



UNIONS AND REUNIONS WITH THE AGGIE RING

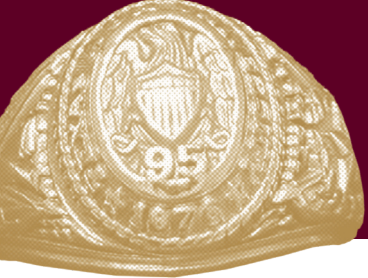
BY ANNIKA ROBERTS '22

The Aggie Ring is the most visible symbol of the Aggie Network. Like the core values, it transcends time and space to unite Aggies everywhere. From College Station to continents abroad, the Aggie Ring represents our university's unique culture and connects current and former students.

But sometimes, Aggie Rings go missing. The Aggie Ring Program, managed by The Association of Former Students, receives over 1,300 lost Ring reports each year. Among other responsibilities, staff work diligently to reunite found Aggie Rings with their owners. They know, as all Aggies do, that the power of the Aggie Network is worth more than its weight in Aggie gold.







NEVER GIVE UP HOPE:

To Latisha Moody '95, the Aggie Ring symbolizes achievement and perseverance. After misplacing her Ring around 2004, Moody was reunited with it over 15 years later with help from Association staff.

Moody received her Aggie Ring as a student, and it remains a proud accomplishment after leaving campus. Although her husband, Wayland Moody '92, and many of his family are Aggies, Latisha is the first on her side of the family to graduate from Texas A&M. "It was an honor to get the Aggie Ring," she said. "It represented a personal goal that I had to

always be an Aggie ... and a reminder of the hard work it took through the years to complete that journey."

Moody wore her Aggie Ring proudly for a decade, until it mysteriously disappeared around 2004. Neither she nor her family could figure out what had happened. Year after year, the Moody family searched their workplaces, cars and home — even including the pipes under their sink — but the Ring never turned up.



Latisha's daughter, Jada '22, received her Aggie Ring in April 2021. Latisha's son, Wayland, Jr. '24, plans to receive his Aggie Ring this year.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LATISHA MOODY '95

Latisha and her husband, Wayland, met at Bryan High School and dated through college. They attended Ring Dance together during Latisha's senior year at A&M.

Moody prayed many times over the years for the return of her Ring and remained hopeful — partly because of the encouragement of her friend Julie Scamardo, who also happened to then be the manager of the Aggie Ring Program. Moody said that Scamardo told her, "We hear about stories [of returned Aggie Rings] all the time, and I'm not giving up." However, after years of searching, Moody wanted to wear an Aggie Ring again. In 2020, she purchased a replacement Ring in anticipation of her daughter's quickly approaching April 2021 Aggie Ring Day.

In January 2021, an Aggie in Austin contacted the Aggie Ring Program about a found Ring. She had tried to get in touch with someone at the university when she first found the ring in 2004, but was unsuccessful.

LATISHA MOODY '95



One reason why it took so many years for Latisha's Aggie Ring to be returned is that the finder struggled to read her name that was hand-engraved on the inside.

Since then, she had kept the Ring safe in a box in her drawer, largely forgetting about it until it was time for her son to order his own.

The Aggie Ring Program arranged to have the Ring shipped to the Clayton W. Williams, Jr. Alumni Center in College Station. The staff, struggling to read the hand-engraving, gave the Ring to their manager, Scamardo, who put on a pair of magnifying glasses, took out a pen and paper, and began to write each letter. "L-A-T," she spelled, and slowly the realization dawned on her. "That's my friend!" she exclaimed.

Moody had made arrangements with Scamardo in early 2021 to pick up a certificate at the Aggie Ring office for her daughter, Jada '22, in anticipation of Jada's upcoming Ring Day. With Moody's found Ring in hand, Scamardo decided to add an exciting surprise.

Scamardo asked Moody to be sure to bring the replacement Aggie Ring she now wore, saying she would clean it at the office. When Latisha handed over her new Ring, though, the staff swapped it for her original.

Moody said, "[Scamardo] had planned for our friend, Christina, to be there and record this whole surprise. She asked me to explain to Christina what had happened to my Ring. So, I'm just telling Christina the story ... and then the young lady comes back with the Ring, and Julie

asks how the Ring looks, and I say it looks good and I keep telling the story." As Moody shared the many places she'd looked for her Ring, she didn't notice that she put that very Ring back on her finger.

Scamardo urged her to look at her Ring again, closely.

"That's when it hit me," Moody said. "I said, 'Julie, is this my original Aggie Ring?' That's when my hands started shaking." The friends cried tears of joy as they celebrated such a special reunion.

Moody believes her reunion with her Aggie Ring "could not have happened at a more perfect time." She said, "I just don't think it could have been as beautiful, as meaningful, as how it aligned."

