



Nürnberg Alumni Association Online Archive

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A History of the Alumni Association

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In October of 1946, only a year and a half after the Allied forces resoundingly defeated the German Third Reich, American dependents of high school age in the Nürnberg area began school in a former private residence in Erlangen, a university town nearby.

The freshmen met in the dining room, the sophomores in the living room, and the juniors and seniors had classes upstairs in bedrooms, according to **Ed Thompson, '50**, who was there in October of 1946 as a freshman.

After Thanksgiving, classes were moved into the Geology Building at Erlangen University, and in the fall of 1947, the school moved to 19 Tannenstrasse in Fürth/Bayern.

For the first three years (1946-49), the American high school sports teams were known as the Tigers. The school colors were originally red and white. The colors were changed to green and white in 1948 when red jerseys for the new six-man football team were unavailable, but green jerseys were. In the 1949-50 school year, the team name/mascot was changed to the Eagles. This seemed appropriate as an eagle was on the crest of the medieval city of Nürnberg.

In January, 1952, after four and a half years at the Tannenstrasse school building, the American students moved into a new building on Fronmüllerstrasse, the school that most NHS alumni attended. In June of 1995, the last graduating seniors were awarded their diplomas from Nürnberg American High School, and the school closed 49 years after its opening. The Cold War was over; American troops were being withdrawn from the Nürnberg area.

For years thousands of students graduated from NHS and then dispersed all over the world, but it wasn't until 1986 that two 1962 graduates conceived the idea of an alumni association. Here is how the association began in the words of its founder, **Terry Jorgensen, '62**:



The Aftermath of War — The inner city of Nürnberg at the end of WW II .

(photo courtesy of Ted Wilson, '51)



1947 — Nürnberg American High School at No. 19 Tannenstrasse



1952 — The new NHS on 30 Fronmüllerstrasse

"It was November 1986, and I had just had my first encounter with a former Eagle alumnus, in Greensboro, NC. He was **David E. ("Dandy Dave") Worland, '62**, former All-USAREUR basketball and MVP star, a.k.a. the President of the National Honor Society at NHS, whose parents had taught at our old alma mater (music/band and typing/shorthand). He and I just held onto one another in a big ol' bear hug for what seemed like several minutes ... without saying anything ... but just knowing we had been part of each other's lives in a distant land during a Cold War Era, when the only thing warm was our smiles for one another and our loyalty and friendship. I think I speak for anyone who went to Nürnberg High when I say that those friendship bonding relationships were the strongest I had experienced during my life at that time, and I only realized it many, many years later."

Both Dave and Terry realized they wanted to reignite the spirit of NHS in the United States. Terry took Dave's challenge to find enough alumni to have a reunion and agreed to pay for the initial start-up costs.

1987 – Reunion No. 1 in Atlanta, Georgia

Jorgensen began looking for people from Nürnberg High by going to the many yearbooks he had. He used telephone information service and started making long-distance telephone calls, which as he says, were not cheap in those days. He also used as a resource his parents, who had kept in touch with many friends from their extended 10-year tour in Fürth/Bayern. By June of 1987 he had located some 200 alumni, and then after being referred to **Gila (Erving) Montfort, '65**, who had developed a list of alumni in the Dallas area, the two combined their lists. They had found 234 alumni. Jorgensen persuaded 119 of them that coming to Atlanta, Georgia, in October of 1987 would be a novel idea and a good place to throw a party.

The first reunion was a big success, with everyone having so much fun that Jorgensen, Montfort, and **David Reberry, '63**, decided that a formal organization was needed. **Jerry Dennard, '63**, attorney-at-law, drew up the requisite articles, and the Nürnberg Alumni Association, Inc. was born as a Texas non-profit corporation (later named a 501(c)7, not-for profit organization by the IRS). The first – unpaid, volunteer – officers of the newly formed Nürnberg Alumni Association were President Jorgensen, Vice President Reberry, and Secretary-Treasurer Montfort, and they decided that a second reunion was in order.

To get things started, Reberry compiled an alumni information data base before having to drop out of active participation in the association, and Jorgensen got back on the telephone. He was aided now by the fact that the association had a small web site, and **Joe Condrill**, who had founded the Overseas Brats, an organization devoted to bringing together all the alumni, teachers, and administrators of the overseas dependents schools, was referring many alumni to the now fast-growing NAA.

