



THE LINK

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SPECIAL EDITION IN MEMORY OF AMOS D. BURNS '49

My View

By Amos Burns '49

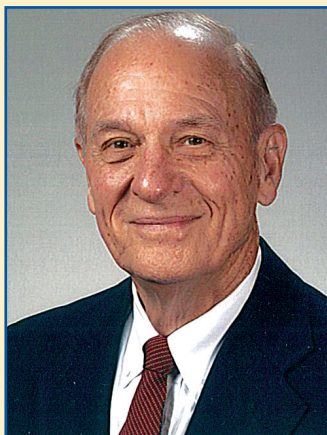
My ATΩ career is quite unique. First, I was initiated at Mississippi State University, Epsilon Epsilon Chapter, as a junior in 1949 after being convinced of the values of membership. I decided to join after being acquainted with the founding principles of ATΩ and its values and the values of fraternity brotherhood.

My undergraduate experience at EE was limited due to time eligibility, but I served as assistant editor for the chapter newsletter and made some friendships, which have lasted for a lifetime. I am still in contact and see occasionally my “big brother” and “little brother” in the chapter. The fraternity taught me the value of friendships in social and business affairs.

Of more importance than offices held in the chapter have been the numerous offices that I have held as an alumnus. Following graduation, my first job was with U.S. Steel Co. in Birmingham, Alabama. This lasted five months when I got a job in Tuscaloosa in the milk and ice cream industry by the name of Dixie Dairy Products Association, where I served 40 years full time, most of which as general manager, plus 15 years as part-time consultant. During that time, I started my own brokerage sales company, Amos Burns Co. Inc. This career provided the opportunity to travel to most of the larger cities in the U.S. from Maine to California, plus Hawaii, Bermuda, Mexico, and several islands in the Caribbean.

During most of my career and until the present, I have served ATΩ in various volunteer offices. Upon arriving in Tuscaloosa, I got

acquainted with members of Beta Delta and was invited to take meals at the house and live in the house one year, paying a house bill for these items. In 1962, I was elected to president of the newly reorganized house corporation and served in that office for 32 years and as a member since. Then, I was elected in 1996 to the newly formed Board of Trustees, serving until present, including four years as chairman and election to chairman emeritus.



I had the opportunity to serve in various offices of ATΩ National, including province chief for Alabama and Mississippi, High Council (board of directors) chairman, National Foundation board of governors, and election to national officer emeritus.

I do not know any secret to success, but of great importance is hard work, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, dependability, and, to ATΩs, being true to the lessons taught during their initiation into the fraternity. I feel that it is important to stay in touch with the chapter because of the enjoyment of the friendships made and the opportunities offered to repay in some degree for the benefits received as an undergraduate.

I have enjoyed a wonderful married life for 60 years with a wonderful and beautiful wife, Dorothy “Dot,” who was introduced to me by an ATΩ brother. We have two successful sons, **Keith** and **Barry**, both of whom were Beta Delta initiates. I also have two grandsons, **Brooks** and **Blake**, who are an ATΩ junior and ATΩ pledge, respectively, at Bama, and a lovely granddaughter, Mary Elizabeth, a high school student.

This article was originally printed in the fall 2014 issue of The Link. Amos D. Burns '49 was a cherished brother of our fraternity and will be deeply missed by not only Beta Deltas, but ATΩs across the nation. Amos will always be remembered for his kind heart and dedication to Alpha Tau Omega. We hope that his story inspires you to keep in touch with your brothers.

Amos's obituary in *The Tuscaloosa News* can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/AmosBurns>

If you would like to correspond with Dot, her address is:
Mrs. Dot Burns
8410 Essex Circle NE
Tuscaloosa, AL 35406-1111

If you feel you would like to honor Amos with a memorial, the family has asked that donations be made to:

Amos Burns Beta Delta Brotherhood Endowment
c/o ATO Foundation
32 East Washington Street, Suite 1350
Indianapolis, IN 46204

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF AMOS BURNS

Eulogy by Barrett A. Burns '82

This was the eulogy read by the son of Amos, Barrett A. Burns '82, at the memorial service at Calvary Baptist Church. Article edited for space restrictions.

Amos had a great life, 87 wonderful years, and 61 years with the love of his life, my mother, Dot Burns. Dot was everything to my dad. He told her he loved her every chance he had, including during the episode which ultimately took his life—what he thought about in his greatest time of need was his love for her. When we came home at about 5:30 a.m., we found a sealed envelope labeled “open upon my death.” In it of course was a letter expressing his undying love for my mom. She was equally supportive of him. It took time to do the things he did. Dot allowed him to spend this time because she loved him and knew it was important to him. Thank you, Mom, for sharing Amos with all of us. You helped him every step of the way.



