

# The Cornerstone

SPRING 2008

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. 13, NO. 2

## Autry Court

By Mary Dix

Donald Suman, who graduated from Rice in 1944 and returned to coach the basketball team from 1950 to 1960, remembers Autry Court as the finest in the Southwest Conference, praise echoed by such Rice basketball stars as Eugene Schwinger, '54, and James Gerhardt, '51. They rejoiced at the move in 1950 from the inadequate practice courts in a field house near the track stadium and, even more, the opportunity to play games on campus rather than at the City Auditorium and other sites around Houston. The old facility, they recalled, had no seats for spectators, was ill-lighted and not regulation length, and had an inhibiting one foot between the court and the surrounding brick walls.

Autry Court, now undergoing a major renovation and due to reopen \$23 million later in the fall of 2008, in 1950 was celebrated by players and fans who cheered on Rice basketball in style.

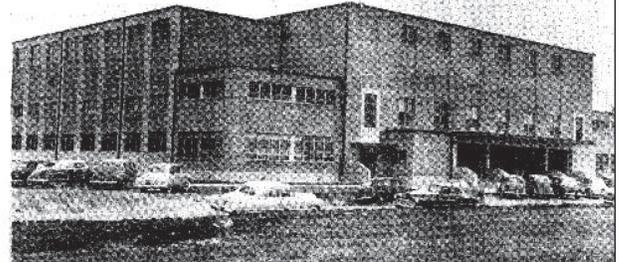


Allie May Autry, 1921

Three items in the Woodson Center's rich collection have a story to tell about how Autry Court came to the Rice Institute in 1950. One is a blanket, dark blue with grey trim and a large "R," one of many given to letter winners by Allie Kinsloe Autry and her daughter Allie May Autry Kelley, '25, both ardent sports fans. The second is a parchment document, as handsome as a medieval illuminated manuscript, that was presented by Wendel D. Ley, president of the Rice Alumni Association, to Mrs. Edward W. Kelley (Allie May Autry Kelley) at Homecoming in the fall of 1950 in

### RICE INSTITUTE

Invites you to visit their NEW GYMNASIUM and the DEDICATION of AUTRY COURT . . . .



News clipping from the Houston Press, March 10, 1951

appreciation of her great service to Rice "as a devoted friend and generous benefactress." The third is an invitation from President William Houston to an open house on March 10, 1951, at which Autry Court was to be formally dedicated.

In 1950 Allie May, or Sally, Kelley had donated \$250,000 to Rice to build a gym that would house a basketball court. How many sports facilities in the country were given by a woman in honor of a woman? Probably not many, if any, but Autry Court was given by Sally Kelley in memory of her mother, Allie Kinsloe Autry. And a third generation, Edward (Mike) Kelley, a freshman at Rice in 1950, remembers playing in freshmen games in the new gym. Grover Noonan, '47, was one of the players from past Rice conference championship teams invited to return to meet the 1950 varsity team in the inaugural game at Autry Court.

Fans loved Autry Court and filled it to its capacity of 5,000, or more if temporary bleachers were added. Their enthusiasm gave the Owls a home court advantage, as records show. The *Houston Press* in the September 18, 1997, issue called Autry Court the "sixth man" and remarked that it had the "rich atmosphere, intimacy, and history that no shiny sports palace can match." One veteran basketball fan felt that

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# The Rice Historical Society

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*To collect and preserve for the future the  
history of Rice University*

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*The Rice Historical Society welcomes letters to  
The Cornerstone, its official newsletter.  
Rice alumni and friends are encouraged to  
contribute photographs and remembrances of  
historical interest that may be used in future issues  
of The Cornerstone. Items cannot  
be returned and will be donated to our  
archival collection.*

Newsletter designed by Starfall Graphics.

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*Rice Institute Board of Trustees, 1911*

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*Please obtain a form from your company's personnel department.*

## RHS ARCHIVES NOTE

*Our archives are **not** classified. We are seeking artifacts you may have preserved, then hidden away, since your years at Rice.*

*If you would like to give that hat or banner or dance card to the Rice Historical Society to be preserved at the Woodson Research Center or in the RHS archive collection, please contact Joyce Nagle, RHS archivist, at 713-782-0703.*

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there was a sense of family among the spectators, and Rice hopes the new Autry Court will retain the ambience and character, the intimacy, of the original. And that is the way Sally Kelley and Allie Autry would want it.