1990 – Reunion No. 2 in Arlington, Texas

In December 1988, the first Stateside Edition of the NHS *Trichter* appeared, typed using a primitive word-processing program, edited,



1986 — the idea of a reunion of alumni and a formal association conceived

1987 — First Gathering of Eagles in Atlanta, GA



After the 1987 reunion, long-time faculty member Helen Crowell said, "One of my biggest thrills was the NHS reunion. There you were, all grown up successfully." 119 Eagles were there. Miss Crowell was the only teacher.



1988 — The first Stateside Edition of the *Trichter*, December 25, 1988

printed, and mailed out to approximately 1000 alumni by Jorgensen. It announced a second reunion – in Arlington, Texas.

In the Dallas metro area, Montfort's personal efforts locally helped in organizing the second of many reunions to come. There were twice as many that came as there were at the first reunion, 238. It was a fun-filled weekend. There was time to play golf, to go to the theme park Six Flags over Texas, to eat with friends, and to review old times.

After Arlington, a pattern was set: each triennial reunion would be in a different part of the country, rotating from the East Coast to Middle America to the West. At this reunion, Jorgensen and Montfort were re-elected, and **Pat (McCarroll) Wood, '59**, came on board as vice president.

From 1990 to spring of 1994, Jorgensen and Montfort took turns editing the *Trichter*, which announced in the fall of 1992 the western reunion site.

1993 – Reunion No. 3 at Lake Tahoe, California

In 1993 the Nürnberg alumni set out for Lake Tahoe, California, for a wonderfully scenic weekend, staying at the Embassy Suites Resort, where 336 alumni were entertained. The big banquet night was a BBQ at the Ponderosa Ranch, site of the famous “Bonanza” TV series. At the business meeting, Jorgensen, Wood, and Montfort were once again elected to lead the association.

In September of 1994, **Betty (Griffith) Qualley, '50**, and **Barbara (Carter) Jenkins, '51**, took over as co-editors of the *Trichter*, utilizing new, more sophisticated desktop publishing technology and emphasizing memoirs from the early days of the high school. With the death of Qualley, editorship of the alumni newsletter passed to **Karen K. West-Burt, '77**.

In 1995, the doors of Nürnberg American High School closed for the last time, but in the U.S. the Nürnberg Alumni Association continued to grow.

1996 – Reunion No. 4 in Clearwater Beach, Florida

In 1996, the alumni headed back east, for their fourth triennial reunion, a wonderfully historic weekend at the famous Bellevue-Mido Resort Hotel, in Clearwater Beach, Florida, where 225 attended. The usual suspects were once again elected to lead the association, but the secretary-treasurer job was split, with **Lynn Tumey, '77**, accepting the post of secretary and Montfort staying as treasurer.

In 1997 the first independent association website came on-line, with **Mike Judd, '89**, as webmaster. In 1998, Judd overhauled the site.

1999 – Reunion No. 5 in Breckenridge, Colorado

By now more than 3,000 NHS alumni had been found, and President Jorgensen was hoping for 400 at the fifth gathering of Eagles. It would take place in Breckenridge, Colorado, in June of 1999 at the Beaver Run Resort and Conference Center. The summer 1999 issue of the *Trichter* was crammed with pictures of the 508 former Eagle students and faculty members who came to Breckenridge and partied until the late hours.

At the business meeting, a new organizational plan was implemented. In place of the cumbersome board of directors consisting of the officers and the representatives from each class, four era positions were established, thus reducing the board from more than 40 to 11. Officers elected were Jorgensen, president; **Ron Burgess, '72**, vice-president for operations; **Dave Oge, '70**, vice president for advertising and marketing; **Vint Wilson, '71**, secretary-treasurer, and West-Burt, *Trichter* editor. Era representatives were **Betty Thomas, '54**, 40s, 50s, and teachers; **Doug Hatt, '68**, 60s; **Tom Kap-pelmann, '77**, 70s; and Mike Judd, 80s and 90s.



