

## Guthrie serves community through banking career

Distinguished alumnus John A. (Jack) Guthrie, Jr. (BA '47), is no stranger to the University of Wyoming — he grew up in Laramie in the family home on Ivinson Avenue that is now the UW Foundation.

Although retired, Jack Guthrie is committed to community service through banking. Over 50 years in the banking industry have led to dedication and generosity to UW since his graduation. Recently, Jack and his wife, Pat (Richardson, BS '53), established the John A. Guthrie Distinguished Professorship in Banking and Financial Service at UW to honor his father.

"One of the best things for the Wyoming economy would be to have knowledgeable and imaginative bankers, trained by the University of Wyoming," Guthrie says of the motivation behind the gift. "We think that it will be good for the state and the students in the program."

While still in high school, Guthrie had applied to MIT; but like many other young men of his time, his life was changed by World War II. Instead, he enrolled as a freshman at the University of Wyoming until he was accepted in the US Navy V-12 program.

Guthrie was sent to State Teachers College in Minot, N.D., where he had his first taste of engineering. After comparing himself to young men from technical institutions, he soon realized that engineering was not the field for him. Upon completion of the V-12 program, Guthrie was sent to Midshipmen's School at Columbia University, where he received his commission. His training continued at Communications School at Harvard. He was then assigned to the USS *Henrico* as a communications officer.

When Guthrie arrived in San Francisco to report for duty he found that the ship was delayed from sailing, and undergoing repairs for damage caused by a kamikaze attack. Orders for the invasion of Japan came while the ship was still in port.

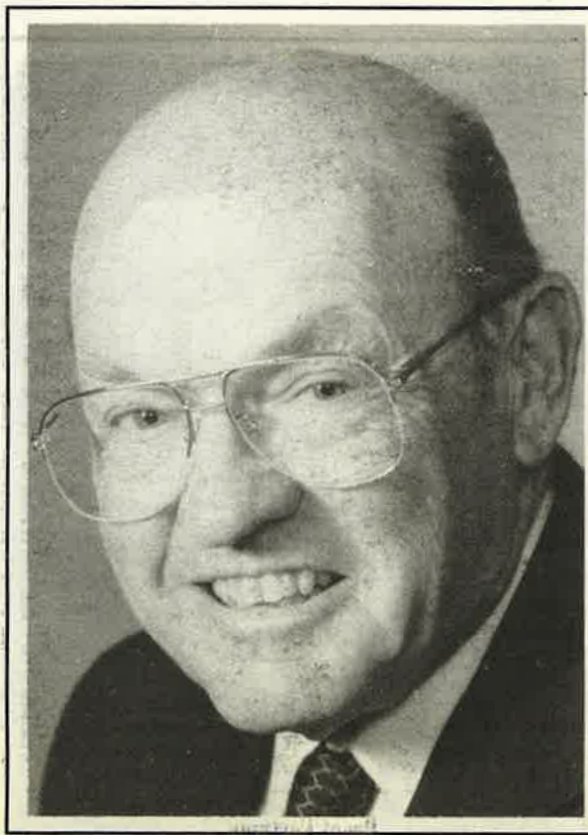
Guthrie served aboard the USS *Henrico*, a Navy attack transport ship, until 1946. The *Henrico* was a squadron flagship that carried 3,500 troops and equipment during the war, and about 5,000 troops home after the war, stopping in ports in the Philippines and Guam.

After completing his military service, Guthrie returned to UW and earned a degree in business in the College of Arts and Sciences. Realizing that advanced study in finance would be beneficial, he returned to Harvard where he earned an MBA with the class of 1949.

He acknowledges turning down lucrative opportunities that would have kept him in the East. Wyoming was where he wanted to live, and Guthrie began his banking career at the First National Bank of Laramie (now First Interstate Bank of Laramie), earning \$400 a month.

Guthrie enjoyed his work, noting that every day brought some new opportunity to serve the community by helping someone start or grow a business, finance a home and manage their financial affairs — build their dreams.

