

AOBS NEWSLETTER

The Association of Oldetime Barbell & Strongmen

An International Iron Game Organization – Organized in 1982

(Vic Boff – Founder and President 1917-2002)

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AUGUST 2009

Our Historic 26th Annual Reunion - A Great Beginning To the “Second” 25 Years!

Quite honestly, after the record-breaking attendance and cavalcade of stars at our 25th reunion last year, we were worried about being able to have an appropriately strong follow-up in our 26th year, for three reasons.

First, so many people made a special effort to attend in 2008, there was a concern that we might see a big drop off in 2009. Second, there was the economy, undoubtedly the worst in decades, surely the worst since our organization began. Third, there were concern about the “swine flu” that was disproportionately impacting the NY Metropolitan area.

Yet despite all of these factors, and others, 2009 turned out to be one of our biggest reunions ever, with more than 275 people coming out to join with their brothers and sisters in the Iron Game. No doubt the commitment to “carry on” outweighed all the others, and by all accounts, our 26th reunion was a resounding success. That phenomena bodes well for the future of our organization.

As usual, we had an amazingly diverse group of Iron Gamers attendance, representing bodybuilding, weightlifting, powerlifting, World’s Strongest Man competitors, grip specialists and modern day old-time strongmen. They were joined by mutual respect for their disciplines and the elements that they all share: strength, health and physical culture in all of its permutations. What a group to be around! My only regret is that I could not spend time with them all.

Naturally, one of the foundations of the success of any reunion is those it honors. And we had a very deserving group this year. Carla Dunlap, Bill Seno and Bruce Wilhelm are, needless to say, true Iron Game legends. But they were also incredibly gracious and accessible to all who joined in this great day of celebration. All three were shining examples of lifelong devotees of exercise

and excellence. I thank them all very deeply for agreeing to grace us with their presence.

Then there was the veritable “Who’s Who” that came from everywhere to honor these great champions and to join in a celebration of our values. Dr. Ken Rosa will have more to say about this in his report on our event, but suffice it to say that without the support of the famous and lesser known achievers in attendance, the event wouldn’t have been what it was.

Then there was the staff of, and accommodations offered by, the Newark Airport Marriott Hotel. We had a very positive experience with this fine facility last year and this year (after they got to know us a little more fully) they did an even better job. This top drawer facility is perfectly located for travel (in Newark Airport and served by 24 hour public transportation – making a trip to Manhattan a simple matter). The hotel’s restaurants, a health club (with two pools), spacious lobby (a true gathering spot for our group), a very large and comfortable area for the pre-dinner reception, a wonderful meeting room for our presentations during the very full day, and a fabulous ballroom for the dinner itself, all combined to make for an outstanding experience.

As has been the case for the past several years, our very special day is full of delightful and educational activities that offer unique opportunities to learn about the history of the Iron Game and the benefits of being an active participant in it. Tommy Kono began the day with an outstanding clinic on Olympic-style weightlifting and I can’t thank him enough for making such a special presentation to our group.

Our Collector’s and Historical Meeting was once again led by Carl Linich and David Hartnett. I thank them both for continuing the series of such meetings that have become one of our traditions (we hope Mike Bondurant will be back to join his friends next year).

Our thanks go to Bruce Wilhelm for his seminar on training and his memories of the greats of the Iron Game with whom he competed (e.g., at the Olympic Games and Worlds' Strongest Man competitions). Bruce combines deep knowledge with a great sense of humor and no one left his presentation without a smile.

Finally, Slim "The Hammerman" Farman and Dennis Rogers, brought together a terrific crew of modern day oldtime strongmen (and one strongwoman) to demonstrate their strength prowess and I thank them both, along with the strongmen who performed, for their contributions.

Thanks to our artist, Jim Sanders, we were once again able to display likenesses of our founder, Vic Boff, and our first 3 Hall of Fame honorees Bob Hoffman, Joe "Might Atom" Greenstein and John Davis. Jim once again outdid himself with the paintings he crafted of this year's honorees. Jim's decades of contributing his very special talents to our organization is very much appreciated.

As usual, our official AOBS photographer and/videographer, Iron Mike D'Angelo, was once again busy contributing to a host of activities besides wielding his cameras. Mike works hard for our organization throughout the year but really goes into high gear at our dinners. The AOBS is very lucky indeed to have a person with his many skills and complete dedication serving it.

Our Showtime performers were outstanding this year. I want to thank Greg Matonick and Chris Rider for their strongman performances. I want to thank Olympic-style lifters, Arielle Lippman, Frankie Murray and Peter Musa for their fine performances as well. I heard raves all night and the next day about what these folks did during their presentations.

Steve "The Mighty Stefan" Sadicario once more enthralled the audience with his voice, his knowledge and his enthusiasm. We are fortunate indeed to have such an outstanding MC guide us through our magical evening each year. Steve lives for these great evenings and his passion shows through very clearly as he interacts with the audience throughout the night.

There is never any way to fully express our appreciation to our loyal and generous sponsor, Iron Grip Barbell Co. Their support enables us to remain on a sound financial footing in doing our work. This was a tough year for virtually every company in the country, and no doubt Iron Grip faced its challenges as well. But they

continued to donate generously and with no strings attached. And they offer wonderful moral support as well. Iron Grip has added a new competition quality Olympic bar to their portfolio of outstanding products. Our lifters have been testing those bars throughout this past year and they are excellent in every respect. We thank Iron Grip's CEO, Mike Rojas, COO Scott Frasco, and the entire staff of Iron Grip, for their continuing support.

My wife, JoAnne, as always, helped with many issues that surround preparing for our event, and she led the work at the registration area on the day of the event, with her friends and ours: Rosemary Miller and Sylvia D'Angelo. Gary Mandel and Bob McNall helped in too many ways to describe during the day and provided their usual assistance at the door just prior to the beginning of the dinner. Of course our Invictus/Metro Elite Weightlifting team members helped in many ways as well.