Rice basketball game at Autry Court, 1950's (at left)

Rendering of renovated Autry Court and addition (above)

## The First Board of Trustees—The Rice Institute

The Rice Historical Society recently received as a gift from Audrey Ley, a number of publications concerning the university. Among them was a limited edition copy (number 26 pf 75) of *Some Information Concerning the Rice Institute* by J. T. McCants published in 1955. This article is reproduced from the section about the Rice board.

There have been 24 life members of the Board of Trustees of the Institute (as of 1955). The original board of seven members included the Founder, of whose life some details have been given already. The other six members were Frederick Allyn Rice, James Addison Baker, Jr., Emanuel Raphael, Cesar Maurice Lombardi, James Everett McAshan, and Alfred Stephen Richardson.

Frederick Allyn Rice, a brother of the Founder, was born in Springfield, Massachusetts, and died on April 7, 1901. He came to Houston in 1850 to join his brother in the management of some of the enterprises in which the Founder had made investments.

In the early directories of Houston he was listed as "Planter." In 1877 he was Treasurer of the H. and T. C. Railway and President of the Houston Savings Bank. A little later he became Vice-President of the City Bank of Houston, Vice President of the Houston Flour Mills Company, Vice-President of the Houston Insurance Company, Secretary-Treasurer of the Bayou City Compress, and Treasurer of the Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade. In 1884 he was associated with the McIlhenny Company and became president of the Houston Brick Works Company.

While continuing to hold most of these positions he became Treasurer of the Union Compress and Warehouse Company and President of the Montgomery Mill and Lumber Company. At the end of his business career he considered himself a "lumber and real estate dealer". At the time of his death he was Secretary-Treasurer of the Houston, Brazos, and Northern Railway Company.

James Addison Baker, Jr. was born in Huntsville, Texas, on January 10, 1857 and died in Houston on August 2, 1941. He attended the public school in Huntsville and graduated from the Texas Military Academy, in Austin Texas. After he was admitted to the bar as an attorney, he became a member of the firm of Baker and Botts, composed of his father, James A. Baker, and W. B. Botts. The firm name then became Baker, Botts and Baker. He was addressed as "Captain Baker," a title which he acquired as the captain of the Houston Light Guard, a military company, a social unit as well as a drill team.

He married Alice Graham, of Waco, Texas on 10 January 1883, and was the father of five children.

When the trustees of the Institute were chosen he was elected by them Chairman of the Board. This position he held from 24 June 1891 until his death.

The law firm of which he was a member attended to much of the business of the Founder. Captain Baker was most interested in this business and became Mr. Rice's friend and adviser. One service to Mr. Rice

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*Rice Institute, Board of Trustees, 1911*

*Front row (left to right): J. E. McAshan, C. M. Lombard, James A. Baker*

*Back row (left to right): B. B. Rice, E. O. Lovett, E. Raphael, William Marsh Rice, Jr.*

*This Board differs slightly from the original board of 1892.*

came in connection with the litigation involved in the settlement of the will of Mrs. Elizabeth Baldwin Rice under the terms of which Mrs. Rice made bequests amounting to one-half of Mr. Rice's estate. His greatest service to the Rice Institute, however, was rendered at the time of Mr. Rice's death and in the subsequent legal affairs by which he saved the estate of Mr. Rice for the Institute. A record of his participation in these events is to be found elsewhere in this report. A full report of the litigation concerning the will of Mrs. Rice, the trial of the murderers of Mr. Rice, and the final award of the founder's estate to the Rice Institute is on file in the Archives of Fondren Library at the Rice Institute. These documents were presented to the Institute by the law firm of which Captain Baker finally became the head, usually mentioned locally as "Baker-Botts".

Other details of Captain Baker's participation in the Founder's affairs are to be found in the Rice Institute Pamphlet, Volume XVIII, and in a brochure which Captain Baker later prepared for the benefit of the large number of members of his law firm, outlining the procedure in the suit brought about by the murder of Mr. Rice.

Captain Baker was actively connected with a number of enterprises in Houston. In 1890 he was Vice-President of the Texas Rolling Mill; in 1894 he was President of the Houston Abstract Company and of the Citizens' Electric Light and Power Company. A little later he was Vice-President of the Merchants and Planters Oil Company, and the President of the Houston Gas and Light Company, and President of the Houston Industrial Club. In 1910 he became Vice President of the Texas Trust Company, in 1911 President of the Houston Gas Company and Vice-President of the Bakers Trust Company. In 1915 he was President of the Houston Gas and Fuel Company and Receiver of the I and G. N. Railway Company. Later he was President of the Guardian Trust Company and

then Chairman of the Board.

