Platinum Classes (1927, 1932, 1937, 1942, 1947 and 1952)

Homecoming & Reunion Newsletter

Save the dates! October 25-28, 2007

Congratulations on your Platinum Reunion!

We are eagerly looking forward to welcoming you home to Carnegie Mellon this fall. Carnegie Tech has undergone many changes – both physically on campus and in the global impact of our curriculum and research – in the 55-plus years since your graduation. We hope you will enjoy returning to campus to ReConnect, ReDiscover, and ReExperience Carnegie Mellon as it is today.

Our President, Jared L. Cohon, has made connecting with alumni a top priority. And your Alumni Association has been working especially hard in the past few years to offer more ways for alumni to become involved in the life of the university. We all look forward to seeing you during Homecoming & Reunion Weekend as you and your fellow graduates return to campus to ReConnect, ReDiscover, and ReExperience this innovative and vital institution.

With all best regards,

Judith M. Cole
Associate Vice President for University Advancement & Director of Alumni Relations

www.alumni.cmu.edu/homecoming
Sharing 60+ Years of Friendship:
Al Checco (A’47) & Bill Thurnhurst (A’43, ‘47)

Although both grew up in Pittsburgh, Al Checco and Bill Thurnhurst were leading very different lives prior to meeting during their Tech days as students in the Drama Department. Al grew up in the Highland Park, “S-liberty” (East Liberty) area. He recalls working a lot selling drinks, manning hat check rooms, and MC’ing dances. The money he made helped his mother support the household and, later, helped pay for college, as those were the “depression years.” Bill, on the other hand, grew up in Edgewood and attended Edgewood High School. He was “the rich, tall, good-looking kid from the other side of the tracks,” per Al. His dad was a medical doctor and worked for Wilkinsburg High School.

Although growing up in very different neighborhoods, Carnegie Tech brought Al and Bill together. Bill was known as “The All American Boy.” And, Al was part of a group deemed “The Rover Boys,” which also included Ernie Motyl (A’47), Dave Crantz (A’48), and Bob Parks (A’47). All of these guys also hung out with Lester Stanford (A’47) and Jim Boyce (A’47). Al said “we connected to him (Boyce) because he was a big fraternity boy.” Although Bill was a Beta, “…through Boyce we enjoyed a lot of the DU activities.” Al recalls that, even in their Tech days, Boyce was very nice – “always the business man.”

Bill had a convertible sedan—a Phaeton—that he and the Rover Boys used for “cruising” back in a day when gas went for only 18 cents a gallon. During their senior year, the guys decided, since it was the last football game, they would go to Grove City to cheer on the Tartan Football Team in Bill’s car. According to Bill and Al, at that time in Tech’s history, the students were really not athletes. Tech did not “accent” the football team or other sports, and students primarily participated in intramurals. The record of the football team that year was atrocious. Not only did they not win a single game during the season, but they never even scored! Nobody ever made a touchdown in the entire season! Al and Bill recall that a couple dramats were on the team: Wes Kenney (A’50) and Norman Keats (A’50). Again, it was their last year and the last college game; so, they went out to cheer them on, and the team didn’t score. Bill and Al joked about the team losing “89-to-nothing.” Toward the end of the game, one of the guys caught a pass with no one around him: a play they used to call “the naked reverse.” He was wide open and could’ve walked into the end zone but tripped and fell only 10 yards before it and never did score!

Al, Bill, and the others not only had fun with each other but also with the faculty. As many other fine arts alumni do, they both fondly remember Bes Kimberly (A’28). Al says she is synonymous with the one thing he had a heck of a time learning: calling someone “Mr.” or “Miss.” But, in those days, the faculty went by first names. And, Bes got angry with all of them for calling her “Mrs. Kimberly.” Ultimately, Al noted that this practice is really “a professional show-biz-attitude” that they had to learn. While it was very difficult to call professors by their first names, they would later address all of their professional colleagues (directors, fellow actors, etc.) in that way.

Then there was Edith Skinner. Bill said they took both voice and speech classes with Edith. However, their fondest memory of her involves her two dogs – Lulubelle Colonol and Lulubelle. The guys would ask which one was which when the dogs were in the hall with Edith. Then, she would bend down and look between the dogs’ legs and tell “which was which.” The students would giggle each time it happened and then tease Edith that she might have puppies some day…Edith would then say “no” because the dogs were brother and sister! Their memories of Edith go beyond the halls of CFA, however, as she often had the students come to her home for dinner where they would all cook together. Al says he always had to “make the sauce since, after all, he was the Italian!”