Doris Barrilleaux was kind enough to present Carla Dunlap to the audience. Doris helped us in many other ways throughout the year as well. Fred Yale did his usual outstanding job as a speaker, this time introducing Bill Seno. Last but not least, we had JP Nicoletta making his debut as a presenter, introducing Bruce Wilhelm. The fine job he did assures that he'll be asked to perform in such a role again in the future.

John Varrone, Martin Denman and Alan Leff took many photos of the event again this year and each has photos that appear in this newsletter, along with Mike D'Angelo's work. Joining us this year as a contributing photographer for the first time was Roland Balik, son of John Balik, publisher of Iron Man Magazine. He took an amazing number of excellent photos, only one of which appears in this newsletter, but many of the others can be seen online at the IronMan.com web-site. We thank them all for their fine work.

Due to a combination of the popularity of the Marriott Hotel in June, and requests from our supporters to try for a fall reunion once in a while, we will be moving our dinner to October in 2010. The actual date will be October 23. [So mark your calendars for next year's reunion at the Marriott at Newark/Liberty Airport. on October 23, 2010](#) – see you all then. We'll strive to make it our best ever!

Artie Drechsler - President

AOBS 26th Annual Reunion - June 13, 2009 by Dr. Ken “Leo” Rosa

One day during this past month of May, I was sorting through some of the decades old enchanted treasures ensconced in my personal Collier’s Mansion. Some refer to it as the Norman Bates Motel. Holy Moley! I found my ticket stub for the February 20, 1948 John Terlazzo Strength Show in New York City’s St. Nicholas Arena. The price on the ticket was \$1.80. At that time the New York City subway fare was five cents.

It was when the kid that was I would travel by subway from the Bronx to the Manhattan offices of The Ring magazine located in Madison Square Garden then occupying the entire square block 49th and 50th Streets between 8th and 9th Avenues. There I got to ask questions of Nat Fleischer, the iconic person behind boxing and wrestling’s Ring Magazine.

Wow! I could hardly wait to attend the 26th annual AOBS reunion on June 13, 2009 to discuss my re-discovered ticket stub with Pete Marozas, practitioner of John Brookfield’s cold water dousing, Dick Smith and other venerable veteran Iron Gamers who might be as excited as I.

Sometimes unexpectedly arduous travel conditions can test one’s mettle, but the waiting AOBS rewards afterwards make climbing Everest worthwhile.

Evening, June 12, 2009. I walked into the Newark Airport Marriott Hotel. The lobby already had a gathering of AOBS family picking up where they had left off last year. Suddenly, I heard the unmistakable booming voice of Steve “Mighty Stefan” Sadicario greeting me and seemingly reverberating from somewhere in Grand Canyon rather than from a few yards away, courtesy of the Marriott’s wonderfully acoustical lobby.

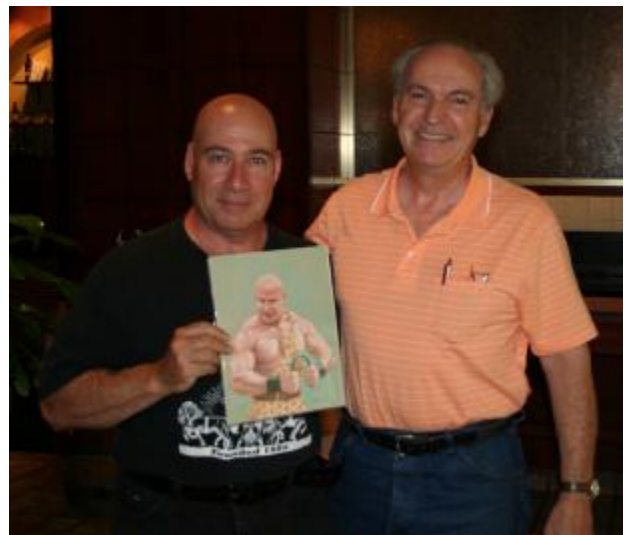
Steve is a brother in Iron and fellow admirer of Vaughn Monroe’s voice. I knew I had reached friendly camp grounds. Well, after Steve and I stole away from everyone else and refreshed ourselves, Guinness Stout was my choice while Steve imbibed something else mysterious and tasty (which he says is the source of his amazing virility and animal magnetism), we all retired for the night.

Saturday, June 13, 2009, 11:00am. The Marriott lobby was filled almost wall to wall with Iron Gamers excitedly continuing their conversations from June 2008. There’s “The Great” Joe Rollino holding court on his way to the Historical and Collector’s meeting.

And there’s Rick Perkins who is the only guy I could count on meeting at both the AOBS here and at the Heidenstam in England. And Barney Pugach with a healthy looking glow.

AOBS reunions attract amazingly interesting people. For example, there’s Dr. Bernarr Zovluck in from California. Dr. Bernarr was one of the large group of young denizens of the legendary Bronx Union YMCA weight room during the late 1940s and 1950s. That’s when professional wrestler Ivan Kamiroff trained there and bodybuilder Manny Tstingis. Joey LaMotta (brother of boxing’s Jake LaMotta) was there in 1955, working on the heavy punching bag with then heavyweight contender, Roland Lasterza!. I know because I too was a member of the Bronx Union Y at that time.

Dr. Bernarr’s story almost sounds like an Edward G. Robinson movie as he told it to me. He said “in the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s my aunt had a corset shop in lower Manhattan on Clinton Street between Broome and Delancy. On the next block from her on Clinton Street, between Delancy and Rivington was the Clinton Yiddish Theater which eventually was torn down. On the site Abe Goldberg later opened his gym, which became legendary. That’s where Marvin Eder trained.



Steve Sadicario (l.) proudly displays the painting done of him by Jim Sanders (r.) – photo by Mike D’Angelo



Our 104 year old wonder, "The Great" Joe Rollino with Doris Barrilleaux (l.) and Deborah Diana in this photo by Mike D'Angelo.