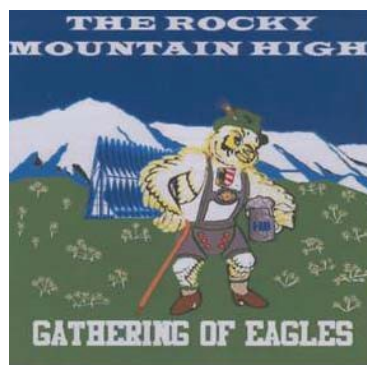
1990 — Radison Suite Hotel in Arlington, TX, site of the 2nd reunion. 238 attended.



1993 — Eagles gather at Lake Tahoe, CA, for the 3rd reunion. Everybody got into the act on Karaoke Night. 336 attended.



1990 — Doing the Bunny Hop at the 4th reunion in Clearwater Beach, FL. 225 attended.



1999 — 5th reunion in Breckenridge, CO. 508 Eagles attended this bash.

At the end of 2000, West-Burt resigned as *Trichter* editor, and Jorgensen asked his former English teacher at NHS, **Bob McQuitty**, if he would consider editing the NHS newsletter. McQuitty accepted and had the pleasure of promoting the sixth triennial reunion, a Gathering of LUCKY Eagles. In 2001 **Hansi-Barbara (Oechsle) Yunkin, '64**, became the new webmaster of the association site, and for the first time it was maintained on a regular basis.

2002 – Reunion No. 6 in Las Vegas, Nevada

Reunion No. 6 took place in Las Vegas, Nevada, at the internationally famous Las Vegas Flamingo Casino and Resort Hotel in June of 2002. The headline in the summer *Trichter* of that year read “639 Get Lucky in Vegas, New Records Set.” It was the biggest reunion yet.

In the fall of 2002, new leadership was elected as Jorgensen stepped down from his volunteer position as president in which he had served for 16 years. For the first time, these unpaid positions were contested, and a spirited election resulted in the election of Burgess as president, **Rita (Jannusch) McKenzie, '63**, as vice president for operations, **Dave Oge, '70**, as vice president for advertising, **Charlotte (Erickson) Forman, '64**, as secretary-treasurer, and **Betty Thomas, Doug Hatt, '68**, **Lynn Tumey, '77**, and **Ginger (Sizemore) Milling, '89**, as era representatives.

In the fall of 2003 the association was fortunate to acquire the services of **Dan Guy, '71**, as webmaster, and the website was set up under a new server with more capabilities than the association had ever had before. In 2004 Guy, assisted by McQuitty, put up a renovated web site.

In 2004 President Burgess resigned for family reasons, and Oge succeeded to the presidency. At the same time McKenzie resigned, and Jorgensen took over the vice president for operations post. Also resigning was Tumey, replaced by **Reni (Peek) Michaels, '79**.

2005 – Reunion No. 7 in Orlando, Florida

In 2005, the Nürnberg Alumni Association continued to grow and to keep the Eagle spirit alive, following an enthusiastic, albeit a smaller and more intimate reunion crowd numbering 273 came to Orlando, Florida, where the event was hosted at the DoubleTree Hotel at The Entrance to Universal Studios. At the reunion, the officers from 2004 were “rolled over,” that is, re-elected, with **Debbie (McLean) Oge, '71**, as the only new face.

In the spring of 2006, McQuitty turned the editorship of the *Trichter* over to **Pat (Knighton) Gibson, '62**. **Doug Veith, '67**, was added to the Board of Directors as legal counsel and McQuitty was named historian/archivist. Shortly thereafter, **Aracelia (Alamo) Velez, '84**, became the 1980s-1990s era representative.

2008 – Reunion No. 8 in San Antonio, Texas

In June 2008 the 8th Gathering of Eagles occurred along the scenic Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. It was called one of the best ever, as the alumni very much enjoyed the Alamo City, which is full of rich traditions in Texas history and blends of cultures and foods. There was also plenty to see and do, all within walking distance, or a ride in a Riverwalk taxi or tour boat.

For the first time, live entertainment was part of a reunion. Doug Veith personally shared his passion for musical nostalgia and became the underwriter of the Saturday banquet's dinner-dance show, when he flew in The Four Preps, and Jim Yester (founder of vocal group Hall of Fame inductee The Association) to perform their greatest hits from the 50s and 60s.