At the First National Bank he became a director, vice president and trust officer before leaving in 1957 to joining his uncle in purchasing the Bank of Laramie (now Key Bank of Wyoming-Laramie). At the Bank of Laramie, Guthrie was vice president and director from 1957-1967; president and CEO



Jack Guthrie

from 1967-1983; and chairman from 1972-85.

Under Guthrie's watchful eye, the Bank of Laramie doubled in size every five years and was a pioneer among Wyoming banks. It was the first Wyoming bank to computerize records and also the first bank to offer bank credit cards to their customers. In addition, Guthrie started Wyoming's first one-bank holding company, Bankshares of Laramie, Inc., in 1972. This was the same year that he was president of the Wyoming Banker's Association, when there were 125 banks in Wyoming.

Guthrie's efforts were not unnoticed. The Small Business Administration named him Wyoming banker of the year in 1979, crediting him with creating more than 500 jobs in the Laramie area with the use of SBA-guaranteed loans. Guthrie says that creating jobs is one of the real satisfactions of the banking business.

Service to the community extends far beyond business concerns. Jack and Pat have long been known for their volunteer service and philanthropy. One of his more gratifying accomplishments was helping to establish the United Way of Albany County in 1949. Guthrie was president of the United Way and continues to volunteer each year in the annual fund drive.

Guthrie helped establish the Jacoby Golf Course by raising money and wielding a shovel to remove rocks from the greens and plant landscaping.

The Cathedral Home, a residential facility for troubled youth located north of Laramie, is another beneficiary of the Guthries' generosity. Jack served on the board and led the first fund drive that moved the Cathedral Home from Hunter Hall downtown to its present location. He and Pat chaired the second fund drive which funded construction of Cathedral Home's education building.

Why play such a critical role in the community?  
"It's fun and very satisfying to help make a differ-

ence," Jack says.

UW also has benefited from Jack Guthrie's voluntarism. He served on the UW Alumni Association board directors, presiding over that organization the year (1970-71) that Casper made its pitch to the legislature for a separate four-year institution. Guthrie and his troops rose to the challenge and organized Wyoming alums to lobby their legislators against that potentially devastating drain of resources from UW.

More recently he has been a member of the UW Foundation Board and is the president-elect for 1997-98. Guthrie takes that job at a time of extensive reorganization of development activities on the campus.

One of Jack's goals for UW is establishing class gifts for 25, 40 and 50 year alums to benefit the university's unrestricted fund pool. He had hoped to start the 50 year drive with his own class, 1947, this year. But fellow Foundation board member Al Wolfe asked, "why wait?" So the class of 1946 pulled together and contributed \$20,000 to benefit the University Libraries. Guthrie has hopes that the class of '47, which is much larger in number, will more than double that figure.

"We hope to see these class gifts reach over \$100,000 while I'm still on the Foundation board," Guthrie says. He notes that Wyoming residents and UW alums have become complacent over the years. Until recently, ample allocations from the Wyoming Legislature downplayed the need for individual giving. But with changing times and economy, now is the time for UW alums to support their university financially.

"It is a tremendous task of education to convince alumni that their gifts are needed and meaningful," Guthrie says.

Certainly, the Guthries have set a stellar example in this area. In addition to the banking professorship, they also have been generous in their support of the UW Art Museum.

### Biographical Information

The Guthries have two children: John A. Guthrie III and Ellen J. Guthrie, both of whom attended UW. They also have three grandchildren.

Guthrie was a founding member and director of the Cowboy Joe Club where he is still active. He has served on all of the committees of the UW Foundation board and most recently was a member of the search committee that resulted in the selection of Phil Dubois as UW president.

His community service activities include past president of the Laramie Rotary Club and the Laramie Country Club. He currently is president of the Sigma Nu House Company. In addition to being treasurer of the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming, he is a member of the Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Investment Committee.

Among his awards are the Laramie Chamber of Commerce Top Hand Award and the Albany County Boy Scouts of America Distinguished Citizen Award.

Guthrie presently serve on the boards of Wholesale Tire Distributors, Inc., and Taco John International, Inc. Until recently he was a director of Key Bank Wyoming and Key Bank Colorado; he is now on the Trust Committee of First National Bank of Wyoming.