My aunt's three daughters married men from the underworld. One owned the famous Cotton Club fronted by Texas Guinan. I grew up in Brownsville where they had Murder Inc. in the 1940s. I knew boxer Al "Bummy" Davis who was killed by them. Then I moved up to the east Bronx, 163rd Street and Kelly Street. On our block lived another kid who grew up and became Secretary Of State. His name, Colin Powell. At this point I couldn't resist putting in my two cents by saying "Colin Powell and I attended the Bronx's Morris High School and Manhattan's City College during the same time period".

Before anything else could be said, California's John Corlett came over with an 8 by 10 color photo he took of me and Doris Barrilleaux conversing with "The Great" Joe Rollino during the 2008 AOBS reunion. Thanks John.



Dr. Benarr Zovluck (r.) with Pete Marozas in this photo courtesy of John Varrone, Jr.

The Historical and Collector's meeting drew many people whose facial expressions and comments seemed to indicate that they were transported back to the halcyon time of youth. In my own personal reverie I seemed to hear Tony Bennett singing "Ah, the apple trees, blossoms in the breeze, that we walked among, lying in the hay, games we used to play, when the rounds were sung, only yesterday, WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG." The meeting was coordinated by Carl Linich and David Hartnett and focused on the life of legendary barbell manufacturer, Andy Jackson.

It was almost time for the 2:00 pm Bruce Wilhelm seminar. People migrated in that direction. So did I. On the way I passed a display table that brought back memories of early TV on Saturdays at noon. I recalled a 1946 issue of Strength & Health magazine which covered John Grimek being challenged to a most muscular contest at that time. However, the challenger was deemed to be a professional and Grimek's status as an A.A.U. athlete would have been at risk if he had participated in any contest with that challenger. Sig Klein volunteered to accept the challenge. The posedown took place. Sig Klein was declared to be the winner over the challenger. Glancing at the table as I walked past produced a vague feeling of sadness in me. Perhaps sixty plus year old acrimonious confrontations are better left alone.

I didn't know who Bruce Wilhelm was when I saw him on TV beat "The Incredible Hulk" Lou Ferrigno in the 1970s' World's Strongest Man contest. I never forgot the name and when Bruce Wilhelm began attending the AOBS reunions each year I found myself in awe of this athlete's athlete. The seminar room was packed with people eagerly awaiting what Bruce Wilhelm would share with us. And there he was, Bruce Wilhelm, looking strong, athletic, in formidable shape.

Bruce Wilhelm spoke about many things, including the Apollon wheels and how he was impressed by the grip strength necessary to be able to grasp the bar in order to lift the wheels. John Davis then Norbert Schemansky had been successful in doing the clean & jerk with the wheels. Bruce said that he DID put them overhead with some help from a couple of Romanian guys when he was not at his peak. At his peak, bodyweight 330 or 340 he's certain that he would have successfully performed a clean & jerk with the Apollon wheels. It's unlikely that anyone doubts him.

Bruce related that it was John Grimek who explained to him the gripping technique necessary for dealing with

the Cyr dumbbell. Following Grimek's advice Wilhelm on his first attempt cleaned and put the Cyr dumbbell overhead. Bruce was taking questions from those in attendance. He recognized a member of the audience and asked "did you have something to say?" It turned out to be another fabulous story teller, Dick "Smitty" Smith who stood up and declared "well, I don't want to cut in on your thunder but I wanted to follow up on Bob Hoffman...about his womanizing". The assembly broke into laughter as the mood was abruptly changed.

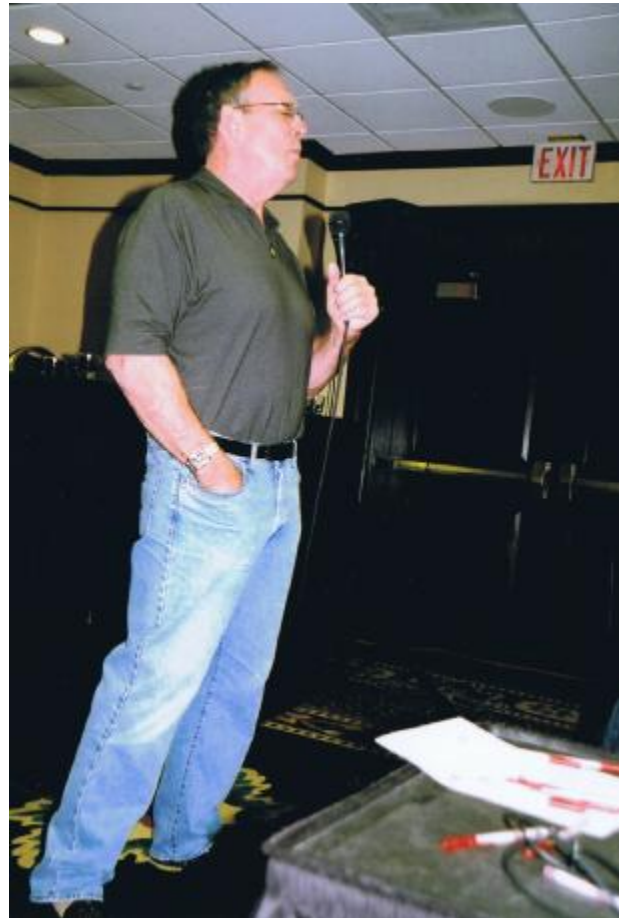
The manner of speech is extremely important here in order for one to fully appreciate what's happening. It is difficult to accurately capture every nuance, every speech inflection in writing. You had to BE there. Those who WERE there will know what I mean. "Smitty" when speaking reminds me of Senator Ford, a regular participant on the panel of a popular 1940s joke formatted radio program called "Can You Top This?" Those nostalgic old radio programs are still available from various sources.



Dick "Smitty" Smith (l.) and photographer, Martin Denman (r.), converse, while Joe Puleo and his son look on in this Varrone photo..