Captain Baker was elected to the board of directors of the Commercial National Bank on 14 January 1896. On 12 January 1897 he was elected Vice-President of the bank and continued in that position until the consolidation with South Texas National Bank. Upon the consolidation on 2 March 1912 he became a director of the new bank, the South Texas Commercial National Bank. He was elected President of this bank on 13 January 1914, and chairman of the board on 11 January 1927, a position which he held until his death.

Emanuel Raphael was born in Birmingham, England, on 21 November 1847 and died in Houston on 16 April 1913. He was the first Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Rice Institute. In 1877 he married Louise Cohn and they had three children.

In a letter which he wrote on 14 March 1905, published in the Houston Post on 17 March 1905, he stated that in 1863 he assisted in building a telegraph line from Houston to Liberty, along the Texas and New Orleans Railroad right-of-way. He then became the manager, operator, and messenger boy of the office at Liberty. It is said that as the operator at Liberty, he

sent out the first news of the victory of the Sabine Pass battle.

In 1877 he was the Cashier of the Houston Savings Bank and in the 1884, President of the Houston Electric Light and Power Company. He helped in the organizing of the Houston Clearing House Association and was manager of the Clearing House for twenty years from 1886. In 1890 he was Secretary of the Board of the Houston High School. In 1899 he was President of the Southern Bridge and Construction Company. He continued to serve as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Rice Institute until his death.

Cesar Maurice Lombardi was born in Airolo, Canton Tessin, Switzerland, on 6 August 1845 and died on 23 June 1919. He attended school in Switzerland and then he moved to America in 1860 and became a student at Jesuit College in New Orleans. He moved to Houston in 1871 and married Caroline Gaston Ennis on 16 January 1877.

When he moved to Houston he became associated with William D. Cleveland and Company, wholesale grocers and cotton factors, first as an accountant then as manager until 1886. From that date until 1898 he was a member of the firm.

In 1899 he moved to Portland, Oregon, where he was engaged in the wholesale wheat industry. There he was President of the W. A. Gordon Company from 1902 to 1906.

On the death of Mr. A. H. Belo, his brother-in-law, Mr. Lombardi returned to Texas as Vice-President and Acting President of the A. H. Belo Company, publishers of the Dallas News and the Galveston News. He became President of this company in 1913. He came back to Texas to join this firm at the request of Mrs. Belo, a daughter of Cornelius Ennis, as sister of Mrs. Lombardi. By her husband's death Mrs. Belo had become head of the company.

Although Mr. Lombardi's home was in Dallas, he continued as an active member of the Board of Trustees of the Rice Institute. Elsewhere in this report reference has been made to his relations with Mr. William Marsh Rice when the plans for the founding of the Rice Institute were being developed.

James Everett McAshan was born in LaGrange, Texas, on 20 October 1857 and died in Houston, Texas, on 19 April 1916. His parents were Samuel Maurice McAshan and Martha Rebecca (Eanes) McAshan. He married Elizabeth Smith on 20 October 1880. They had seven children.

As a youth he was employed in the banking house of T. W. House where he was a teller in 1883, while his

father was cashier of the bank. He was one of the organizers and a charter director of the South Texas National Bank when it was formed on 27 June 1890. He was the first cashier of the bank, the major "full time" officer. (At that time the cashier of a bank was the most important officer.) In 1890 he was also Secretary-Treasurer of the Phoenix Lumber Company. In 1895 he was President of the Union Compress and Warehouse Company and a Vice-President of the American Surety Company of New York.

In 1906 Mr. McAshan was elected to the new position of active Vice-President of the South Texas National Bank, and he remained with the bank in this capacity until it was merged with the South Texas Commercial National Bank. He was a director and Vice-President of that bank. In 1914 he became Vice-President and Cashier. When he retired as an officer of the bank on 19 August 1914, he was succeeded as Cashier by his son, S. M. McAshan, who later became President of that bank. (His grandson, Harris McAshan was later president of the South Texas Commercial National Bank and then of the Texas National Bank. The South Texas Commercial National Bank was merged with the Union National Bank in 1953 and then the Texas National Bank.)

Besides his connection with the bank he was a member of a number of organizations in Houston and was President of the State Bankers Association in 1902. At the time of his death he was the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Rice Institute.

