

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

**An Informal History of
Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi
at the
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

By H. Zane Robbins, Σ '52

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[1855 – 1999]
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The birth of a book is in many respects like the birth of a child. In both cases, the labor pains (so I'm told) are intense at the beginning but fade out of memory once the newborn is with us. The birth of a child might involve one midwife or none. The birth of a book, however, involves many.

I am indebted to Phil Smith, '64, who conceived the idea for this history and drove it forward; to Dick Jenrette, '51, who provided the foreword and generously underwrote the publication of the book; to Matt Cheek, '94, who compiled extensive data from the archives of *The Purple & Gold*; to Don Beeson, '82, who cajoled some reluctant Sigmas to contribute their thoughts; to Frank Allston, '52, and Kurt Gilliland, '92, who risked allergy attacks by combing through decades-old archives; and to all of the brothers of Alpha Sigma who shared memories of their days at the Lodge.

The Chi Psi Central Office also has been extremely helpful in making available to us a wide range of photographs and documents compiled over the years, many of which are included in the following pages.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

While most readers of this modest history will be brothers in Chi Psi, it is possible that others, too, will find the book of some interest – because of its historical notes on fraternities in general and University of North Carolina fraternities in particular or perhaps because they devour anything related to the nation's first state university. For such general readers, let me point out that Alpha Sigma is one of 33 currently active chapters of the Chi Psi national fraternity.

Alpha Sigma was the mother chapter of the South for Chi Psi and remains today, by whatever measures you choose, one of the outstanding fraternity chapters in America. This book seeks to document at least a few of the key events in the history of Alpha Sigma for present and future generations.

Certain word usages in this narrative are peculiar to Chi Psi, e.g., what others call the fraternity house, we call the Lodge; what others call a chapter, we call an alpha and what others call the fraternity president, we call the #1.

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FOREWORD

To come from RHJ.

/s/ Richard H. Jenrette

New York, New York
July 1999

PREFACE

A problem one faces in writing a history of any living thing – whether person or institution – is that the history itself will become history sooner rather than later. That has a way of inducing humility in looking backward at the times that have been and intimidation at looking forward at the times yet to be. And so it is with this modest history of one alpha of one fraternity on one campus – each unsurpassed in its excellence.

Historians typically shuffle through reams of yellowed documents, work their way through stacks of books, attempt to balance conflicting views and seek a thread of continuity in it all. Some struggle to find historic evidence to support their private biases of people and events of the past. None of that applies in this case because of the paucity of documentary records and papers. Instead of sorting through reams, my task was to work through a cigar box full of bits and scraps and scour back issues of *The Purple & Gold*. My conclusion: As a group, we've done a marvelous job of veiling our affairs from "the rude gaze of public scrutiny."

As always, however, Sigma brothers came to my aid. Prodded by Phil Smith, the godfather of this book, scores of Alpha Sigma alumni have contributed recollections of their salad days at Chapel Hill – some lengthy, some brief, all appreciated. In total, they have significantly enhanced this examination of what has made one fraternity chapter different from so many others.

As an author, I am grateful for that, because the story could not have been told without the insights, memories and reflections of these brothers in the bonds. Even so, the story of Alpha Sigma is incomplete. So many of those who have been instrumental in the founding, survival and growth of the alpha have passed on without leaving us their thoughts. And so many others are out of touch and unavailable to add to our knowledge.

Still, the story is a stirring one and one that might inspire others to do great things for Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi – and, with luck, to keep a documentary record of it.

Evanston, Illinois
June 1999

‘OUR MUTUAL LEGACY’

Here are some contemporary views on social fraternities as we approach a new millenium:

“College fraternities, measuring fun by the keg, discredited themselves in the ’50s, declined in the ’60s and disintegrated in the ’70s.”

“If one is seeking examples of political-incorrectness, one need look no further than the chauvinistic fraternity rows that dot the nation’s university campuses.”

“College fraternities represent an idea whose time has come and, thankfully, gone. Let us shed no tears for them.”

Who said what is not important. The fact is that each of these comments is accurate as it relates to some fraternity somewhere. But none is accurate as it relates to Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi – today, in the past or, one fondly hopes, in the future.

