Riggs High Class of '63

1995 Reunion

50th Birthday Celebration
June 29 - July 1, 1995
Ramkota - Pierre



Front- Row 1 - (left to right): Eva Olson Hageman, Wanda Fineran Soper, Charlotte "Tinker" Samco Crawford, Paula Volk Hunsley, Barb Stoehr Nelson, Jeanne Bauman Cannon, Dick Lamster.

Row 2 - Mary Tyler Zulk , Judy Jo Williams Smith, Mickey Ottum White, Ruth Ann Spicer, Maxine Otto Tessier, Georgina Boggs Collier, Peggy Owens Rath, Sharyn Smith Martinson, Nancy Kindt Lorenzen.

Row 3 - Nina Colbert Maxfield, Ron Olesen, Joe Hanson, Wayne Grubbs, Dwight Johnson, Al Freiberg, Ron Smith, Don Madison, Jan Wright, Kay Cruse Mellon, Carol Pyncheon Whitney.

Row 4 - Merl Hawkins, Mark Simmons, Dan Neiles, Jim Whitney, Sam Ruzick, Dean O'Reilly, Jerry Big Eagle, Dave Tommervik, Bonnie Forney.

Back - Row 5 - John Whitney, Gary Porter, Tony Lucas, Ed Jacobsen, Ken Bruce, Larry Morris, Jerry Hunsley, Milt Morris, Dennis Naasz.

Reunion Synopsis

The Class of '63 kicked off their 50th birthday celebration Thursday night, June 29, 1995, with a great get together at the home of Milt and Dawn Morris. Their beautiful home "on the river" was an ideal place for us to gather and get reacquainted. Although the weather was a little chilly (especially for late June in Pierre), the friendliness and warmth of the classmates more than made up for the cool temperatures. Milt and Dawn were very gracious hosts and we thank them for opening their home to us.

The first "official" gathering of the reunion weekend was on Friday night, June 30, when we met for a cash bar reception in the Courtyard at the Ramkota River Centre. Birthday banners greeted the classmates and the balloons on the tables reminded everyone which birthday we were celebrating and the purpose of the gathering. It was fun to listen to the classmates who had already turned 50 as they relayed to one another how they reacted to and celebrated their 50th birthdays. While some stated that they had very quiet celebrations (they couldn't quite yet admit how old

they were), others relayed how their friends and familie did not miss the opportunity to welcome them into their half century of life by throwing the traditional “Over the Hill” party. For those who had not yet turned 50, they didn’t know what to expect but were ready for whatever! One thing everyone seemed to share was the opportunity to be together and celebrate their birthdays together.

The late night gathering and chilly weather did not keep the golfers from their scheduled golf tournament on Saturday morning. With the exception of Wanda Fineran, the golf teams consisted of all guys, so Wanda had quite a challenge. Not only was she able to put up with the bull they dished out, she gave them a run for their money. Way to go, Wanda!!

No activities were planned for Saturday afternoon so classmates were on their own. While they were doing their thing, we were busy decorating for the big “Party.” With the help of Milt Morris, Dick Lamster, and his wife, Maeve, we turned the meeting room at the Ramkota into a party room, complete with banners, balloons, champagne, and a two foot lighted banner that read “CLASS OF ‘63." Since other classes were also gathering at the Ramkota for their reunions, we wanted to make sure everyone knew who we were. When you walked into the room and saw the banner aglow, you knew!

The birthday “Party” began at 6:30 pm on Saturday night with a cocktail hour, followed by dinner. After dinner, our class photo was taken and then Joe, who acted as master of ceremonies, formally welcomed and wished a HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the Class of ‘63. After a short business meeting, in which we confirmed to have out next reunion in the year 2000 and wherein Joe asked i there was anyone interested in chairing the 2000 reunion (no one was so he volunteered to chair it), the “Queen” of the birthday party was announced. Carol Butler Jones won that title by being the person having their birthday closest to the reunion weekend. Carol’s actual birthday was July 2. We told her the party was in her honor (that made her feel really special) and that she couldn’t have picked a better group of people to help her celebrate. Various other drawings for door prizes were held, with Eva Olson Hageman winning the most impressive prize, a 1963 United States coin proof set that was donated by Nina Colbert Maxfield. What a great gift and what a wonderful way to remember the reunion and the Class of ‘63. Thank you, Nina!