Moody is grateful to the Aggies who found her Ring for keeping it safe for so many years, as well as to the staff of The Association. "I am just truly in awe and so appreciative of everyone there," she said. "For one, they were a part of that day. I was so happy that they were happy for me, that they realized what it meant to me to get it back after so many years. To the staff there, I truly am grateful that they didn't give up searching."



Latisha received her replacement Aggie Ring in the fall of 2020. After 15 years, she was excited to once again wear Aggie gold.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE YOUR AGGIE RING

The Association helps reunite Aggies with their lost Rings.

- If you lose (or find) an Aggie Ring, submit a report online. This ensures that Aggie Ring Program staff have your most up-to-date contact information. tx.ag/LostFound
- Be sure that your contact information is correct in Find An Aggie, the online directory provided by The Association. Many Aggies who find a Ring will reach out directly. tx.ag/Directory
- Like other valuables, you can choose to have your Aggie Ring privately insured. In the event that your Ring is lost or stolen, the Aggie Ring Program can provide a proof of ownership letter to support an insurance claim. tx.ag/RRRfaq
- If, after some time, your original Aggie Ring has yet to be found, you may order a replacement. tx.ag/Order



PHOTO COURTESY OF JONAS LOSSNER '20

From left, Sebastian '16, Volker, Christa and Jonas '19 Lossner gathered to celebrate Jonas' 2019 Aggie Ring Day in College Station.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SANDERS CORPS OF CADETS CENTER



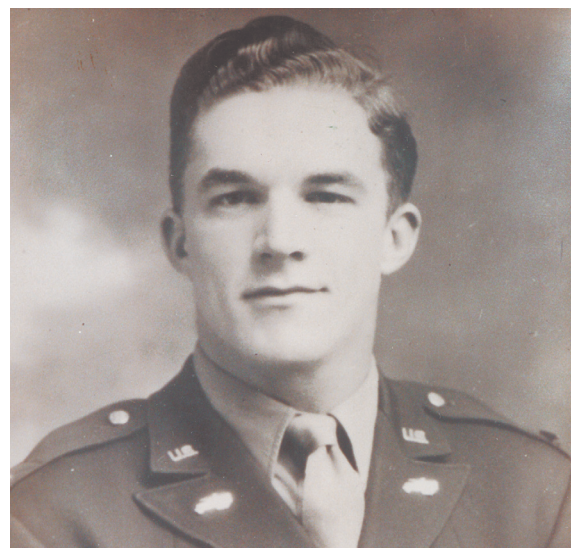
PHOTO COURTESY OF JONAS LOSSNER '20

In 2019, Jonas Lossner '20 added another chapter to his family's Aggie story when he received his Aggie Ring. He said, "None of this would have been possible without Turney Leonard sacrificing his life to liberate Germany."

Adding Chapters To The Aggie Story: Turney W. Leonard '42 and the Lossner Family

In 1944, former A&M Corps cadet Turney W. Leonard '42 gave his life in a World War II battle in a German forest against Nazi forces, for which he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. Two years later, Leonard's Aggie Ring was found by a local German teenager who kept it safe for decades. The finder eventually showed the Aggie Ring to his son-in-law, German military officer Volker Lossner, who suggested that the Ring might be "from a U.S. war college." They agreed that they ought to try to return it; and in 2001, then-Lt. Lossner presented Turney's long-lost Ring to his surviving family. Read *Texas Aggie's* coverage at tx.ag/SpecialRingReturnsHome.

This profound experience left its mark on the Lossner family, including Lossner's two sons. When they were ready to attend university, both chose to come to Texas A&M. In 2015, Sebastian Lossner '16 received his own Aggie Ring; and in 2019, Jonas Lossner '20 received his. Sebastian said, "Getting my Aggie Ring is a big deal even without the story, but with the story it just gets so much more meaning. It shows that basically the legacy of Turney W. Leonard is living on and will be living on forever." Read more at tx.ag/LossnerRings.



For his bravery, leadership and heroism in battle, Turney Leonard '42 was awarded the Medal of Honor soon after his death. Leonard was the fifth Aggie to receive this honor.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MEG AUSTIN '90

Stauffer, right, called Austin to let her know she had found Austin's Aggie Ring. Austin immediately left her home so the two could meet up only 10 minutes later.

A Park And Pokémon Go: Meg Austin '90 and Alex Stauffer '17

Aggie Rings are often found in unlikely ways. Alex Stauffer '17, for instance, found a lost Aggie Ring in a neighborhood park while playing mobile game Pokémon Go. Stauffer was waiting for friends when she saw a gleam of gold. An Aggie Ring was buried in the mud.