Chi Psi itself had distinctly different origins from most other fraternities. It was the eighth Greek-letter society founded in the United States, and the fifth brought to life at Union College in Schenectady, NY. As *Baird’s Manual* points out, however, Chi Psi was the first society “founded upon the fraternal and social principles of brotherhood, rather than upon the literary characteristics on which existing societies had been started.” It might also have been the first to focus distinctly on the factors of spirit and common interest that serve to distinguish a fraternity from a mere social club. It also was the first – and remains one of the very few – to characterize itself as a “family fraternity.”

Chi Psi has long been an innovator among social fraternities. In 1846, for example, Alpha Epsilon at the University of Michigan sought escape from the aggressively hostile attitudes toward fraternities on the Ann Arbor campus – they sought, in words familiar to every Chi Psi, to “forsake the throng and seek retirement for its proper use.” So the brothers constructed a small (20’ x 24’) building in the nearby woods, the first ever built specifically for fraternity use. The Epsilon brothers built the log structure in the style of a hunting lodge and gave that name to all Chi Psi Lodges that have followed.

In 1889, our fraternity became the first to employ a fulltime traveling secretary – the Visitor – to work with local alphas and ensure uniformity in policies and procedures. In 1919, the fraternity was the first to adopt a uniform accounting system for all alphas and, in 1926, the first to endow an educational foundation. Later, Chi Psi was first to implement a student-exchange program to provide intercultural experiences for Chi Psis and foreign students.

In 1952, the Executive Council, the national governing body of Chi Psi, created the landmark *Man and His College* program to give undergraduates a keener appreciation of their primary reason for attending college. In 1960, Chi Psi was among the first to include student representatives with full voting privileges on the governing Executive Council.

In 1965, Chi Psi launched the pioneering *Program for Self Development*, which *Baird's Manual* calls “one of the most significant ventures in interfraternity history.” This innovative two-day program helps students better understand themselves and learn the basics of goal-setting, personal development and team building. Unlike typical academic courses, the Chi Psi program focuses on leadership skills and the importance of setting realistic personal goals.

During his tenure as president of the national fraternity from 1977 to 1985, Oliver Rowe, who had been a driving force in the rechartering of Alpha Sigma a half-century earlier, introduced his *Program for Excellence*. This program, implemented in all alphas, also looks beyond the academic to foster self-discipline and to underscore the importance of both scholastic and extracurricular excellence.

This pioneering attitude is not simply a vestige of the past; it continues today, as evidenced by the creation in 1991 of the first four-year sequential *National Leadership Training Program*.

John Strickland, who has served the fraternity in a variety of roles since graduation, offers an evaluation of the *Program for Excellence* two decades after its birth. “Oliver Rowe developed the *Program for Excellence* to elevate the fraternity's standing by encouraging alphas to set lofty goals and implement plans to achieve them. That program has been a savior for several alphas, and it is no secret that the basis for it was the remarkable history and model set by Sigma since 1928. This,” he concludes, “is our mutual legacy. Let us assure its continuance in whatever ways we can.”

The Chi Psi Story, a 1994 history of the national fraternity, called Brother Rowe “one of the most active presidents in the history of the fraternity.” In addition to his tireless contributions to Alpha Sigma and the national fraternity, Brother Rowe also was instrumental in the founding of alphas at Washington & Lee University and Rollins College, and he was a member of the group that labored long and successfully to reestablish Alpha Chi at Amherst College in 1985. The national fraternity's Founders Trophy is dedicated to Brother Rowe. This award was first proposed at the 100th annual convention at Chapel Hill in 1951 and finally established in 1974 to recognize the alpha that makes the greatest progress toward excellence each year. Oddly enough, it is the only Chi Psi national award that Alpha Sigma has failed to win – perhaps because of the alpha's consistently high standards of excellence.

In 1991 the national fraternity went a step beyond Oliver Rowe's *Program for Excellence*, introducing a sequential four-year National Leadership Training Program – another product of the Educational Trust. In common with its predecessors, the new program focuses on developing individual leadership abilities, responsible citizenship and continuing growth.

If Chi Psi is a rarity among social fraternities, so is Alpha Sigma among its peers. The UNC alpha truly lives up to the vision of its founders: “the cultivation of true friendship. . .[and] advancement in intellectual, moral and social life.” Alpha Sigma stands proudly apart from its peers. It has quietly but effectively established a genuine tradition of excellence. This is not to say that there have been no dips in the quality of the alpha or the commitment of the brothers. Unfortunately, there have been, as in any organization, but the trendline has moved clearly upward over the years.