Joe then invited anyone who wanted to share some thoughts about the reunion, their birthday, life experiences, or whatever, to do just that. Anyone who is familiar with the Class of ‘63 knows that we had many volunteers to share their stories. There were several classmates who had never attended one of our reunions before that shared their thoughts, so it was especially nice to hea them say that they felt really comfortable with everyone, how impressed they were with the reunion, and after being at this reunion, they planned to be at all future reunions.

After hearing from various classmates, we opened the champagne, lit the birthday candles on the birthday cakes, and Joe then proposed a formal birthday toast to the Class of ‘63. The “Party” had begun! To make it even more special, shortly after we toasted one another, several members of the Class of ‘65 joined us and sang “Happy Birthday” to us. What a great touch for the party. We invited them to stay and share our champagne, cake, and the rest of the evening with us. We cleared an area for dancing and had several “oldy but goody” recordings on hand in case anyone wanted to dance, but no one did. In fact, the Class of ‘75, who was meeting adjacent to us, had hired a band and invited us to join them for dancing but we were so busy visiting with one another that no one took advantage of that.

Several other classes from Riggs High, in addition to the Class of ‘65, also joined us in our celebration. The classes of ‘75 and ‘80 were in adjacent rooms to us at the Ramkota and the Class of ‘60 was meeting at the Senior Citizens Center (I hope when we get that old, they don’t stick us in the Senior Citizens Center), so several members of those classes filtered into our reunion. In fact, we kind of inherited two classmates from the Class of ‘64 that weekend also

- Laurel Hanson and Lenny Hanson. Apparently their class was supposed to have their 30 year reunion last year and no one could get a reunion going so when they heard we were going to have a reunion, they decided to come to Pierre and crash ours. We didn’t mind though, in fact, we were kind of flattered and figured the more the merrier!

Steamboat Park was the site of the family picnic on Sunday afternoon. We were joined by several children and parents of the classmates, so that made it even more fun. The temperature was just right for volleyball so the great athletes in the crowd showe off their athletic skills while the others just enjoyed visiting. Mid-afternoon, we started

saying our farewells and departing. The birthday celebration was coming to an end and as we reflected back on the weekend, we agreed that the time went by way too quickly. We also agreed that even though many may think that 50 is old, for us 50 IS FABULOUS!

Our weekend “Party” and birthday celebration was a very fun and memorable time for all of us. What a way to begin the second half century of our lives - sharing time with lifetime friends. It was a great celebration and we thank all of you who were able to join us and make it so memorable for us. For those of you who were not able to join us, we want you to know that you definitely were with us in spirit and we celebrated for you too. We look forward to seeing you when we gather for our next reunion at the turn of the century in the year 2000.

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!

Classmates Who Attended Reunion

David Baade
Jeanne Bauman Cannon
Jerry Big Eagle
Georgina Boggs Collier
Ken Bruce
Carol Butler Jones
Nina Colbert Maxfield
Kay Cruse Mellon
Wanda Fineran Soper
Bonnie Forney Mattick
Al Freiberg
Wayne Grubbs
Joe Hanson
Merl Hawkins
Jerry Hunsley
Ed Jacobsen
Dwight Johnson
Nancy Kindt Lorenzen
Dick Lamster
Tony Lucas
Don Madison
Larry Morris
Milt Morris
Dennis Naasz
Dan Neiles
Ron Olesen
Eva Olson Hageman
Robert Dean O'Reilly
Maxine Otto Tessier
Mickey Ottum White
Peggy Owens Rath Gary Porter
Carol Pyncheon Whitney
Sam Ruzick, Jr.
Tinker Samco (Crawford)
Mark Simmons
Ronald Smith
Sharyn Smith Martinson
Ruth Ann Spicer Stenberg
Barb Stoehr Nelson
Janet Tobin Talley
David Tommervik
Mary Tyler Zulk
Paula Volk Hunsley
Jim Whitney
John Whitney
Judy Jo Williams Smith
Janice Wright