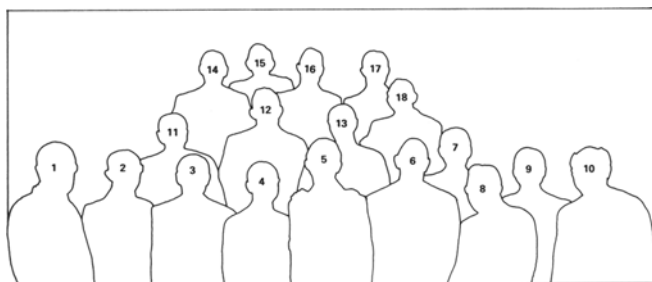


## Past Presidents gather in St. Louis



**AOCs Past Presidents: 1. Frank A. Norris, 1973; 2. Howard C. Black, 1957; 3. Charles E. Morris, 1954; 4. Reid T. Milner, 1947; 5. Robert R. Allen, 1971; 6. Robert R. King, 1945; 7. Ralph T. Holman, 1974; 8. Ron C. Stillman, 1964; 9. David Firestone, 1978; 10. Raymond Reiser, 1957; 11. A. Ernest MacGee, 1962; 12. Walter O. Lundberg, 1963; 13. A. Richard Baldwin, 1961; 14. James C. Konen, 1958; 15. John C. Cowan, 1968; 16. Frank B. White, 1976; 17. Thomas H. Applewhite, 1977; and 18. George C. Cavanagh, 1969.**

A purple ribbon at the AOCs Annual Meeting in St. Louis was a passport to good times and fond memories, for the purple ribbons were worn by AOCs Past Presidents.

The central location of St. Louis made it an ideal opportunity to try to get as many past presidents as possible to attend—and the effort was successful.

Senior Past President present was Robert R. (Bob) King, who headed AOCs more than three decades ago in 1945.

“The AOCs has been so much a part of our lives for 41 years that probably the most dearest and closest friends have developed through these years,” King wrote after the meeting. “I first took my bride of a few months to her first meeting in New Orleans in the spring of 1937. The annual banquet was held in one of New Orleans restaurants—attended by about the same number of people as are now on the AOCs staff, Boots being one of three or four ladies present. She almost always attended the two meetings each year for the next 32 years, even while raising two children.”

King recalls that when AOCs was younger and smaller—“a rather crude scientific society”—it seemed more like a fraternity or a lodge.

A.E. (Doc) MacGee, didn’t wear his purple ribbon too much, but he visited throughout the meeting with new and old friends, noting at one point that when he was discussing his retirement with some friends, they asked, “Well, Doc, aren’t you doing anything?”

“I’m still chasing women,” I told them,” the octogenarian MacGee said. “I’m not catching any, but I’m still chasing ‘em.’”

Highlight of the meeting for the past presidents was the annual dinner held this year in Mr. Sam’s, a private dining

room in the Chase Park Plaza. King was the sole 1978 attendee who also had attended the first past president’s dinner in 1946.

Ron Stillman, who was president in 1964, had supervised a major revision of AOCs’ Articles of Incorporation and By-laws about that time. He found himself appointed to direct a similar effort now.

Many past presidents flipped through Bob King’s scrapbook of past president’s dinners—the one in an exclusive men-only San Francisco club, when wives had to get off the elevator and climb two flights of stairs to enter by a little-used entrance and the dinner in J.R. (Bob) Mays Jr. home in Memphis, TN, when wives were first invited to attend the annual event.

King says he still vividly remembers a comment from



**From left, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Norris, Mr. and Mrs. Robert King, Ron Stillman, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Allen.**

Tom Law, a charter member and past president of the AOCS. Law also was a 33rd degree mason, past imperial potentate of the Shrine, and past president of Rotary International.

"Tom Law told me that being a charter member and past president of the AOCS meant more to him than any other honor he had ever received," King said. "Can you imagine that? Need I say more!"

Past President A.R. Baldwin, a lapidarian in part of his spare time, prepared miniature versions of the AOCS tomahawk gavel for presentation to each of the past presidents. The gavel included an engraved nameplate with each recipient's name and term of office. ●



**Mr. and Mrs. Robert King converse during dinner.**

Past President R.R. (Bob) King, a member since 1938 and the 1945 AOCS president, came to the St. Louis meeting complete with his scrapbook featuring pictures of past president's dinners dating back to the original. The last page in the book was a tearout from the April JAACS that showed the current staff in Champaign. "I put that in there for one reason," King said, "At the first AOCS meeting I went to there were fewer members than we now have staff." ●



**Past Presidents, their wives, and guests posed during annual Past President's dinner.**



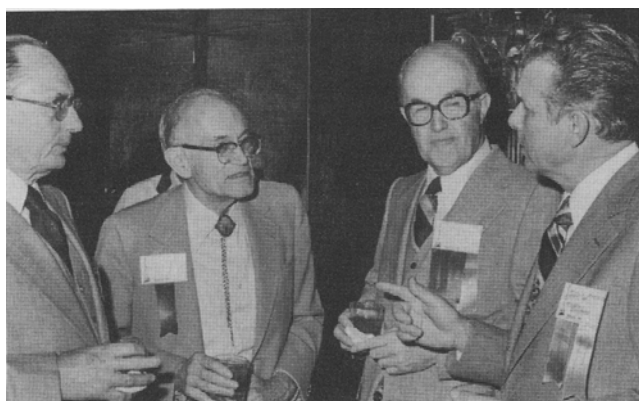
**Sandy Lyon, Ginny Cavanagh, and Margaret Stillman chat before dinner.**



**Karla Holman and A.E. (Doc) MacGee visit.**



**Ralph Holman, Frank White, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Morris.**



**Past Presidents George Cavanagh, John Cowan, Frank Norris, and Tom Applewhite.**

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The large turnout for the meeting literally overflowed the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel. More than 900 AOCS registrants occupied every available room in the Chase-Park Plaza. Approximately 100 more rooms in the nearby Bellaire and Forest Park Hotels also were filled. Some registrants had to be booked into the Rodeway Inn, about halfway between the Chase-Park Plaza and the Gateway Arch. Moral: Get your housing reservations in early for future meetings. ●