"Smitty's uniquely told Bob Hoffman anecdote was hilarious. I don't think I should spoil it by trying to re-create it here. Or by trying to re-tell "Smitty's" enthusiastically applauded story of how on a particular day he beat the whole Soviet lifting team in one specific exercise, the straight arm pulldown. "Smitty" is a special guy. It was approaching time for Bruce Wilhelm to wrap up the seminar. He shared his wise philosophical comments based on life experiences of an outstanding champion: "when you're young you can get away with a lot of stuff (bad health practices).....but you can't continue them as you get older. You will pay

a price". "If you're not hungry, excited about your sport (or ANY life pursuit:my comment).....if you don't love it, if you only do it for money, I don't think you'll do it as well. You have to love what you're doing and you have to be dedicated".



Bruce Wilhelm at his seminar – Martin Denman photo

Then Bruce went into more exciting stories about Ken Patera, Superstar Billy Graham, Wahoo McDaniels. "Smitty" stood up again and told us about the amazing agility Bruce Wilhelm exhibited some years ago on the trampoline. That would have been when his bodyweight was 300 plus rather than the 230 or so that it is now which Bruce says was his high school bodyweight. Questions kept coming from the audience until Bruce had to call a halt so as not to interfere with the next event at 4:00pm.

The unanticipated historical, philosophical gems heard during the Bruce Wilhelm seminar are among the many worthwhile reasons to attend AOBs annual reunions.

Bruce Wilhelm is an extraordinary athlete, an astoundingly strong man and one of the most spellbinding storytellers I have heard in a long time. He

reminded me of 1950s, 1960s Golden Age radio's iconic Jean Sheppard. In my 1950s imagination influenced by nostalgia I can hear Bruce Wilhelm doing a syndicated 1950s late night radio talk program just talking about whatever came into his mind as Jean Sheppard did. I think Bruce Wilhelm could have been a Golden Age radio broadcasting star

AOBS reunions attract male and female Iron Gamers of varied age categories: young, not quite so young anymore, used to be young, old but not all THAT old and forever young. Now it was time for the Rising Stars Of Oldtime Strongmanism.

Big John Mannino was understandably excited watching his Rising Star strongwoman wife Donyale as she bent with two hands a ¼ inch thick five inch long carriage bolt into a U shape. Thunderation!



Donyale Manino bending a carriage bolt into a U in this photo courtesy of Martin Denman.



John McGrath, all the way from Scotland, bending a bar into what would eventually be a series of coils. Photo courtesy of Roland Balik (hundreds of Roland's photos from the dinner are available at http://contests.ironmanmagazine.com/pop_photoevent.cfm?EventID=6&startrow=37 (the Iron Man site of Roland's dad, John Balik)

What could possibly follow THAT?! Kettlebells have become popular and effective training equipment. I like them. So the next Rising Star performer was particularly interesting to me. David Whitley did a splendid kettlebell demonstration. He did a 32 kg bottom up press then a press with pinky finger. He did a two hands anyhow lift with a woman and kettlebell. Spectacular.

There was much more, including performances by Mike Bruce, Aaron McKenzie, Sonny Barry, Tom Kelly, and all the way from Scotland, John McGrath. Rising Stars, those who didn't see it missed some marvelous strength people. Well, there's next year. Try to catch it then.

5:30 pm. Now we had a while to hang out together before the MAIN EVENT at 7:00 pm. Some people, like me, consider this reception period of socially interacting with each other to be the high point of each reunion. After all, it's then that we can converse with the fabulously interesting author and anti-aging authority Dr. Bob Goldman. It was then that we got together with John Balik who is the force behind today's Iron Man magazine and with Mr. America/Mr. Universe Joe Abbenda. We spoke with Joseph Greenstein who is a son of the Mighty Atom.

We were all eager to just breath the same air as the more than legendary Tommy Kono. It was a thrill to have Isaac Berger simply say hi. Wow, there's posing legend Russ Testo. And David Landau up from Florida.

Slim “The Hammerman” Farman is someone I feel connected to in the Iron Game family. Slim is the most exciting strongman that I have ever seen perform and his great strength does not diminish his human sensitivity. He’s an exceptional human being.



Nobody worked harder than Sonny Barry during the Rising Stars exhibition – eventually bending this steel into a heart shape - Denman photo

Andrew Corlett is a talented Mixed Martial Arts competitor to whom I also feel connected. It’s because of that fact he and I know that the 1964 movie *The Umbrellas Of Cherbourg* must come into his life one of these days. In 1964 it was the New York World’s Fair (which I visited fourteen times!) and THAT French movie which motivated me to move to Europe for a time. During that time I competed in the 1965 NABBA Mr. Universe in London. Golden memories.

There’s tall Dan Leahy, a martial artist skill in “Sticky Hands”. He demonstrated some moves while many of us were gathered in the hotel lobby. Impressive. Vic

Boff was his mentor in winter bathing and physical culture. Mighty Stefan tells me that Dan Leahy used to operate the Brooklyn Health Food Store when Vic was away. Please be with us again next year Dan Leahy.

Here comes Len Bosland, he with the great deep radio 1940s Lone Ranger voice. Smiling world record holding strength athlete Gregg Ernst, down from Nova Scotia, Canada, graciously walked over and presented me with an unexpected greatly appreciated surprise gift. It was three CDs of his precious singing family plus a family biography and a color photograph of the Ernst Sibtet. This a cappella singing family group has taken their impressive range and with hard work are producing a sound that audience members say “everyone should experience at least once in their lives”. We who attended the AOBS reunion couple of years ago DID experience the Ernst Family singing. The beautiful sound moved me profoundly. Good music is the strongest passion in my life and THAT was heavenly music. Thank you Gregg Ernst.



Slim Farman’s wife, Shirle (r). with daughter Penny Rose in this photo courtesy of Alan Leff

Steve “Mighty Stefan” Sadicario was conversing with Kim Wood and his son John in from Ohio. Since Kim Wodd was a buddy of Arthur Jones I walked over to see what esoteric aspects of the Iron Game they might be discussing. These guys were talking about Johnny Cash and Peter La Forge! Say what? That’s right. Does the AOBS have music enthusiasts or WHAT?!