Stauffer contacted The Association, who placed her in contact with the Ring's owner, Meg Austin '90, who lived only two miles from the park where her Ring was found. However, neither Austin nor her family had ever visited the park. Rather, 11 years earlier, the Aggie Ring had disappeared off an outdoor table in the Austins' backyard when Meg had taken it off to go for a swim. According to tx.ag/AustinPokemonPark, "The only suspect in the Ring's mysterious disappearance seems to be a squirrel or bird that may have picked up the shiny treasure."

DID YOU KNOW?

Although Aggie Rings can be replaced if they are lost or stolen, it's better to take preventative measures to keep your Ring safe. The most common fate of lost Aggie Rings is disappearing in bodies of water. Find tips at tx.ag/SafeAggieRings.

Lost At Sea: Matt Hofmeister '15 and Paul Krugler '72

The most common way for Aggie Rings to separate from their owners is to fall into a body of water, according to lost Ring reports submitted to The Association. Unfortunately, Matt Hofmeister '15 was no exception. When "high-fiving a buddy" in the waters of Port Aransas, his Aggie Ring flew off and could not be found.

Luckily for Hofmeister, Paul Krugler '72 went metal-detecting along that same beach five weeks later. After getting a signal, but seeing nothing, he dug into the sand a little. "I thought I had found a rather large gold wedding band," Krugler said. "As I pulled it from the sand and saw the star on the side, that thought immediately changed to — I'm going to make one Aggie somewhere a very, very happy person today!"

Read more about Hofmeister's lost and found Ring at tx.ag/HofmeisterLostAtSea.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATT HOFMEISTER '15 AND PAUL KRUGLER '72

Krugler, left, found Hofmeister's Aggie Ring on a summer vacation, and the two met up for its return at season's first football game early that fall. Hofmeister said he wasn't worried about the delay in receiving his found Ring — "I knew he would take care of it like his own."

Read more stories about lost Aggie Rings that are found again at tx.ag/LostRingStories.



PHOTO COURTESY OF P.T. RATHBONE '55

P.T. Rathbone '55 and Rick Hall '72 met serendipitously on a 71-day Grand Africa cruise. They stopped to take this picture on a safari excursion north of Cape Town in South Africa. Rathbone said, "I pack that flag everywhere I go and finally found Rick Hall."



PHOTO COURTESY OF TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY AT QATAR

Texas A&M at Qatar student Sara Badar '22 and her father celebrate her Aggie Ring Day in the spring of 2022. Sara has two Aggie sisters who have also received Rings.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HARMIT JASANI '20



I went hiking to Mt. Evans [in 2021]. Imagine running into an Aggie in Colorado at the summit! Small world. This is Mr. Chris Bradshaw from the Class of '88! He lives in Kansas City now and was in Colorado with his wife for a vacation. We were both super stoked meeting fellow Aggies at such an unlikely location! His wife narrated stories of how he has always run into Aggies throughout his life in the unlikeliest of places. I hope this is the first of many such Aggie encounters for me, haha! Just wanted to share this news with someone from school and so I'm passing this along. Attaching our picture together with this email! Take care. Thanks & gig 'em!
Best, Harmit

Emailed from Harmit Jasani '20



AggieNetwork

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Aggies and their Rings have traveled all around the world. If you choose to take your Ring on your travels, share your photos on social media by tagging @AggieNetwork or using the hashtag #AggiesEverywhere.



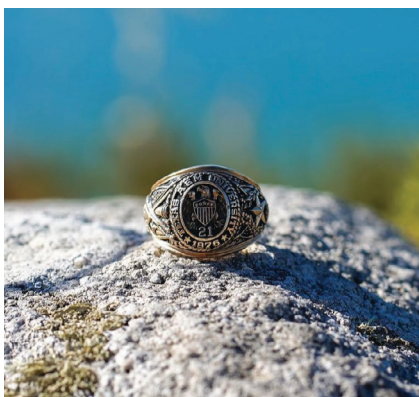
Big Bend National Park, Texas: Photo by Bailey Ingle '23.



Zion National Park: Photo by Hallie Airheart '22 includes the Rings belonging to her and Diego Coronado '22.



The Colosseum, Rome: Photo by Joseph Thornberg '17.



Carnac-Plage, France: Photo by Matthieu Ionesco '21.



Griffith Observatory, Los Angeles: Photo by Victoria Hutcheson-Deeb '21 includes the Rings belonging to her and her husband, Thomas Deeb '22.



Four Corners: Photo by C.J. Godkin '20.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE RODGERS

Aggie construction science professor Steve Rodgers, left in neon jacket, led a group of students on a study abroad trip in London, where they were stopped on the streets by Aggies four separate times. Pictured here with the group are father and daughter Kenny '90 and Peyton '23 Wyatt, front center.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Association distributed over 15,000 new and replacement Aggie Rings in 2022.