Alfred Stephen Richardson was born on 16 August 1830 and died on 30 October 1899. Not much is known concerning his life. He was an attorney, and as early as 1870 he was Secretary of the Houston and Texas Railway, a position which he was holding as late as 1885. In 1886 he was the Master in Chancery for the Houston East and West Texas Railway. In 1890 he became the Secretary of the City of Houston and continued in this position until his death.

It is not known where he was buried in 1899. When his son, Libbie A. Richardson, died in 1929, interment was made in Glenwood Cemetery, in Houston. At that time Mr. Richardson's body was also buried in the family lot with their daughter, Jeane, who had died in 1916.

On the stone marking Mr. Richardson's grave the following statements are carved:

"Forty-two years vestryman of Christ Church, Houston. Member ninth legislature. Trustee of William M. Rice Institute."

# Neologisms at Rice

by Karen Hess Rogers

One of the joys of serving on the Rice Historical Society board and attending the monthly meetings is the very random nature of the conversation about all things *Rice*. Obviously, the board gets things done; the organization is totally volunteer-run and the only services we pay for are the design and printing of this newsletter which almost always is published in a timely manner.

At the September board meeting, John Gladu mentioned a web site he had found listing new words that, over the years, had been coined at Rice. At everyone's urging he sent us the web site as well as related sites.

Suzanne Kemmer, who fostered the collection of these new words, notes that the term neologism comes from *neo* 'new' + *log* 'word' + *ism* 'N' + s pl. and says "as this parsing suggests," they are "new words that have crept into English recently, and may or may not be found in most dictionaries." These have been collected over the years by English and Linguistics students at Rice and this database is home to approximately 5,500 new words. She says that these neologisms are not necessarily indicative of changes to the English language occurring nationwide and certainly not worldwide. Rice is a small close-knit community with a unique culture and its own traditions. These words may have no practical usage outside the Rice campus.

My favorite neologisms beginning with 'A' from the Rice web site are:

## **Absoludicrous** *adj.*

An embarrassing situation, something that is so bizarre or outrageous it is simply ludicrous, formed by blending and clipping: 'absolutely' (definitely) + 'ludicrous' (absurd/preposterous/outrageous)

## **Adhocracy** *n.*

Apparent meaning: a rather disorganized organization. Reason used: describes the lack of structure in an organization.

"Ad hoc" means for the particular end or case at hand without consideration of wider application; "cracy" is the suffix used to describe a type of organization or government.

## **Adorkable** *adj.*

Someone who is considered adorable because of awkward, clumsy, or otherwise dorky characteristics. Blending 'adorable' and 'dork'.

This word was created to combine the two concepts of dorky and adorable together to describe a new idea. It is unusual because the blending occurs in the middle of the word by inserting a 'k' instead of at the beginning or the end as is conventional.

## **Adultolescence** *n.*

Moving back in with your parents after graduating from college. Formed by blending 'adult' (fully developed mature person) + 'adolescence' (the process of growing up). "The job market was so weak he opted for adultolescence." (Implies he is stuck between the adult world and adolescence)

## **Alpha Geek** *n.*

The most knowledgeable, technically proficient person in an office, department, or working group. The term seems to be derived from 'alpha male', a word created by animal ethnologists. The word 'alpha' is especially appealing because it refers to the beginning, first, or principle of whatever it describes.

## **Ambiguates** *v.*

To make ambiguous [root 'ambiguous' + verb-forming suffix 'ate'] Possible reason used: it clearly conveys the notion of rendering something unclear.

## **Antique** *v.*

To cover an individual's face and/or body with flour, making the person look like he has accumulated a large amount of dust; often performed on an individual who is sleeping as a prank.

## **Ashified** *adj.*

Cremated. "Do you want your body to be ashified after you pass away?" Comment: "I used the neologism 'ashified' because I couldn't remember the word 'cremated'."

## **Ask-o-letter** *n.*

A letter of request. Formed by compounding the English words 'ask' + 'letter' with the filler syllable 'o'.