Hey, there are the Tortorellis, father and son looking healthy, strong and happy. Father and son competed in a recent powerlifting event and showed us the photographs which are an exciting graphic testimony. Very inspirational. Two Iron Game friends who happen to be father and son. No generation gap here. Hey, there’s Bill Clark. And Joe Dube! AOBS reunions

really bring together Iron Game legends and the rest of us who are eager to interact with them.

7:00 pm, Dinner time and Show time in the huge dining/meeting room filled with people and with appropriately nostalgic music helping to transport us to a time when there was the one and ONLY 007 and his name was Sean Connery. Sean Connery was a bodybuilder. He competed in the 1953 NABBA Mr. Universe in London. Some of Connery's boyhood chums, like Dave Webster, Alex Thompson, tried without success to persuade him to attend the Heidenstam in England. He never did. Our loss and his as well.

Thanks for providing the right music go to Showtime Coordinator Russell Jones with assistance from his chip off the old block son of whom he is rightfully proud. Kudos also to our other Showtime Coordinator and strong man Dennis Rogers.

The large 2009 AOBS turnout (closing in on 300 including from Scotland, England, Canada) was gratifying in view of this staggering early 21st century Depression, referred to as a "recession" by the world's most admired people: politicians. Breadlines and Champagne was how a New York City movie theater advertised a 2009 six week showing of many different movies from the 1930s Depression era. Everyone seems to realize the truth except the politicians and the media.

But adversity did not prevent US from being present to appreciate what our Iron Game predecessors have done. John Grimek stands as a shining beacon in Iron Game history. It was a time before freakishness became the norm. As I see it, if there had never been a John Grimek there would never have been a Reg Park who was inspired by Grimek. If there had never been a Reg Park to have inspired him there would never have been an "Austrian Oak" named Arnold Schwarzenegger. Contemplate that. If there had never been a Pudgy Stockton...I think you know where I am going with this. Time has moved along. As they demolish the house that Babe Ruth built, where I saw Joe Louis fight, let us honor our own.

I really enjoy eating good food after which I always take a multitude of nutritional supplements. So when I spotted Mr. World Bill Grant at his table I had to make a difficult decision: do I continue my beloved eating or do I go over and talk to him? Since he got away from me last year I decided to catch him NOW. I went to his table. It was the right decision. He smiled and

immediately said "you and I know each other" but he didn't know from where. I supplied the details. I said "July 1975, Santa Monica in California, Gold's Gym. We know each other from there.

It was my first trip to California. I traveled in a bus from Santa Barbara (where I was visiting a transplanted former New York girl friend) to Santa Monica's Gold's Gym because I wanted to see for myself what this highly publicized "Austrian Oak" really looked like." I was in very good shape then, forty pounds heavier than I am now, with a young bodybuilder's strong ego. My attitude was I want to see this guy. He can't be THAT good. Or so I thought. I would soon find out otherwise.

When I walked through the front door of Gold's Gym the first person I saw standing to my left was Schwarzenegger. I thought to myself "So What's So Special?" I found out later that he had just finished making the movie Stay Hungry in which they required him to reduce his bodyweight. Since I had never met him I just continued walking to the manager's desk in the rear of the gym and signed up to workout for a few weeks. It soon became obvious that Schwarzenegger was regarded with reverence usually reserved for some sort of monarch. I did not become one of his subjects.

Eventually I introduced myself to Arnold as a very long time friend of Leroy Colbert since Leroy and Arnold are friends. That was the ice breaker. This was all during the period when scenes for the movie Pumping Iron were being filmed in the gym. Bill Grant was working out there daily as well as Robby Robinson, Ken Waller, Ed Giuliani, Kent Kuehn. That's why Bill Grant remembered me when we conversed at the 2009 AOBS reunion.

I recall being absolutely consternated when every day I would be in the gym to train and Arnold was muscularly bigger. Astonishingly BIGGER!! I thought to myself "this is impossible! Nobody can make muscular gains this fast!"

Of course, I was only thinking the old fashioned methodology (which I followed): train hard, eat correctly, sleep sufficiently. I had not even thought about another factor which had never been a part of my own old fashioned training but which was now ubiquitous in the NEW tactics for muscle building. My guileless naivete did not let me see what was REALLY happening.

My 1975 training in close proximity with Arnold Schwarzenegger, my unsuccessfully trying to get used

to his constant lame attempts at humor, which frequently seemed between friendly and mocking as well as sometimes annoying: just another fortuitous rich adventure in my life. Of course, I quickly recognized that Arnold was not just another musclehead. In fact, he's one of the smartest guys I've ever met albeit often overbearing. Sometimes the man was so charming he could sell you your own car. He's an inspiring American success story.

Later that year I again interacted with Arnold in New York radio station WOR when he and Leroy Colbert were on the Barry Farber program publicizing Pumping Iron.

But there's more to the Gold's Gym story including about some guy who got annoyed and actually squared off in the gym with the future California governor while people stared in slack jawed disbelief. Who WAS that guy? I told Bill Grant. Ask me that question at the next AOBS reunion and I'll tell YOU.

During the AOBS 2009 reunion Bill Grant displayed a pair of astounding biceps! Big and ripped! He looks spectacular. Also seated at Bill Grant's table was another unforgettably impressive person who the Mighty Stefan informed me is named Heather Darling. She is an attorney, is statuesque and possesses an obviously powerful muscular physique which left me gaping with admiration, but in silence, which is the best way. Then I went back and continued my dinner.

In the 1980s, even if one had retreated to the periphery of the bodybuilding scene it was still likely that a person would be aware of Carla Dunlap's imposing presence. I was.

In 1983 Carla Dunlap was crowned Ms Olympia. She subsequently continued being sensational and winning titles throughout the 1980s. My friend Leroy Colbert invited me to attend with him in New York City the pre-theater screening of "Pumping iron 11- The Women". Afterwards a group of us went to a nearby restaurant. Everyone was talking about the film while I was silent and listening. Ricky Wayne was perplexed by my silence and finally asked me what I thought. I said "I sure would like to meet Carla Dunlap".