Once again the officers from the previous term were re-elected. The empty 80s-90s rep position was filled in 2009 by **Linda (Moreira) Langford, '80**.



2002 — 6th reunion in Las Vegas. Pool party at the Flamingo Hilton. A record 639 came to this one.



Talking to the Stroll in Vegas



Doing the Macarena at Reunion No. 7 in Orlando, Fl.



Reunion No. 8 in San Antonio, TX. A bunch of the boys whooping it up on the Riverwalk

2011 — Reunion No. 9 in Boise, Idaho

In **2011** the Nürnberg Alumni Association was 24 years old, and an unlikely city was chosen for **Reunion No. 9**, Boise, Idaho. A smaller city in a sparsely populated part of the U.S., some said Boise was a poor choice, but most of the **279** who came said Boise was one of the best. The town was large enough to have excellent restaurants and entertainment venues but small enough one could walk to most places. The weather was wonderful and the surrounding area beautiful. Many took tours of various attractions around the town, such as the former state prison, the capital building, and a renowned bird sanctuary. A group of brave souls went white water rafting.

New volunteers came on board at the business meeting. They were **Shelley (Flippen) Conroy**, '73, President -- **Reni (Peek) Michael** '79, VP-Advertising -- **Don Hutchins**, '67, Secretary -- **Dina (Bock) DuPree**, '75, Treasurer. **Terry Jorgensen** '62 was re-elected VP-Operations. Two new Board members were **Bob Hervey** '64 and **Tom Kappelmann**, '77. Conroy only served a few months before personal obligations occasioned her stepping down as president. She was succeeded by Don Hutchins. Tom Kappelmann took over as Secretary.

2014 — Reunion No. 10 in Tysons Corner, Washington D.C. Area

Tysons Corner, located on the south edge of the Washington DC area, was the site of the **2014 Reunion**. Approximately **230** Eagles gathered for **Reunion No. 10**. Many attendees took advantage of the chance to visit the tourist sites of the U.S. capital, a large group enjoyed a boat ride down the Potomac River, and everyone enjoyed a performance by a German folk dance group at the dinner. An extraordinary event for those interested in the early history of NHS was a panel of seven alumni who were students in the first years. They were **Bob Boutz**, '52; **Joan Kay (McCarter) Adrian**, '49; **Betty Thomas**, '54; **Jack Philips**, '51; **Bob Russell**, '47; **Bill Shortt**, '49; and **Gary Gassel**, '49.

At the business meeting, a close reading of the Association Bylaws occasioned a change regarding the election of directors. Only five people should be elected. Other directors may be appointed. **Don Hutchins** was installed as President, **Reni Michael** was named VP for Membership and Media, and **Tom Kappelmann** took over as VP for Reunion Planning. The Historian, *Trichter* editor, and Era Reps were then appointed.

2017 — Reunion No 11 in Denver, Colorado

Denver, Colorado, was the gathering place in **2017**. Denver offered trips to the mountains, walking tours of craft brewers around downtown, tours of the Air Force Academy, and Coors Brewery in historic Golden. The 12th reunion was enjoyed by **231** Eagles.

Don Hutchins was re-elected President at the business meeting. New faces on the board were **Rita (Sexton) May**, '68 – VP for Reunion Planning — **Dawn (Goad) McCullough**, '60, VP for Membership — **Kim (Becker) Blacka** '82, Secretary. Re-elected were Reni Michael — VP for Marketing and Media and Diana DuPree, Treasurer. Reappointed were Doug Veith – Legal Counsel, Pat Gibson, Trichter Editor — Ranelle (Gray) Fortier, Era Rep, and Pat (McCarroll) Wood, Era Rep.

San Diego, California, will be the site of Reunion No. 12 in 2020.

No matter the site of a Gathering of Eagles or who is elected to lead and plan the reunion, attendees know the main purpose of the reunion will be fulfilled. Classmates from 1947 to 1995 will come together to revive old friendships and tell tales of long ago bravado and mischief. And as they lift a glass, they might say “**Ein Prosit der Gemütlichkeit**.”



Fearless Leader Terry Jorgensen captains the White Water Rrafters.



A good place to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there.



German folk dancers entertain the D.C. visitors



And a good time was had by all in Golden!