

History of The Association for the Arts

In 1973 Berda Stout Johnson Rittenhouse was encouraged by The Alumni Association to explore the formation of an organization which would lend support to the Arts similar to what the Bison Club provides for Athletics. For the next two years the feasibility of such an organization was worked out. The Alumni Association agreed to support the start up with a \$3000. donation (there is no record of the transfer of any funds to the Association.)

The first Association for the Arts weekend was held March 7, 8, 1976, with performances by Cap & Dagger doing "The Night Thoreau spent in Jail", BJRE (Bucknell Jazz & Rock Ensemble) presenting a concert and a recital by faculty members Martha Hill and Darina Tuhy. Meetings were held on theatre, music, art, writing and dance. A steering committee was formed and objectives of the Association were formulated. The first election of officers, a Board of Directors, and adoption of By-laws occurred in Sept. 1976

At the time of the official organization of the Association for the Arts concerts were being held in Davis Gym, Art exhibits in a room in the library or The Lounge in the now Langone Center, and an inadequate dance performing space in the gym. One of our first objectives was to lobby for a performing Arts space, which we are now pleased to have with the Weiss Center. We also have the Center Gallery and Tustin Studio Theatre with an excellent dance studio.

Our other objectives were

1. Develop a scholarship for the performing arts
We now have over \$100,000. in our scholarship endowment. This year we were pleased to offer four scholarships of \$2000 each for an art student, a theatre/dance student, and two music students.
2. Provide programs in the Arts to enhance academic programs already in place.

The Association is very involved with supporting the Focus Semesters at Bucknell. Next year we will help with bringing music, theatre, dance and art exhibitions for the Chinese semester in the fall and the Japanese semester in the Spring. Residencies related to the performances will increase student participation in all the programs.

3. Provide faculty support for development of special projects. This Spring three members of the Music Dept. had Compact discs produced with our help.

4. Make alumni aware that Bucknell is interested and supportive of their artistic endeavors after they graduate.

We have hosted receptions at the Hammer Gallery in New York for David Armstrong. We also joined with P.B.S. to produce David's special "The Vanishing American Landscape"

Rudolph Palmer has returned to campus to conduct performances in the Weis Center using both professional singers and Bucknell students. They also performed together in New York. We have helped him produce two Compact discs of early opera never recorded before. He will return this December to conduct The Messiah with the chorale and guest Singers.

The theatre and dance program has benefited with alumni returning for workshops with the students. The residency/workshops have included different acting techniques, voice and movement, fencing, and choreography.

5. The Association also provides a place for students and faculty to apply for funding for an event when other sources are not available. We also help get programs started which later receive support from Grant money, student government or other outside contributions.

6. The Association supplies the funding for residencies which are in connection to performances given in the Weis Center. While we do not supply blanket support to the Weis Center (there is no financial connection of the Association and the Weis Center) we do fund programs connected to the Focus semester and other special events.

Considering that the Association began 18 years ago with a \$3000. budget and we now have a scholarship endowment and close to \$100,000. annual budget I think we could consider we have come very far. The money contributed July 1 1993 - June 30 1994 will be used for the 1994-95 Academic year.