June 13, 2009, the AOBS 26th annual reunion; Carla Dunlap was introduced to us from the dais by Doris Barrilleaux. It was indeed a magic moment as the 1983 Ms Olympia and multiple title winner addressed us. I was totally enraptured, captivated, enthralled by this eloquent, articulate human being, still in fantastic

physical condition. And she does her own SPECIAL charming impression of the "Austrian Oak".

From time to time politicians running for office seek to make disappear indiscretions from life before politics. Carla Dunlap shared with us one such amusing attempt by a certain nameless politician to vaporize carryings on committed during a youthful period of life. Irony lies in the fact that those exploits were known world wide, which is the way the individual had wanted it to be long before politics became an aspiration. Things can come back to haunt us.

AOBS President, Artie Drechsler, presented Carla Dunlap with the Vic Boff Highest Achievement Award in the form of a resplendent plaque which read as follows:



Carla Dunlap enchants the audience – Varrone photo

Presented to: Carla Dunlap, guest of honor, Ms.America, two-time NPC National Champion, Ms. Olympia, star of big and small screen, teacher to officials and seekers of fitness.

Your fabulous physique and athleticism served as an inspiration to countless women in their pursuit of better fitness.

Winning the Ms. America, NPC Nationals and Ms. Olympia titles, against some of the toughest competitors in the world, established your name as a true great in the world of women's bodybuilding.

Your pioneering, tireless and articulate promotion of women's bodybuilding and weight training helped secure the wide acceptance of make women's bodybuilding and fitness competitions

Your continuing efforts personal training, and the training of competition judges have bestowed wisdom on many and helped to assure the future of those trainees.

With appreciation for your great talent and dedication, we proudly confer our highest achievement award, the AOBS- Vic Boff Award on this day of Saturday, June 13th, 2009.

AOBS artist extraordinaire Jim Sanders presented Carla Dunlap with his beautifully painted color portrait of Carla at her splendid peak where, to me, she still appears to be. Both awards were graciously received by this queen of physical culture .

Another superbly physiqued Iron Game woman was near the dais. Her name was Deborah Diana, one of the major figures in early women's bodybuilding and one of the stars of Pumping Iron II .



Bill Seno (r.) with Fred Yale in this photo courtesy of John Varrone Jr.

Fred Yale introduced us to the extraordinary Iron Game career of Bill Seno a champion who successfully did it all: powerlifting, bodybuilding and Olympic style weightlifting. AOBS president Artie Drechsler bestowed upon Bill Seno the Vic Boff Highest Achievement Award In the form of a plaque which read as follows:

Presented to: Bill Seno, guest of honor, champion weightlifter, Most Muscular Man in America, two-time National Powerlifting Champion, World Powerlifting Champion, World Recordholder and Trainer of Champions

Your National Championships, World Championship, American Records, World Records in powerlifting competition, against some of the best athletes in the world, have demonstrated to all your incredible strength and competitive spirit.

Your fabulous 578 lb. bench press without special equipment in the 242 lb. class, stands as one of the greatest performances of all time in that lift.

Your fantastic physique led you to being named the Most Muscular Man in America and made you a sought after coverman for bodybuilding publications worldwide

Your coaching and writing have helped to assure that future generations will benefit from the knowledge that you gained over your many dedicated years of training

With appreciation for your great talent and dedication, we proudly present to you our highest achievement award, the AOBS – Vic Boff Award on this day of Saturday, June 13th , 2009.

Then Bill Seno was presented by Jim Sanders with the artist's inimitable color painting of the honoree performing in his prime. Bill Seno then addressed the appreciative gathering and revealed himself to be another remarkable speaker. He finished with these words: "all of us have experienced a new frontier when we worked out and when we reached the heights that we never dreamed of." There was well deserved applause.

First-time presenter, JP Nicoletta, ably introduced Bruce Wilhelm, who was again a physically and verbally impressive athlete's athlete as he accepted his Vic Boff's Highest Achievement Award plaque.

The plaque read as follows:

Presented to Bruce Wilhelm, Guest of Honor,
Champion Wrestler and Weight Thrower, First
American to Snatch 400 lb., Olympian and World
Weightlifting Championships medallist, Two-Time
World's Strongest Man Winner, Wide World of Sports
Commentator and prolific Iron Game writer.

Your National Championships, American Records,
World Championship medals and performances at the
Olympic Games, against the best athletes in the world,
have demonstrated to all your incredible weightlifting
abilities and competitive spirit.

Your performances as a weight thrower have
established you as one of the top performers of all time.
Your tremendous strength and athletic ability enabled
you to become the first World's Strongest Man Winner
and your repeat victory the following year further
demonstrated your abilities

Your writing skills and devotion to honoring the greats
of the Iron Game have contributed mightily to
memorializing Iron Game history

With appreciation for your great talent and dedication,
we proudly present to you our highest achievement
award, the AOBS – Vic Boff Award
on this day of Saturday, June 13th, 2009

The Jim Sanders masterpiece color painting of Bruce
Wilhelm during his peak years was indeed something to
see. The many camera flashbulbs going off indicated
that many people were capturing the moment.
Thrilling.

After Bruce addressed us and returned to his seat at the
dais, to the surprise of our mighty master of ceremonies,
Jim Sanders uncovered a new Sanders color
painting/portrait of Steve "Mighty Stefan" Sadicario
himself with strongman's handlebar mustache and all.
Steve obviously liked it and so did the applauding
crowd.

Now cameraman Mike D'Angelo left his video camera
and walked from the far side of the room to the dais
with a surprise Vic Boff, Leo Murdock, Rosemary
Miller "Carry On Award" for a literally speechless
JoAnne Drechsler. In the form of a plaque it was
presented to her by "The Great" Joe Rollino and read as
follows:



JP Nicoletta speaks on Bruce Wilhelm - Varrone photo
Below, Joe "The Great" Rollino (l.) presents the
"Carry-On" award to JoAnne Drechsler as Mike
"D'Angelo looks on – D'Angelo photo



"Presented on this 13th day of June, 2009, to JoAnne
Drechsler. With many thanks and deepest gratitude for
your unending work and support in helping to keep our
organization continuing in the tradition of its founder,
Vic Boff. "

Arielle and Frankie are very fortunate to have Artie Drechsler as their coach and Peter is fortunate to have his mother JoAnne (a Masters champion in her own right) and Peter Roselli his coaches. These young Olympic-style lifters were enthusiastically received at the 2009 AOBS reunion.



