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UA52/1 Snowball Express Memories

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WKU Archives Solicited Collections Snowball Express Memories

Memories shared by alumni at the Snowball Special Hilltopper Rescue Reunion February 25, 2012 at The Historic RailPark & Train Museum, Bowling Green, KY. Share your memories at archives@wku.edu.

I recall the Snowball Special in the spring of 1960 with fond memories and was delighted to read about it in the WKU Alumni Magazine last month. I am Patricia Richards Turner and graduated in the class of 1962 with a degree in Mathematics. It was in the spring of my Sophomore Year and if I recall correctly, I was the Sophomore Class President that year.

I lived in Potter Hall, next to Van Meter Auditorium, across from the 'kissing bridge." I liked taking my math classes early in the mornings and always went to the cafeteria for breakfast where Coach Diddle and his "boys" ate breakfast. Since there were few others eating that early, Coach would call me over to talk to him, etc. He and I became great friends. He even asked me to get some other co-eds at one of the away games and fly back to Bowling Green with the team! It was my first plane ride and he even took me to the cockpit to talk with the pilot! Needless to say, I was a great basketball fan while I was at Western.

I was among the students who traveled to Louisville to see the game, dressed as we did at that time to attend games, in my three inch heels and a short mouton coat with no hat or gloves. Now exactly the attire for a blizzard! My "resting place" for that night was the Bonnieville movie theater - not really my normal way of getting a good night's sleep!

One of the things I recall most vividly though was riding in the back of the National Guard truck up to The Hill. You notice I say, up to the campus, because once we got to the bottom of the hill behind Potter Hall, the trucks could go no further. We climbed out (high heels and all) and trudged through the deep snow the rest of the way up to the dorm. I was cold, wet, and exhausted when I reached my room and kicked my soggy shoes off and under the bed, where they lay for the next month! I never wore them again. What a memory!

Pat Turner

I was a freshman that year and was on the trip. We slept in the bus overnight then walked to Bonnieville the next morning to board the train. Happy memories!!

Dianne (Winkler) Watkins Stuart Class of 1963

Seeing the picture brought back fond memories of that catastrophic event. I think of that experience when it snows in March, There [were] two carloads of us .The snow started just before we got to Bardstown on Tuesday night. I have never seen snow come down so hard.

Both carloads were fortunate enough to get to Boston, where one student in the car in which I was riding, had a sister living there so we spent two nights with her. We got back to campus Thursday afternoon. Some of the students in my car went to Louisville to see the Western-Ohio State game. The campus never looked more beautiful and I stayed there not wanting to tempt the fates further.

Joe Hicklin Class of 1961, 1974

I was one of the fans who got stranded on the way from Lexington to Bowling Green. Our buses were stopped on 31-W somewhere north of Bonnieville. Some of us walked to a grocery-cafe, which ran out of food, etc. Somehow we eventually got to Bonnieville where the theatre was opened and showed a Japanese horror film. I don't recall many of the details, but it was quite an experience. We eventually got on the special train and back to BG, which was fairly buried in snow. I cannot make the reunion, but it is a great idea. Hope all have fun remembering.

Bernie Madison, Class of 1962

I was a WKSC Cheerleader and remember being stranded that night by the weather on the way home from an NCAA basketball game in Louisville. I remember the church that served us food and the train rescue and the 3 feet of snow that blanketed the area.

Rachael Chadwick Augspurg Class of 1960

I was stuck in Bardstown with three other people. We got two rooms at the Wilson Motel. We were lucky. We stayed three days before going back to Bowling Green.

Don Brantley

I was a junior at Western and on the Snowball Special. One of the things I most remember is that when the National Guard met us at the BG depot & transported us back to campus in their trucks, we were exhausted & feeling like "survivors." So when we began unloading the trucks at the dorm, we were shocked to find that the students who had stayed on campus, rather than being "sympathetic" to our plight, had amassed to greet us with thousands of snowballs in the face!!! Not nice!

Alice Chumbley Lora

I was part of that bunch and was one of those that stayed in a car without a heater;...I did wear a coat and tie for coverage.....Smart, Huh???./.....

Tom Covington , Class of 61

It brought back a lot of memories when I read the e-mail about the blizzard of 1960. I was a student on a bus that was stranded in Bonnieville. I spent most of the night in the Bonnieville Movie Theatre. The restaurants in Bonnieville were overwhelmed with business and we were told that they had run out of food. A train picked us up in Bonnieville and took us to Bowling Green where 2 ½ ton National Guard trucks ferried us up the hill to our dorms. What an experience.

Alan Fryrear

I was on a bus that was stranded for the night. I think my roommate, Pat Durbin was with me. Dr. Wilson Wood, interim head of the English department was also on this bus.

Mary Alice (Mather) Hildreth Class of 1963 & 1969