Bill and Al’s memories of their days together both before and after Tech go on and on. There were the recitations of “Theopolis Thistle.” (Anyone who attends Homecoming should be sure to ask Bill to recite this!) Of course, the Beaux Arts Ball needs no mention. And, Al and Bill are certain their classmates will recall Bill masquerading as the unusual streetcar nicknamed “The Flying Fraction” and Al and his crew running around dressed as large flower pots: “Four Roses Potted!” (Does anyone remember what “four roses” references?) Then there was the “performance” on top of “The Beanery” which ended with a straw man being strewn out of a top floor window…with the crowd below shrieking, as they thought it was a real person. Or, you may recall Bill, “The King of Hearts,” always getting to crown the Snow Queens and Spring Carnival Queens because, according to Al, “Bes liked him so much.”

Whatever your college or whatever your memories, Al and Bill are certain all members of the Platinum Reunion Classes will agree lessons learned at Tech went beyond academics. They included things like how to eat onion soup—those things you learn in school that become part of your life. You also become a family—part of the Carnegie Mellon family—something that stays with you for all of time and unifies you with all other members of this very special university community that used to be Carnegie Tech and is now Carnegie Mellon.

Al (standing) and Bill (sitting) performing together in a 1940s Pittsburgh Playhouse production of “After Hours.”
From YOUR Reunion Planning and Giving Volunteers

The Carnegie Tech experience means something different to each alumnus. Whether it was participating in a meaningful student activity, commiserating with classmates about rigorous academics or painting the fence, we all have stories to tell. One story most of us will share is the extraordinary opportunities that Carnegie Tech offered – and continues to offer today at Carnegie Mellon. Despite the difficult coursework and late nights without sleep, we owe a great deal to our alma mater. Professional opportunities, good friends and membership in a life-long educational community are just a few of the many benefits of a Carnegie Tech education. So, how do we give back?

Reunion Planning Committee Members

In an effort to give back to the Carnegie Mellon community, many of us help to plan our class and various organization reunions. We continue to work with Alumni Relations staff to plan social events and alumni speakers, as well as spread the word to our classmates about Homecoming and Reunion Weekend. Ultimately, we want to create a weekend of reconnection with each other, current students and with the university.

Class Giving Agents

In addition to planning reunions and programs, some of us help with class giving efforts. In this role, we work with the Reunion Giving staff to educate our classmates about the importance of giving back financially to the university and to encourage them to consider increased or special gifts in honor of our reunions.

While planning and giving volunteer opportunities may seem separate, we work together to make our reunions a special time and to help ensure that our alma mater remains on the cutting edge of academic excellence and innovation.

Class Giving Effort

The overall Reunion Giving goal for alumni in class years ending in a 2 or a 7 is to raise $5 million from 1,800 alumni. Reunion classes tend to lead the alumni body in donor participation and in dollars. Let’s make sure this trend continues and help Carnegie Mellon maintain its preeminent global reputation for excellence in education and research.

In the coming months, you’ll be hearing from your Class Giving Agents who will ask you to join in supporting the Platinum Reunion Giving Effort. All gifts made between July 1, 2006-June 30, 2008 are being counted toward your class giving effort.

Although it’s important to support the university each and every year, reunions provide a special opportunity to s-t-r-e-t-c-h your giving as a way to honor your Reunion. Alumni participation in giving is an important factor in prestigious university rankings, such as those in U.S. News and World Report. In addition, annual gifts are used to meet the university’s most pressing needs, including scholarship support and student life initiatives. Please consider making a gift in both years of your reunion counting cycle. Regardless of the amount of your gift, your participation is important and appreciated. If you have no particular funding area of interest, we recommend allocating your gift to the Carnegie Mellon Fund, which supports university’s most pressing needs. To make a gift, please visit the university’s online giving site at www.cmu.edu/giving.

Andrew Carnegie Society (ACS) Legacy Scholarship Program

Many alumni who are celebrating their reunion this year are members of the Andrew Carnegie Society (ACS). This leadership giving society recognizes donors who make gifts of $1,000 or more within a fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). One unique ACS giving opportunity is the ACS Legacy Scholarship Program, which provides tuition assistance during the course of a student’s four-year study at Carnegie Mellon. It is a commitment of $10,000 ($2,500 each year for four years). Funding a Legacy Scholarship provides a donor with a unique opportunity to develop a personal and rewarding relationship with a Carnegie Mellon student. As a special bonus for alumni celebrating reunions, if you make your pledge of $10,000 during your two-year reunion counting cycle and make at least the first payment within the cycle, your entire $10,000 will count toward the Reunion Giving total for your class. Learn more about this program at the ACS Legacy Scholarship Program Web site: www.cmu.edu/giving/societies/acs.

Corporate Matching Gift Program

You might be asking yourself – how can I possibly give more money to Carnegie Mellon? The answer: Corporate Matching Gifts. Learn more by visiting: www.matchinggifts.com/cmu.
Hoping to Come!