Frank Murray pushes a barbell overhead in a military press – photo by Varrone

AOBS president Artie Drechsler then came to the microphone and introduced three wonderful young Olympic style weightlifters who were now going to put on a lifting exhibition for us. Artie would deliver a lift by lift commentary while the young athletes performed. Seventeen year old Peter Musa, at a bodyweight of 152 pounds did a clean and squat jerk with 286 pounds! Twenty year old Arielle Lipmann, a hurdler/runner who has been lifting for one year, won a bronze medal at this year's Jr. Nationals. This evening, she performed a 250 pound squat for three repetitions, and a C&J of 187 lb. at a bodyweight of 130 pounds. Twenty one year old Frank Murray, at a bodyweight of 187 pounds, did a military press with 231 pounds and a 286 pound squat snatch. He took third in the Nationals this year.

Arielle and Frankie are very fortunate to have Artie Drechsler as their coach and Peter is fortunate to have his mother JoAnne (a Masters champion in her own right) and Peter Roselli his coaches. These young Olympic style lifters were enthusiastically received at the 2009 AOBS reunion



Peter Musa demonstrates the squat style jerk.

MC Steve "Mighty Stefan" Sadicario now came to the microphone and declared that the Strongman Dinner would not be the same without the other types of Feats Of Strength. Our AOBS MC has several talents. One is helping to create an environment of excitement and causing it to build to crescendo proportions simply by using his mighty voice.



Arielle Lipmann demonstrates her fine form in the split style jerk – Varrone photo here and above

MC Steve described Greg Matonick as having the strongest teeth in the world as Greg bent a horse shoe in

his molars followed by doing it again with a United States twenty five cent piece, a quarter, which inspired energetic applause.



Greg Matonick (photo at top on the left) puts his powerful hands and teeth to work, while Chris Rider (photo at bottom left) displays a wrench he bent in these photos by Martin Denman.

Now came Chris Rider (a protégé of Dennis Rogers) described by the Mighty Stefan as the ominous big man with long hair from York, Pennsylvania. Chris Rider bent a 300 millimeter heavy duty adjustable wrench to the obvious appreciation of the onlookers. Chris then broke double number eight Jack chain using what MC Stefan referred to as “the world’s strongest hair”.

Now it was time for the world’s mightiest MC to entertain with his incomparable “Rollino Rap” with “The Great” Joe Rollino at his side and obviously enjoying Steve’s song.



Mike Greenstein, son of “The Mighty” Atom holds the a poster of his father that was raffelled off during the evening – photo by Varrone

Non-stop action at the AOBS 26th reunion because it was Raffle time. Mike Greenstein, son of The Mighty Atom, walked to the dais and revealed a vintage Mighty Atom poster which would be the raffle prize. Our mighty MC asked yours truly to reach into a large bowl containing a huge number of little folded pieces of

paper upon which people had written their names. I grabbed on and turned it over to the Mighty One. He announced that the winner was strongman, former police officer and member/supporter of the AOBS for many years, Carl Linich. A broadly smiling Carl Linich came to the dais and received the Mighty Atom memorable poster. Congratulations Carl.

MC Mighty Stefan kept the excitement level high when he announced that we would now see brief parts of the movie Pumping Iron 11-The Women. When that started we all got pumped up just as we did when we originally saw it years ago.

There were more magic moments which took place before the enchanted AOBS evening June 13, 2009 was over. Too many such moments to be covered properly here. "Some Enchanted Evening" from South Pacific might now be appropriate.

Every theater production, every cinematic production, every musical concert, every quality radio broadcast, every television program, the Baseball and Football Halls of Fame, AOBS reunions have at least one important factor in common: they function properly for their audiences/viewers due in a large part to the dedicated behind the scenes people. AOBS is forever appreciative of Sylvia D'Angelo, Rosemary Miller, JoAnne Drechsler as well as Gary Mandel and Bob McNall. Thank you all.

For those who were not present with us and for those who simply would like to re-live the adventure it is suggested that you contact Mike D'Angelo at 18 Colon, St., Staten Island, NY 10312. And obtain a video of the memorable event (\$25 including shipping). The next one is not that far off. We'd like you to be there (October 23, 2010).

EPILOGUE: Every time I see George "Bombero" Schumacher at the AOBS reunions we invariably talk about our long time mutual Iron Game friend Roberto Santana, Mr. Puerto Rico 1952 and a big fan of John Grimek. My friendship with Roberto Santana started over half a century ago. I'm talking about a REAL friend, an older protective brother, a counselor, a philosopher, a very successful business man, a star of bodybuilding then competitive weightlifting in Puerto Rico, owner of gyms there as well as real estate and very well connected politically.

In early 1952 Roberto had trained briefly in Abe Goldberg's famous lower Manhattan gym along with Marvin Eder and George Schumacher.

In October 2008 I was in San Juan, Puerto Rico on one of my many visits there over a span of decades and I spent an unforgettable time with my friend/brother Roberto Santana. He shared with me his philosophy of life in a gorgeous sunlit Oceanside setting with huge boats all around us. I gave him a the AOBS newsletter which covered our 2008 reunion and contained a photograph of me with George Schumacher and Tommy Kono. He read it carefully while we were together and was quite impressed. I will cherish that time as long as I exist.

Roberto was so excited about the newsletter that he made plans with his wife to attend the next reunion in 2009. George Schumacher and I were disappointed when our friend did not appear at the June 13, 2009 reunion. I was baffled as to why.

On June 19, 2009 I received a phone call from Puerto Rico informing me that the day before at 5:00 pm Roberto Santana had died! The call was from his son. Although the news was not totally unanticipated because of Roberto's declining health during the last several years when the call was finished I put the phone down and just sobbed for some minutes. I had not totally realized just how important a part Roberto Santana had played in my young, formative years, my life. Roberto Santana, I won't say goodbye. Instead I'll say Hasta Siempre which I intend to mean I'll see you later, My Brother.