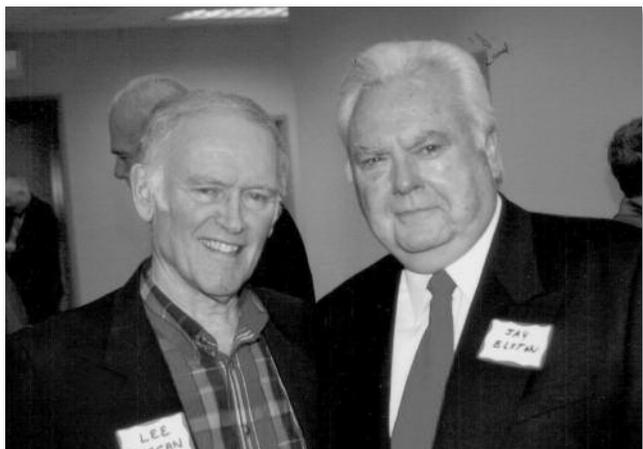
## **Automagically** *adv.*

When something is done automatically and it seems like magic because the method in which it is done is not known. "The computer automagically outputs the tax information."

Related web sites are:

[www.ruf.rice.edu/~kemmer/words04](http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~kemmer/words04) and  
[www.enjoywords.com](http://www.enjoywords.com)

# Rice Historical Society Valentine Party



*Lee Duggan and Jay Elston*



*Gail Rosenthal and Doris Anderson*



*Froggy and Robbie Williams*

Many thanks to Lee and Glenn Seureau for hosting this wonderful event at Star Motor Cars!



*Nancy Boles and Joyce Nagle*



*Nancy Eubank and Clare Kotch*

# FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Alan Bath



## Homeland Security

Sparked by the Cuban crisis of 1962, Rice put into effect a “whirlwind program” for civil defense and radioactive fallout that was designed to feed and house all students, faculty and employees in case of a nuclear attack. Planning centered on use of campus steam tunnels and

basements which, according to Assistant Professor of Military Science, Major P. D. Sellers, provide “remarkable protection” for this portion of the country. (*Thresher*, 31 October, 1962)

## High Cost of Higher Education

As current costs of attending college continue to escalate, we cannot help but wonder how the students of 1956 reacted to the announcement by the administration that charges per student in a double room would climb to \$270.00 per academic year. All rooms were to be priced the same, and occupancy of more desirable rooms would be determined by seniority. (*Thresher*, 11 May 1956)

## World War I Redux

26 November 1926. A number of wooden rifles, imitations of the World War One Springfield rifle used by the U.S. Army, were discovered in the cellars under South Hall. Apparently they had been used to train students during the First World War.

## Asian Flu

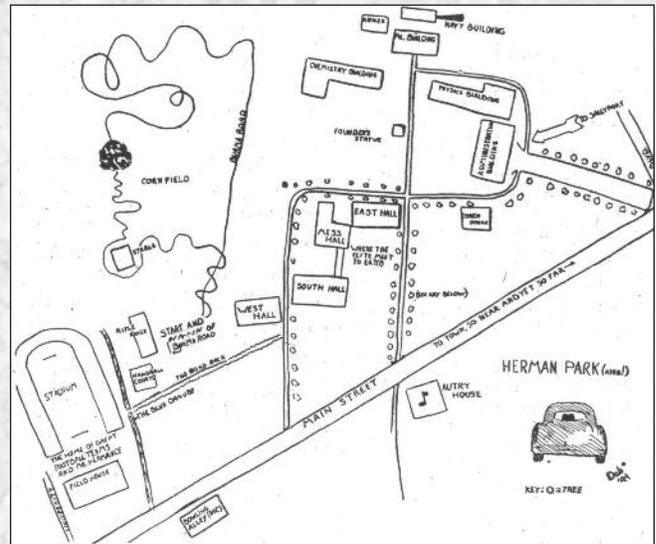
Those of us who suffered this flu season are following a well-established Rice tradition. In October 1957 the *Thresher* reported that Asian flu had struck the campus “with all its horror.” The crisis was marked by the Health Service running out on nose drops and throat lozenges. “Erroneous signs” saying that flu vaccine would be distributed on 1 October only added to the confusion. Helpfully, the *Thresher* noted that the Co-op was still selling Kleenex for five cents a pack.

## Headline of the Month

“Senate Requires Sex Declaration From Cheerleader Candidates” (*Thresher*, 2 March 1962)

## Building Boom

As new university buildings continue to spring up, both in and outside the hedges, it is interesting to look back at one student’s impression of the campus in 1944. This drawing was made for the *Thresher* by Donald Buckner.



*Drawing of Rice campus, by Donald Buckner, 1944*



*Bathing beauties,  
Autry Court, 1950*