1932
Ellen Van Der Voort Becker (A)
William Sketres (E)

1937
Henry Elden (A)
Edwin Mulligan (PM)
James Trigg (E)

1942
Wasil William Dyrkacz (E) **
Jack Heller (E)
Dean Hirschfield (E) ***
Jere Keiser (E)
Charlotte Miller Lang (MM)
Joanne Tishlarich Luther (MM)
Stanley Mallen (E)
Richard Padden (E)
Julia Potter Parsons (MM)
Barbara Kramer Shore (MM) **
Elinor Lesker Stock (MM)
June Bernard Swiger (A)
Joseph Wachter (S)

1947
Benjamin Baklarz (E)
Arden Balogh (E)
Ralph Berkowitz (PM)
Mary Madelyn Gannon
Castner (MM)
Al Checco (A) *
Martha Morrill Corson (A)
Helen Goodman Eaton (A) **
Chester Edwards (S)
Bonnie Jean Lisle Johnson (MM)
Kenneth King (E)
William Knoell (E)
John Martin Jr. (S)
Helen Louise Biesecker
Moe (MM)
Norman Parker (E)
Chaucneey Rapp (PM) ***
Albert Schindler (S)
Anita Lopatin Stewart
Smolover (A) **
Lester Stanford (A)
Jeanne Hecht Steele (MM)
Gladys Fulton Thomas (MM)
Helen McCormick Tremont (MM)

Valentine Rochez Trumbauer (MM)
Frederick Wunderlich Jr. (E)

1952
Thomas Astle (E)
George Balta (A)
Thomas Brinkman (PM)
Robert Butterworth Jr. (IM)
Samuel Cerni (E)
Jane Robb Crowley (MM)
Ronald Curhan (IM)
Margaret D’Andrea (MM)
Elaine English Darnell (MM)
Shirley Emerick (MM)
Edward Evans (PM)
Thomas Fidance (A)
Lee Fleckenstein (S)
Enoch Frankhouser (S)
Dolores Walker Fullerton (MM)
Donald Gustafson (E)
Shirley Cunningham Gustafson (MM)
Thomas Hursen (E)
John Kablach (IM)
Shirley Pearl Katz (A)
Chloe Pollock Miecekowskii (A) **
Harold Noelker (A)
Arne Oberg (IM) *
Nancy Stiler Parker (MM)
Barbara Brown Parsons (MM)
Frederick Parsons (E)
Suzanne Richard (MM)
Albert Roth (E)
Ruth Osborne Rouleau (MM) **
Donald J Schumacher (E)
John Sharbaugh (E)
H. Kenneth Siefers Jr. (E)
Joan Simons (MM)
Grace Skoog (MM)
Clarence Smith (PM)
Michael Vucich (E)
Shirley Wagner (MM)
William Weltman Jr. (E)
Margot Wharton (MM)
Richard Whitmore (S)
Hugh Young (S)
Carl Zorowski (E)

* Denotes Giving Committee Member
** Denotes Planning Committee Member
*** Denotes Giving and Planning Committee Member

Homecoming Highlights

University Center Art Gallery: “Homecoming Through the Years” Art Show (All weekend)

Welcome Home Reception: Join fellow alumni from all classes for a time to mingle and reconnect! (Thursday)

Campus & Building Tours (Thursday, Friday & Saturday)

Open Classes: Sit in on a class and see what students are learning today! (Friday)

Platinum & Golden Brunch: Join fellow Platinum classmates to enjoy brunch and each other! (Friday)

Alumni Awards Ceremony: Join in this celebration as the Alumni Association honors alumni, students and faculty for their significant professional accomplishments, commitment and service to the university! (Friday)

“Look Who’s Here” Party: Join fellow alumni from all class years for a time to mingle and reconnect! (Friday)

President’s Address: Join alumni, students, faculty and staff to hear President Cohon speak. (Saturday)

Platinum Reunion Group “Catching Up” Join fellow classmates from 1952, 1947, 1942, 1937… to share your memories of “Tech” and your life experiences since your graduation. (Saturday afternoon)

Chili Cook-off: Sponsored by the Carnegie Clan (Saturday)

Football Game: Come cheer on your Tartans as they battle Washington University! (Saturday)

Platinum Reunion Dinner & Reception: Celebrate with your fellow Platinum classmates. (Saturday)

Re-Discover Vegas! Step back in time to the old days of Las Vegas with amazing entertainment, slot machines and tables. (Saturday)

Many more events are in the works! Look for additional information online: www.alumni.cmu.edu/homecoming

What’s in your attic? Do you have items from your “Tech” days somewhere in your house? We would love to have them for our University Archives! Please consider donating your photos and memorabilia to help us make sure that the legend of “Tech” lives on for future generations. Please include as much information as possible for each piece (names of people in photos, year that the photo was taken, what people are doing in the photo, etc.). Send your photos/memorabilia to the attention of Sarah Lohr via email: lohrs@andrew.cmu.edu or mail: Alumni House, 5017 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Also, don’t forget to stop by the University Center art gallery on the first floor when you are back for reunion to help us identify photographs from Homecomings past!

Reunion Contact Information

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