Reunion Memories From Fred Yale

Twenty-six years! Really, just a milestone in time, but long enough to see many friends and faces come and go, and new faces brighten-up our reunion/dinner. That is exactly what I saw at this year's 26th reunion of the AOBS. As I sat in the lobby, both Friday and Saturday afternoon waiting for so many familiar faces, which never arrived as in the past, I witnessed many newcomers arrive for their first time experience. And, I hope it was a great one as it always is for me. Our host, as usual, did his always outstanding job, with just a few "twists" for the day. These just added to the three distinguished honorees at the head table.

For me, this dinner presented a challenge. I brought my nineteen year old nephew! How was I going to entertain him with just "conversation" between mainly much older adults, right up to a 104 year old athlete. My challenge was on! Here was my chance to get a younger person (athlete), who is into weights and bodybuilding, to understand the bonding we all share. To start with, I had to get him away from the TV in the

hotel room (didn't happen for hours), and the ipod and texting. You can see what I was up against. I tried to lure him to a seminar, which was "right up his alley." Nope! MTV won out! When I informed him what he had missed, he came down.

It was strongman time. Well, as the bars were bending, his eyes lit up. I was on track! As the feats increased, so did his interest. He needed to see and touch everything that was bent. Now, it was on to the dinner! I introduced him to a couple of "great ones" and he was taken aback from their stories and general enthusiasm of the iron game. Now I knew what had to be done! I needed to go "out on a limb" and shoot all the marbles and take a chance that this idea would work. So, I called over our 104 year old friend and asked to see his photo he carries of when he was 10 years old. If you haven't seen this picture, you just won't believe your eyes.



Olympian Joe Puleo (l.) and Mr. Universe, Joe Abbenda in the Varrone

Our friend pulls out the photo, shows it to my nephew and, he just can't believe what he's looking at! Guess what? My challenge was over. I had a 19 year old believer. Later on, he wanted a picture with his new friend and, it didn't end there. As the evening progressed, I saw him talking to this one and that one. By the end of the night, I was taking his picture with all the honorees and many others. When just about everyone had filed out from all the activities, I found him in the lobby with all the strongmen performers talking and watching some added strength attractions. My mission was complete.

I thoroughly enjoyed the entire time I spent at the reunion with the distinguished pleasure of being a presenter to one of the honorees, and making a believer in a 19 year old ironman. As we walked back to our room that evening, I thought about our founder, who would simply say at this point, "carry on."

New Book By Dr. Don Morse

Dr. Don has long been an AOBS member. A very respected and experienced health professional, he is active as a master bodybuilder, Don has become very active in the longevity movement. After many years of study in this area, he has recently written "Young at 100: Successful Longevity Strategies". The book has much material on how to live a long, active and healthy life, as well as a feature on our outstanding centenarian, Joe "The Great" Rollino. More information on the book can be found at www.donmorsebooks.com.

Drugs In Baseball – Still Again

When the Yankees were taking a beating on the issue of drug use by a number of their players, some of the Boston Red Sox were crying "foul", arguing that the Yankees would not have been as formidable as they were without the drugs they apparently took.

Now it is the Boston Red Sox turn to be shamed. It has been reported that David Ortiz "Big Papi" and Manny Ramirez were also partaking in the use of banned substances in 2003. When he was confronted about the issue, Ortiz, who had been very vocal in chastising other players for being dirty, reportedly said he'd have to look into what the reporters were saying as he didn't know anything about taking drugs. What a sorry mess!

Your Membership Up/Do You Want To Become A Supporter of the AOBS?

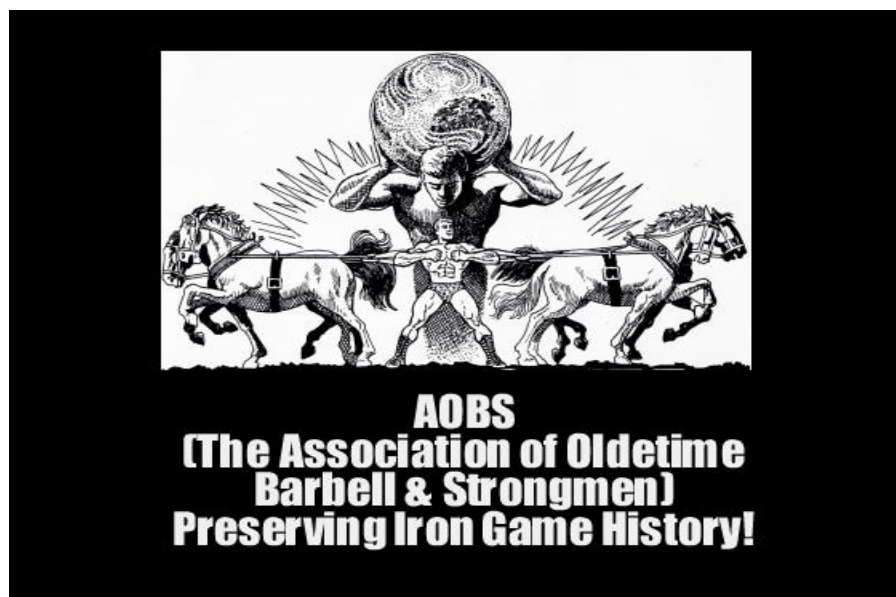
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In addition to supporting our great organization, a donation of at least \$25 brings you 4 annual issues of this newsletter and discount tickets to our reunion. What a great way to support the AOBS and get some terrific benefits at the same time. You can make a donation with a credit card or PayPal account on our web-site www.aobs.cc or by mailing a check to:

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OUR NEXT REUNION IS ON OCTOBER 23, 2010

at the

NEWARK/ LIBERTY AIRPORT MARRIOTT HOTEL, NEWARK NJ (IN THE AIRPORT)