Student Union evolves from humble beginnings

Before the opening of the Jot Travis Student Union in 1958, the student body did not have an adequate headquarters at the University. An old brick and stucco edifice at North and Virginia Streets abandoned by the Nevada Historical Society in the 1920’s was passed on to the students during the depression years; but it was badly designed and too small for the student organizations of that era. For a number of years after World War II, various student organizations solicited money for a new student union building; but the fund grew slowly.

Finally, in 1952, the will of Wesley E. Travis, a western transportation executive who had been born in Hamilton, Nev., named the University as the recipient of a substantial amount of money for a student facility. Travis specified that the building should be named for his father, Ezra Johnson “Jot” Travis, who had been a pioneer stagecoach company manager in the West during the bonanza period. Wesley Travis, like his father, had prospered in the transportation field. His gift to the University was matched by a $300,000 appropriation from the state legislature and supplemented by smaller contributions collected over the years to provide for the original building. The building was erected on the north edge of Manzanita Lake and dedicated May 18, 1958.

The original structure contained 17,000 square feet. Its facilities included reading and recreation lounges, snack bar, game room, meeting rooms, ballroom, and offices. Later, the University Dining Commons was added to the south end of the structure.

In 1988, the biggest expansion of the JTSU took place as $1.5 million was raised to develop the structure to meet students’ needs. The project increased the size of the union about 15,000 sq. feet and doubled the size of the student lounge area on the top floor and included a terraced room on the ground floor.

The Bust of Jot Travis

Bust of Jot Travis

Jot Travis Student Union opening day ceremony on May 18, 1958.

Look Online

To see additional historic student union photos and biography of Jot Travis, visit our website: http://www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue
The Nevada Alumni Association would like to thank the following businesses for encouraging their employees to wear blue during Homecoming 2007. We appreciate your continued support of the University of Nevada!

Over the course of a remarkable career, saxophonist Lee Konitz has developed a resilient and lyrical tone, an understated and emotionally complex style, and an unparalleled reputation as an improviser. One of the most influential alto sax players in the early development of modern jazz, Konitz has an elegant solo style and has appeared on hundreds of recordings including Miles Davis’ “Birth of the Cool.” Konitz appears with the University’s own acclaimed faculty jazz ensemble, The Collective.

Lee Konitz and The Collective
Thursday, April 24, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
Nightingale Concert Hall

Called “an eight ball in the side pocket” by Thelonious Monk and “the father of modern drumming” by Pat Metheny, legendary drummer Roy Haynes has been the pulse of jazz percussion for more than 50 years, altering the very fabric and direction of jazz improvisation with his mercurial, intelligent, joyous drumming. Joined by Jaleel Shaw on saxophone, John Sullivan on bass, and Martin Bejerano on piano in the Roy Haynes Quartet, the influential and innovative drummer continues to forge new paths in jazz with his “hard swing” style.

Roy Haynes Quartet
Friday, April 25, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
Lawlor Events Center

The showcase and awards ceremony features performances from some of the finest groups and soloists in the 2008 festival.

Festival Showcase and Awards
Saturday, April 26, 2008, 6:30 p.m.
Lawlor Events Center

Jazz Fan Pass!
General $60/ or Senior and FTOJ members $50
Provides entrance to all festival events.
April 24-26, including daytime competitions and evening concerts with preferred seating. Call (775) 784-4ART to order.
Charles and Ruth Hopping were humble people who treasured education and their Midwestern roots. Ruth Andrews Hopping was born in 1912 in Cambridge, Neb., the youngest girl of seven children. After completing her schooling in Nebraska, and graduating from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, she taught elementary school in Superior, Grand Island and Cambridge, Neb.

Ruth moved on to teach in Monte Vista, Colo., with her older sister, Mary. She married Charles Hopping in May of 1941, at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Los Angeles, after knowing him since childhood. She went back to Colorado and Nebraska to teach while Charles served in the 263rd Battalion, Infantry Division, in World War II.

When Charles returned from his tour of service, the couple lived in Alhambra, Calif., while Charles joined the Roberts Company, in charge of sales. He later became chairman of the board and director of the International Division. The Hoppings moved to Arcadia, Calif., shortly after the birth of their first child, Catherine Ann, followed by a son, Earl Eugene. Charles traveled a great deal for the company and took the family with him often.

After retiring and moving to Reno in 1962, the Hoppings continued to travel, often in their motor home, but also overseas, visiting at their leisure many places they had seen during their business travels. They were “Airstreamers” for many years, reveling in the life of their caravanning friends. Charles passed away in 1998 and Ruth passed away at age 94 in 2006 in Reno.

The Hopping’s names were engraved in the granite pillars of Honor Court in 1997 to recognize their outstanding service to the University of Nevada, Reno. It was their appreciation of higher education that encouraged them to foster and enhance the educational experience for students in their adopted home state of Nevada. The Hopping estate has provided more than $1 million to the University to support construction of the AAUN Academic Center and Davidson Mathematics and Science Center. Another trust endowment established by the Hoppings strengthens academic programs in the College of Education.

“My parents came West with the values they were raised with—hard work, humility, honesty in every way, and devotion to family,” said daughter Catherine Hopping Wing. “Education to both of them was of the utmost importance. They were, in a nutshell, just regular folks who worked hard all their lives and wanted to give back something to help where they could.”

The values and benevolence of Ruth and Charles Hopping will continue to inspire and sustain quality academic programming and facilities at the University for generations to come. Their giving demonstrates the affection they held for the University and their stellar leadership in ensuring that it will continue providing a world-class education far into the future.

Increasing numbers of Nevada alumni and friends are including the University Foundation in their estate plans. Bequests are a wonderful way to show support for higher education, while possibly realizing significant estate tax benefits. Planned gifts often enable donors to make a far larger gift than they thought possible.

To learn more about the benefits of including the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation in your estate plans, please contact Lisa Riley or Bob Eggleston in the Planned Giving Office at (775) 784-1352 or at plannedgiving@unr.edu.
Join the Nevada Alumni Association as we explore the new Joe Crowley Student Union. Alumni and friends can enjoy free desserts, drinks, childcare, tours of the building and an exclusive ASUN Bookstore discount.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2008
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
Joe Crowley Student Union

For more information, visit www.unr.edu/alumni or call 888.NV ALUMS.