at Mazzuca Bros. on the NW corner of Lavergne & Chicago. It provided most of our dairy, meat, and canned goods. (My wife Peggy recently had some foot surgery in Minneapolis, by a Dr. Mazzuca. He admitted that his two uncles were the Mazzuca Brothers. (Wow! Butchers and an orthopedic surgeon in the same family!)

A half-block west of Mazzuca was another grocery store, but they just had produce. In good weather, he displayed his vegetables, fruits, and berries on tables on the sidewalk under the awning. Displayed in typical European fashion were all the local peas, beans, lettuce, berries, plus non-local foods like citrus, bananas, and sometimes even pineapples. These were the same foods that you would now find in a farmer’s market. In the mid-summer he had severe competition from truck-driving peddlers who cruised our alleys selling fresh produce.

And then, there was the fish market by Sunnie Kiddie. It was a stark white store that stank, and the show-window had a big aquarium that was crowded with unhappy-looking goldfish.

More next time on “But Some People LIVED on Chicago Avenue”

SAVE THE DATES!!

Mark your calendars for our 60th (yes, 60th!) reunion the weekend of September 25-27, 2015. With your help, location and activities will be firmed up as we approach the dates. Please stay healthy and plan to join in the fun.

SPECIAL THANKS:

We have been remiss in not acknowledging the ongoing efforts of two of our reunion committee members: Chuck Meyer for his many interesting contributions to this newsletter, for blasting newsletter and other announcements to those who have internet access, and especially for his diligent work in keeping our complete class database up-to-date; and Jim Padar (Class of 1956!) for creating and maintaining our website, acquiring software to keep our information safe, arranging for backup website maintenance for the future, and especially for helping your editor solve technical problems that are beyond her limited capability. Thanks, Chuck and Jim. We truly appreciate.

YEARBOOK WARNING:

We recently received an on-line ad from Classmates.com offering a copy of our Austin 1955 Maroon & White for \$79.96!! The ad says, "*Recapture your own piece of personal history with a one-of-a-kind reprint of your high school yearbook.*" Please advise your family that the Class of 1955 Reunion Committee will act as a clearing house for unwanted annuals. We will store them, advertise them in this newsletter, and send them to people who want them for just the cost of postage. Newsletter donations are, of course, always welcome.

HELPFUL HINTS:

- A frozen, saturated sponge in a plastic bag makes an ice pack that won't drip all over when it melts.
- When microwaving leftovers, space out a circle in the middle of the plate to heat them more evenly.
- Microwave a small amount of water in a glass with your leftover pizza to keep the crust crispy.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

- The reason the pro tells you to keep your head down is so you can't see him laughing.
- Did you ever notice: The Roman Numerals for forty (40) are XL?
- Never go to a surgeon whose shoes are always coming untied.

Phyllis Dillerisms:

- Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance?
- A smile is a curve that sets everything straight.
- The best way to get rid of kitchen odors: Eat out.

We never really grow up; we only learn how to act in public.

TELL US WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOU:

Photos and items of general class interest should be directed to webmaster@austin1955.org. If you have any news (special trips, births, deaths, anniversaries, moves, etc.) or memories of your days at Austin to share, email *Kaye (Beecroft) Aurigemma* or write to her at 10846 Martindale Drive, Westchester, IL 60154-5021.

WE STILL NEED IDEAS FOR 2015!

We really need your help. Please take a few moments to answer the questions below. Return your answers to any reunion committee member via email or to Ken Rosko via fax at 847-623-5885 or snail mail to: Ken Rosko, c/o JKR Financial Consultants, Ltd., 3233 W. Grand Ave., Suite 103, Waukegan, IL 60085. Thanks in advance for your ideas.

- A. What event (in addition to our 60th reunion) would you like the Reunion Committee to organize for early 2015? Play? Picnic? Race Track? Lunch? Dinner? Cruise? Land Tour?

What month? _____ Day(s) of week? _____ Afternoon? ___ Evening? ___

- B. What activities would you like for our 60th reunion in September: Lunch? Dinner? Dance? Entertainment?

Your Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGE: Please email changes to reunion@austin1955.org
OR, mail to: **Chuck Meyer, Austin Class of 1955; 3800 85th Avenue N #103; Brooklyn Park, MN 55443-2972**

NAME (1st, maiden, last): _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE (Required): _____

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DRURY LANE

Luncheon/Theatre: Wednesday, June 4, 2014

Drury Lane begins its 30th anniversary season with one of the world's most iconic musical classics - a sweeping tale of romance, passion, suspense and redemption.

Check-In 11:00 AM -- Lunch 11:30 AM -- Play 1:30 PM

Based on Victor Hugo's novel, *Les Misérables* travels through three turbulent decades of 19th century France. *Les Misérables* is the recipient of over 50 international theater awards and is considered the world's longest running musical. **WINNER OF 8 TONY AWARDS**



Payment due by Wednesday, May 1, 2014 (no refunds)

Payable to: "Austin 1955 Reunion, Ltd."

Name(s): _____ X \$45 = _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Please Select: Roast Loin of Beef or Salmon Filet *

Please mail this form and your check to:

Irwin Magad
Austin Class of 1955 Reunion
2100 Sanders Road, Suite 200
Northbrook, IL 60062-6141

*Vegetarian meals are available upon request.