



Clockwise (from top left): Mr. and Mrs. William Markham Sleeper '79 (Sam Harrison's maternal great grandparents), R. Henry "Chick" Harrison, Jr. '20, Richard Henry "Dick" Harrison III '47, Richard H. Harrison IV '82, and Samuel "Sam" Hills Harrison '85.

FIVE GENERATIONS LATER, HARRISONS STILL MAKING PRESENCE FELT AT A&M

BY MARK MINTON

After 60 days on the road from Tennessee, Richard Henry Harrison and his pioneering brothers bounced into the Brazos Valley in an ox wagon in the late 1840s. "They were a trifle early to become Aggies, considering that Texas A&M wouldn't open for another 30 years," said descendant Samuel Hills Harrison '85. "But Harrissons have been trooping to Texas A&M and making a difference ever since."





Richard "Dick" Harrison '92

A generation after the three teen-age brothers settled in nearby Bedias, Texas, Richard Henry's namesake son became the first to enroll at A&M. Richard "Dick" Harrison graduated in 1892, went on to medical school and served as mayor of Bryan at the end of the 19th century. His name is still visible on the foundation stone of the city's landmark Carnegie Library.

Next on campus, R. Henry "Chick" Harrison Jr. was a Ross Volunteer who played quarterback and halfback on Coach D.X. Bible's legendary 1917 and 1919 Texas A&M football squads. Chick Harrison played offense and



R. Henry "Chick" Harrison Jr. '20

defense and drop-kicked field goals, including a 45-yarder that stands as one of the school's longest. He established another Texas A&M milestone in 1920 when he graduated in the veterinary school's seminal class. "First in line for his diploma, he became the first Aggie veterinarian," Sam Harrison said.

After four years as a vet, Chick Harrison went to medical school and launched a general practice in Bryan. He maintained his Aggie football ties by serving as team doctor for 25 years, during which time Texas A&M won the 1939 National Championship and later when Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant prowled the sidelines. His son, Richard Henry "Dick" Harrison III '47, said he came to know the legendary football coaches as a young man tagging along with his father.

"I kind of grew up watching practices and games from the sidelines," Dick Harrison said. "On football weekends, my family hosted gatherings in our home, and my mother, (Eula Merle Lucas Harrison, the 1919 Texas Aggie Sweetheart), would play piano and sing for a houseful of coaches, supporters and sports writers." Chick Harrison has been inducted into the Letterman's Association Hall of Honor and recognized as a distinguished alumnus of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

At age 16, Dick Harrison followed his father's footsteps to Texas A&M and into the Ross Volunteers. He graduated in 1948, attended medical school and returned to Bryan in 1956 to work as a urologist. Now retired from his private practice, he lives in Bryan and remains active in community development. Harrison has held numerous advisory roles at Texas A&M, including membership on both the President's and Chancellor's Advisory Councils. His gifts to Texas A&M, totaling more than \$1 million, have established the endowed dean's chair in the College of Science and several endowed scholarships which have supported students for 25 years. His gifts also have benefited the Corps of Cadets and Texas A&M athletics. He was inducted into the Letterman's Association

Hall of Honor and has been recognized as a distinguished alumnus of the College of Science.

Dr. Harrison extended his Aggie credentials through marriage. His wife, Peggy Sames, is the granddaughter of William Markham Sleeper, who graduated in 1879 in the first four-year class at Texas A&M and was one of the founders and the first president of the Ex-Cadets Association – known today as the Association of Former Students.

Considering their lineage, it is little wonder that another generation of Harrisons is now making a mark at Texas A&M. Sam Harrison '85 is following the family tradition.



Richard Henry "Dick" Harrison III '47

A third generation Ross Volunteer and medical doctor, Harrison took over his father's urology practice in 1995. His wife is Janet Woodward '86, a microbiology graduate.

Like his forefathers, Sam Harrison believes deeply in the educational vision of Texas A&M. As chairman of the *One Spirit One Vision Campaign* for the College of Science, he recently made a gift to match the scholarship gifts that others make to the College of Science. He is a member of the President's Council of Advisors, College of Science



Samuel "Sam" Hills Harrison '85

FIVE GENERATIONS

External Advisory & Development Council, Corps of Cadets Development Council, Development Council for the Center of Teaching Excellence and the 12th Man Foundation Board of Directors. He also is an instructor at the Texas A&M College of Medicine.

"I consider it an honor, a privilege and a responsibility to contribute back to the university that has given me so much," said Sam Harrison. "There is no greater responsibility than the education of our young people. I want to help provide not only a good education for our students, but also a foundation for them to leave campus with a sense of dignity and responsibility."

Generations deep, the loyal support of the Harrison family stands as a great example of generosity for Aggies everywhere.

ONE SPIRIT A&M ONE VISION

THE TEXAS A&M CAMPAIGN

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As of November 30, 2003, Texas A&M supporters raised the *One Spirit One Vision Campaign* total to \$685 million. That puts the campaign at 69 percent of the \$1 billion goal.

Regional efforts are playing a significant role in the campaign's success. Campaign leaders in Dallas, Fort Worth and Austin hosted launch events last fall, bringing the campaign message to hundreds of leading alumni and friends. Spring 2004 will see similar events in Houston, Midland and Tyler.

Individual donors have displayed exceptional generosity. Gifts and commitments from alumni and friends account for 55 percent of the current campaign total. Using estate planning tools such as bequests and gift annuities, a small donor group has committed \$144 million, or 22 percent, of the total.

Sadly, the Campaign Executive Committee recently lost two leaders. Vice Chair Bunny Jean Raba of San Antonio passed away in July. Raba was senior chairman emeritus of Raba-Kistner Consultants Inc. and chairman of

* the San Antonio regional committee for Texas A&M's *Capturing the Spirit Campaign* in 1990-96. Vice Chair Carlos Cantu '55 of Germantown, Tennessee, passed away in September. Cantu was senior chairman of The ServiceMaster Company and a 1997 Horatio Alger Award winner. The entire Aggie family will sorely miss their graciousness, dedication and leadership.

