

= George P. Burdell =

George P. Burdell is a fictitious student officially enrolled at Georgia Tech in 1927 as a practical joke . Since then , he has supposedly received all undergraduate degrees offered by Georgia Tech , served in the military , gotten married , and served on Mad magazine 's Board of Directors , among other accomplishments . Burdell at one point led the online poll for Time 's 2001 Person of the Year award . He has evolved into an important and notorious campus tradition ; all Georgia Tech students learn about him at orientation .

= = History = =

= = = Origins = = =

George P. Burdell was created by William Edgar " Ed " Smith , BS in Ceramic Engineering , 1927 . Smith conceived the idea for Burdell when he received two Georgia Tech enrollment forms . In a 1977 Atlanta Newspaper interview , Smith said that he originally intended to enroll his Academy of Richmond County principal , George P. Butler , but instead changed the last name to Burdell , the maiden name of his best friend 's mother .

After enrolling him , Smith signed Burdell up for all the same classes he had . Smith would do all schoolwork twice , changing it slightly to avoid professors catching his sham . When he had a test , he would take it twice and then turn it in under both names . By 1930 , the school had awarded Burdell a bachelor 's degree , and a few years later awarded the fictitious student a master 's degree . The college listed him as an official alumnus , even though his name has remained on the active student rolls . In 1930 , the ANAK Society , Georgia Tech 's oldest secret society , offered Burdell membership .

An early prank to use Burdell 's name came after someone was snubbed by a fraternity he had intended to join . " That irritated [him] . He went out and ordered a truckload of furniture to be delivered C.O.D. to that fraternity . Of course , the order was made by George P. Burdell . "

= = = World War II = = =

During World War II , service members continued the hoax , with Burdell 's name appearing on various fronts . For example , he was listed on the flight crew of a B @-@ 17 bomber , flying twelve missions over Europe with the 8th Air Force in England , until a Georgia Tech graduate became the new operations officer for the crew , recognized the name on the flight log , and ended the charade .

= = = Postwar = = =

In 1958 , members of the senior class of Agnes Scott College announced the wedding engagement of Burdell and fictional Agnes Scott student Ramona Cartwright in the Atlanta Journal @-@ Constitution . The 50th wedding anniversary , of " Mr. and Mrs. George P. Burdell from Atlanta " was acknowledged in the September 23 , 2006 broadcast of A Prairie Home Companion .

George P. Burdell is listed as a basketball letterman from 1956 to 1958 in the Georgia Tech Basketball yearbook . In 1969 , Georgia Tech computerized its class registration , believing it had successfully found a way to keep students from registering Burdell for class that semester . As it turned out , hackers registered him for every class in the Institute that quarter , over 3 @,@ 000 credit hours . He was subsequently re @-@ enrolled several times , including in 1975 and 1980 .

The publishers of Mad magazine listed Burdell as a member of its Board of Directors from 1969 until 1981 . In 1991 a check from Kraft Foods bore the signature " George P. Burdell " . When Time magazine was attempting to select their Person of the Year for 2001 , George Burdell was the leading candidate (holding at least 57 % of the votes) until the magazine removed him from the

running . Credit cards have been issued in his name .

WREK , the Georgia Tech student radio station , lists him as a staff member , and he is credited for playing baritone on the 1995 album Jesus Christ Superstar : A Resurrection , which was made in Atlanta by musicians from the local alternative rock scene . In 2000 , Burdell was named an alternate delegate to the Democratic National Convention from Georgia . Burdell was credited as a member of the choir of the 2006 album There is a Place . George 's fictitious son , George P. Burdell Junior , has been a proctor for several classes at Georgia Tech .

= = Legacy = =

Burdell is a campus icon at Georgia Tech , and incoming freshmen are introduced to him as one of the greatest alumni to graduate from the school . George P. Burdell is often paged over the public @-@ address system during football games and also at airports , bars , and hotels . Georgia Tech students or alumni often use his name as an alias when they do not want to disclose their real name . There is a store in Georgia Tech 's student center named " Burdell 's " .

During a speech made by US President Barack Obama being held at Georgia Tech in the McCamish Pavilion on March 10 , 2015 , the president jokingly indicated that he was supposed to be introduced by George P. Burdell , but no one could find George .