

## The Story of “Stege”

Coach Dan Magill

Sunday, May 15, 2005

3:00 p.m.

Athens-Clarke County Library Auditorium



*Stegeman*

Longtime sports writer, popular speaker and tennis coach Dan Magill will reminisce about the Stegeman family at the May meeting of Athens Historical Society. **Herman James “Stege” Stegeman** came to Athens as a football coach in 1919 and for the next twenty years was an effective builder of the entire athletics department of the University of Georgia. He influenced many students through his active involvement as coach of the football, baseball, basketball and track programs, director of athletics (1923-1927), and Dean of Men (1931-1939). T.W. Reed considered Stege the “Father of Track Athletics” at University of Georgia.<sup>1</sup>

Stegeman served as football coach until 1922, when he was succeeded by George C. Woodruff. He continued to coach basketball and track until 1931, when he retired as basketball coach. He also coached the Georgia track team. The UGA track and field team of 1937, the last team that Stege coached, brought home the Southeastern Conference title – one member of this team, Forrest “Spec” Towns, held a world record for 100-meter hurdles and won a gold medal at the Berlin Olympics in 1936.

Born 1891 in Holland, Michigan, Stege received a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in 1915 from the University of Chicago, where he was a favorite player of famed coach Amos Alonzo Stagg. Stege died in 1939 and was buried in Oconee Hill Cemetery. His wife was Dorothea Washburne, also of Holland, Michigan. His children were John, Joanna (Traylor) and Marion (Hodgson). John was a physician in Athens and wrote numerous books about the history of Athens and UGA. Granddaughter Jodie Traylor Guy was secretary of our Society for many years.

The UGA Coliseum was named in honor of Herman Stegeman prior to the 1996 Olympic Games. Previously the natatorium at the foot of Lumpkin hill had been called Stegeman Hall. This building was razed in 1995 in preparation for the Olympic women’s soccer matches to be played in Sanford Stadium.

**Coach Dan Magill** has been called “Mr. Bulldog” for his dedication to UGA and its athletic programs. Coach of the UGA tennis program for 33 years, sports information director for the Athletic Association, and executive secretary of the Georgia Bulldog Club, he continues to preserve the history of athletics at UGA through his popular newspaper column, talks and books. He has known personally many of the great names in UGA’s history. His October 2002 talk on “Athletics in Athens” for AHS was published in the 2003 *Athens Historian*, vol. 8.

**The Fall AHS meeting, October 16, 2005, will be held at the Athens-Clarke County Library Auditorium, 3:00 p.m.**

Historian Ernie Hynds will talk about the 175 years of First Baptist Church of Athens and the role its members played in the building of our community.

<sup>1</sup> Reed, T.W. 1948. *History of the University of Georgia*. Digital Library of Georgia online at [http://dlgtemp.galib.uga.edu/reed/docs/reed\\_c17/118.jpg](http://dlgtemp.galib.uga.edu/reed/docs/reed_c17/118.jpg)



A talk on **Stoneman's Raid** was presented at the March meeting by Goodloe Y. Erwin, M.D. Federal cavalry troops under Gen. George Stoneman were ordered by Sherman to disrupt the railroad lines from Macon to Atlanta in late July 1864. Once this was accomplished, Stoneman had hoped to push southward first to Macon and free Federal officers at Camp Oglethorpe at Macon, then on to Andersonville to release the prisoners in the Confederate prison there. After the battle of Sunshine Church on July 31<sup>st</sup>, Stoneman and 600 men surrendered to the Confederate forces of Gen. Alfred Iverson.

Two of the Federal brigades, over 1000 men under Col. Silas Adams and Col. Horace Capron, managed to fight their way northward to avoid capture. These forces did considerable damage looting and burning at Eatonton and Madison, before stopping to rest and exchange their exhausted horses at Watkinsville. Mrs. Laura Ashford wrote that the

Yankees helped themselves to watches and jewelry. She was polite and fed the soldiers a nice meal.

On the morning of August 2<sup>nd</sup>, Col. Adams' men were turned away from their target of the Cook and Brother Armory in Athens by artillery fire from the Home Guard fortifications on the hillside above the Barber Creek bridge, near where the old Puritan Cordage Mill stands today. They and many of Capron's men were later captured near Winder by Col. W.C.P. Breckenridge and local forces. The 431 prisoners were held on the Franklin College (UGA north) campus in tents before being shipped off to Andersonville. Thus, Athens was spared the wrath of Sherman's March to the Sea.

Dr. Erwin has graciously given permission for the slide show from this program to be put on the AHS website at [www.rootsweb.com/~gaahs/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~gaahs/) – click on the STONEMAN link.

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*Don't forget to renew your AHS membership for 2005! The 2005 Directory will be mailed in May.  
If your mailing label shows 2005, you have already renewed.*

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2005 Meetings	
January 16	✓
March 20	✓
May 15	
October 16	

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