Many of you may not know his childhood story. Amos was born in Webster County, Mississippi, and was raised outside of Eupora in an area everyone called Ticky Bend. His mother died when he was 12. His youngest brother, Bobby, was only 2. Brothers Jessie and Carl were in between. By the time he was 14, his dad had remarried. The Burns and the Schaefer became a blended family with a total of 10 kids. The circumstances are not fully known to us—did Amos not fit in? Were there too many kids to feed? We don't know. But an aunt in Ruleville offered to take him for the summer. He packed everything he owned in a small cardboard box to go visit his aunt in Ruleville. We believe the aunt wanted to take him in and raise him as her own. However, her husband did not want to raise another child. One day Mr. Jones, who owned a small dairy, was delivering the milk. Dad's aunt asked, “Wouldn't you like to have a boy to help you on the farm?” At that time, a child was considered extra hands to help on the farm. As a young boy, Amos began his workday at 4:30 on the farm, milking cows and delivering before school began for his room and board. He also picked cotton and worked in a department store after school to earn money. Even though this started as a work relationship, even though he was lonely and scared, even though his brothers thought he would be coming back home, this became the beginning of a new family. The Joneses nurtured his Christian faith, and they came to love him as the son they never had and he loved them as his second set of parents. We visited them on holidays until they passed away.

Maybe this could be an excuse, maybe a crutch. You would not learn these things from Amos unless you asked. He never complained. Maybe he was dealt a tough hand OR MAYBE IT WAS A BLESSING FROM GOD. He never stopped

loving his dad, Henry, and his stepmother, Momma Doshi, his brothers, his stepbrothers and sisters.

He ran Dixie Dairy Products with maximum efficiency. He gave them 40 years full time, 15 years as a consultant, and when he was 80, they called on Amos to come back and tend to all the details of closing down the business affairs. At the peak, the company had around 58 member dairies consisting of a Who's Who of large family-owned dairies – Mayfield's, Perry's Pride, Barbers, Blue Bell, Kinnette's, Luvell's, Browns. He was close friends with most of the owners. They dined with mom and dad, invited them into their homes and to special events in their cities. Amos cried tears of joy when greeting these owners who flew in from all over the country to surprise him at his retirement party.

Have I mentioned that he was in a fraternity? His 66 years of membership in Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity and more than 53 years of leadership and service are pretty well documented. He joined as a junior at MSU. He was drawn by the founding Christian principles and the value of friendships. His highest National office was chairman of the Board of Trustees and he was awarded the 1978 Worthy Grand Chief Award given to the most outstanding alumnus in the nation. The Alabama Beta Delta chapter room is named for him and it is commemorated by his portrait and a plaque in the lobby. I hope you will stop by after the service to see it. The young men of the chapter really wanted to do something special for Amos and Amos would be pleased if you did.

Can you imagine spending 30 years helping a fraternity chapter in a leadership role and learn the chapter charter has been revoked for not doing things the right way? That is exactly what happened to Beta Delta in the 1990s, reducing the chapter to zero active members. As soon as the time had passed when the chapter could re-apply, Amos began recruiting the nucleus members to get it going again. It started small and gradually grew. In 2000 at Founders Day, they honored him with another portrait (which, of course, later got stolen). There were only 30 or so in attendance. At that time he again cried tears of joy for the honor. He proceeded to give his testimony on why he did what he did. He said he knew life was full of choices on how he could use his time. He said he realized he could not take worldly possessions with him. He said he wanted to make a difference in people's lives and to spread the news of Christ's love for them.

Now there are close to 200 members. I believe this is some of his best work—to bring the chapter back. He trained the early ones to do it the right way; to stick to the founding principles of ATΩ. They did and it has paid off in spades. In 2010, the chapter was awarded Top Chapter Award by the National Fraternity and has contended every year since winning its 14th True Merit Award this year. Last year, Beta Delta won top University of Alabama fraternity at Order of Omega Banquet. Additionally, this year's and last year's Thomas Arkle Clark Award, recognizing the top ATΩ undergraduate in the country, went to Beta Delta chapter members—Peter Inge this year and Marlan Golden last year. Last year's average GPA was 3.31—one of the highest in the country and on campus. In the spring of 2014 it was 3.33 with 71 members exceeding a 3.5 GPA and 24 of those with a 4.0 GPA.

