



## A.E. Hotchner

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS  
Class of 1940

*The author of scores of books, plays and television dramas, A.E. Hotchner became an entrepreneur and philanthropist when, with his friend Paul Newman, he co-founded the food company Newman's Own.*

A.E. grew up in St. Louis with his parents and brother in the Westgate Hotel at Delmar and Kingshighway. As chronicled in his 1972 memoir, *King of the Hill*, when he was 12, he lived in the hotel alone, trying to escape eviction, while his mother was in a sanitarium and his father was broke and stranded in Oklahoma.

He could not afford to go away to college, so A.E. attended what was then St. Louis's "streetcar college": Washington University, whose costs at the time were kept artificially low for residents of St. Louis. He has said of his time at the university, "It was a saving grace. It was the place where I could achieve despite the deprivation in which I lived. It was the other side of the coin of my life."

While a student at the university, A.E. took English 16, a playwriting course taught by distinguished professor and author William G. B. Carson. The three best plays would be produced with a student cast, and everyone expected that an older student in the class, Thomas Lanier (later "Tennessee") Williams, would win the competition. However, his play was not chosen; A.E.'s was. Williams picked up his books, stormed out of class, out of St. Louis and never came back.

Alongtime supporter of Washington University, A.E. is a graduate of both the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Law. After two stultifying years practicing with a St. Louis law firm, he escaped into the wild blue yonder of the Air Force, where he served with the Anti-Submarine command, emerging four years later with the rank of major.

In New York City, A.E. obtained a job as "literary bounty hunter" for *Cosmopolitan* magazine. In that role, he traveled to Cuba to recruit Ernest Hemingway to write for the magazine, and the two became fast friends. The memoir of his friendship with Hemingway, *Papa Hemingway* (1966)—published in 34 countries in 28 different languages—remains among A.E.'s best-known works. Over the years, he has written scores of novels, biographies, plays, screenplays, magazine articles and television dramas.

In 1982, A.E. and his longtime friend, Paul Newman, started a food business company, Newman's Own. All of the after-tax profits from the highly successful business are donated for educational and charitable purposes, including the creation of eight Hole in the Wall Gang Camps, which provide 1,000 children with cancer and other serious conditions summer camping experiences of the highest quality, while extending year-round support to their families and health care providers.

Through his writing, over a long and distinguished career, A.E. has delighted, enlightened and entertained audiences on a wide variety of topics. As cofounder of Newman's Own, he systematically disregarded the advice of experts—relying instead on instinct, imagination and luck—to create an enterprise that has helped channel over \$175 million to thousands of worthy charities.