If you think he spent a lot of time with ATΩ you are correct. Those who know him know he spent at least that much time with this Church as a member and leader for 64 years. At Calvary Baptist Church, he served in every position possible, including Sunday School Teacher and Director, Personnel Committee, Finance Committee, Deacon, and Chairman of Deacons. He was also named “Life Deacon.” He never limited himself to organizations as he made friends everywhere he went. He was also active with Tuscaloosa's International Friends and he always had an adopted foreign student who of course came to adore him.

He wanted to make a difference in the lives of others and invested his time in friendships to accomplish this. The friendships had great value to him and to him it was worth the time. I know you too can see the smile on his face and the excitement in his voice when he greeted a friend.

I wish you could have seen how much he enjoyed attending just this month the celebration of the 150th year of the founding of the Fraternity. He was proud to have attended the 100th, 125th and every one in between since the 1960s. His last day was as good as you could ask for. Lunch with Dot at Taco Casa, dinner with his grandsons at the chapter house, met all the new pledges (50+), all whose names he would soon learn, attended the chapter meeting, made a few comments, and left early to meet his personal trainer for exercise.

The time Amos invested in the things which were important to him was significant. I hope you join me in concluding what Amos believed—it was worth it. It really was worth it. Thank you, Dad, for being the best husband my mom could ask for, the best father, father-in-law, grandfather, brother, friend and mentor we could ask for. We love you and will cherish the life you lived.



Walter Monroe Reflects on Friendship with Amos

The last few weeks have been very sad for me personally and for Beta Delta since Amos Burns passed away on the early morning of Thursday, August 27, 2015. I had the opportunity to talk to Amos on that Wednesday afternoon, and as always he wanted to talk about what was going on at the chapter, but not until after he had first asked about Peggy, my wife, and how we were doing. That was Amos—always more interested in others than himself or his own agenda, and it was not perfunctory talk. Amos genuinely always put others first! All the time! That is the biggest impact Amos had on my life.

Amos joined the chapter Wednesday night for dinner, met a number of the new members to begin to learn their names, and stayed for the chapter meeting. He then left to go work out before heading home for bed. He woke up in the middle of the night, told Dot he didn't feel well, and was taken to the hospital where he died from a cerebral hemorrhage. Amos was 87 years old. He now rests in peace in the Chapter Eternal. God blessed him with a faithful wife and family and a ministry to thousands of ATQs whom he knew over his years of service to Beta Delta and the National Fraternity. Always putting others first.

Wynn Smiley, our National CEO, said Amos was in grand spirits at the ATQ 150th Anniversary Celebration several weeks ago in Indianapolis. Amos was delighted that Keith and Barry and his two grandsons, Brooks and Blake, were all with him throughout that weekend. Amos was the 1978 recipient of the Worthy Grand Chief Award. The General Assembly bestowed the title of national officer emeritus on Amos in 1979. He served on the High Council 1970-1978 and served as chairman 1974-1978.

Without Amos, Beta Delta would not exist at the University. He was Beta Delta, as all of the brothers, pledges, and alumni know very well. Peter Inge, immediate past Worthy Master and recipient of this year's Thomas Arkle Clark Award, said it best. "He truly exemplified all it meant to be a true brother, friend, and man of God. I have rarely encountered someone so pure of heart and well-intentioned. He always put others first and remained that way until the end." He was a true friend to everyone that wore the badge or pledge pin of ATQ.

Love and Respect,
Walter H. Monroe '62
 Chairman, Board of Trustees

FORMER ATQ NATIONAL PRESIDENT WALTER HUGHES '60 SHARES INSPIRATION FOUND FROM AMOS

The loss of our brother, **Amos D. Burns '49**, on August 27, 2015, was deeply felt by all. Not only by those of us who knew and respected him for his unselfish dedication to Beta Delta, but also by his many friends and brothers throughout the ATQ nation.

I first met Amos in 1959, the year I pledged, and have been proud to call him a true friend and brother for the past 56 years. I had the pleasure of working closely with Amos at the Chapter for the past 20 years, and additionally the opportunity of working with him in many situations at the National Fraternity. **To me, Amos personified all of the attributes of our brotherhood that every ATQ should aspire to achieve. He truly loved ATQ in ways that are difficult for many to comprehend, and dedicated more than 65 years of his life to the true principles of Christian brotherhood upon which our Fraternity was founded.**

From the years as an undergraduate at Beta Delta, and for years thereafter, I learned from Amos what the true meaning of "a lifelong experience in the ATQ brotherhood" really meant. He was a living example to all undergraduates that ATQ brotherhood does not end at graduation. Amos leaves us with a profound legacy through the many lives he touched through his mentoring, encouragement, and true Christian friendship and brotherhood.

I have had many great experiences during my 56 years of ATQ brotherhood that will resonate with me for the rest of my life. However, one of the most memorable was the opportunity in 1962 along with Brother **Horace Hunt '60** to recommend Amos as a replacement of **Dr. Bramlett** of Oxford, Mississippi, as province chief of province ten of the fraternity. This was the first experience for Amos at the National Fraternity arena where his achievements over the next 30-plus years both with the High Council (national board of directors) and the board of governors of the ATQ Foundation were substantial. His dedicated service and contributions were ultimately recognized by his being awarded and designated as a national officer emeritus—one of very few in existence today.

Even though I often joke that Dot has never forgiven me for this introduction of Amos to the national stage, Amos did have the opportunity, some 46 years later, to reciprocate by seconding my nomination for National President (Worthy Grand Chief) at the 2008 Louisville Congress. We will all miss Brother Amos Burns in many different and personal ways, but I personally will especially miss his frequent calls and visits, but most of all, his firm handshake and genuine welcoming smile on every occasion that we met.

Love and Respect,
Walter Hughes '60
 National President 2008-2012



“Few could ever reach the true spirit of brotherhood that Amos felt for all of us. He was a great inspiration and role model for how to stay committed to ATΩ. I have repeated many times how proud I am that it is his signature on my own initiation certificate. For me, it’s one more memory of Amos to cherish for all time. He will be deeply missed.”

JEFFREY BUSCH,
NATIONAL FRATERNITY PRESIDENT



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Beta Delta Scholarship Endowment Fund Name Changed to Honor Amos Burns

At the September 2015 joint meeting of the Board of Trustees and the executive committee of the chapter, a unanimous decision was made and later confirmed by the entire Chapter to change the name of the recently established Beta Delta Endowment Fund to the Amos Burns Beta Delta Brotherhood Endowment. Similarly, awards from this endowment will now be known in perpetuity as Amos D. Burns Scholarships.

The earnings from this endowment fund will provide scholarships to worthy pledges and brothers. These annual awards will be based upon need and merit as determined by an award committee consisting of the current and past Worthy Master, the chapter treasurer and scholarship chairman, and two members of the Board of Trustees. It is hoped the endowment will grow to the point that multiple scholarship awards will be possible. The endowment fund will be managed by the ATΩ Foundation and contributions to it are tax deductible.

If you wish to remember Amos and all of the contributions he made to ATΩ, the chapter, and each of our lives, please consider a contribution in his memory to:

Amos Burns Beta Delta
Brotherhood Endowment
ATΩ Foundation
32 E. Washington Street, Suite 1350
Indianapolis, IN 46204

If you have any questions, contact Terry Turman, CEO of the ATΩ Foundation, at (317) 472-0935, ext. 205 or tturman@atofoundation.org.

Special Edition in Memory of Amos D. Burns '49

Comments from Wynn Smiley, Chief Executive Officer of Alpha Tau Omega National Fraternity:

“Of all the alumni checking in, Amos was always one of the first people who would greet me at any Congress, which meant he was almost always registering the moment we opened for business. With his ever present smile, he would ask how I was doing, how things were going with ATΩ, and then let me know how many Congresses’ he attended, including the one he was currently attending.

In 2006 at the Austin Congress, the General Assembly passed a resolution to memorialize his platinum Congress attendance record:

- Whereas Brother Amos Burns has been a loyal ATΩ since his initiation at Mississippi State in 1949; and*
- Whereas Brother Burns has served ATΩ as a member of the High Council, the Board of Governors, National Alumni Board, Alabama Board of Trustees Chairman; and*
- Whereas Brother Burns has been honored as a National Officer Emeritus, has received the National President’s Award and is a proud Life Loyal Tau; and*
- Whereas The 77th Congress of Alpha Tau Omega is Brother Burns’ 31st consecutive Congress;*

Therefore Be It Resolved that this, the 77th Congress of Alpha Tau Omega recognizes Brother Burns for his dedication to Alpha Tau Omega and congratulates him on attending 31 consecutive sessions of the Alpha Tau Omega Congress.

We had the resolution printed up and delivered to him. He got a big kick out of being the Dean of Congress.”