THE BEGINNING. . .AND TEMPORARY END

The path to brotherhood was not made easy in the 19th century by the ponderous Chi Psi petitioning process or by the hostile attitude of a sizable segment of the University of North Carolina faculty and student body. In a nutshell, mid-19th century educators were opposed to so-called “secret” societies, and many were determined to keep them off the nation’s campuses. As early as 1842 – just one year after the founding of Chi Psi at Union College – the UNC trustees adopted a resolution opposing fraternities and other exclusive clubs. The resolution condemned such organizations as injurious to the university’s established literary societies (the storied Philanthropic and Dialectic Societies) and to “the cause of good morals and sound learning.”

Notwithstanding the odds, a determined group of six young UNC men in 1854 began petitioning Chi Psi to establish the fraternity’s first southern alpha in Chapel Hill. They formed Sigma Gamma as a local fraternity that, according to one member, met “in fence corners, byways and, on special occasions, at old Burnett’s restaurant.” The Carolina group had the encouragement and active support of Princeton University’s Alpha Delta, which itself had been chartered only three years earlier in 1851. Some 18 months later, the Chi Psi Executive Council approved the petition, and Alpha Sigma – now with 10 members – came into being in November 1855.

The new Chi Psi brothers were former members of the first Kappa Alpha fraternity, founded at UNC by four members of Phi Beta Kappa. According to a contemporary account, “The fraternity was composed strictly of the gentry classes.” This particular Kappa Alpha had no apparent relationship with the Kappa Alpha Society founded in 1825 at Union College or the Kappa Alpha Order founded in 1865 at Washington & Lee University. There were, however, some 21 chapters at Southern colleges and universities, but the KA seams began cracking when dissension erupted at the University of Alabama, leading to public disclosure of the fraternity’s secrets. Most of the KA chapters – including the mother chapter at UNC – dissolved between 1854 and 1858. Alpha Sigma was not alone in drawing members from the defunct KA. Charter members of Chi Psi at both Furman and Virginia also were former members of Kappa Alpha.

Hamlin Beattie, who attended both Princeton (where he was initiated into Alpha Delta) and UNC, was instrumental in drawing on friends in Kappa Alpha to form the nucleus of what became Alpha Sigma. For reasons unknown, neither the centennial (1941) nor the sesquicentennial (1991) history of Chi Psi mentions Beattie in connection with the establishment of Alpha Sigma. He later contributed importantly to the establishment of alphas at Furman, South Carolina, Mississippi and Virginia.

The chartering process at UNC began through the persistent efforts of a group of like-minded young men who simply wanted to share common interests. Chi Psi became the fourth (or fifth, depending upon which source one accepts) national fraternity on the Chapel Hill campus although, as one of the founders later recalled, the charter had been “cautiously granted.” As an aside, it is interesting to note that at this time the University of North Carolina’s student enrollment was second only to that of Yale University, where Chi Psi established Alpha _____ in 18__.

By 1858, William Wooster was reporting to the Central Office that Sigma “has commenced the [Fall] session under peculiarly happy auspices – in fact, in a condition of prosperity without a parallel in the annals of our college.”

Wooster also reported that Alpha Sigma had declined to support petitioners for a Chi Psi alpha at Baylor College because they felt that Baylor – then in existence for only 13 years – was “rather a one-horse affair.” Explaining the alpha’s view, Wooster wrote: “With a chapter in the University of Virginia and ours in the ‘great Southern university’ . . . we will rest contented.” He added this thought: “There is clearly no good resulting from the foundation of chapters in every little prep school in the country, but rather it has a pernicious effect upon our standing, inasmuch as it excites the ridicule and contempt of those around us.” Despite their opposition to “one-horse” Baylor, the Sigma brothers supported petitions in this period from South Carolina College [now University], the University of Mississippi and Georgia Military Institute as well as those of the University of Virginia and Furman College.

Brothers Thomas Sterling Falconer and Robert Tarleton, both native Alabamans attending Princeton, officiated at the founding ceremony. In the words of one new Sigma brother, they “lifted the mystic veil which separated 15 earnest, anxious Sigma Gammas from the secrets, friendships and ennobling purposes of Chi Psi.”

At the 1858 national convention, a dispute erupted involving a number of Northern alphas. Once the matter was settled, the convention minutes state, the UNC delegate (possibly Basil Manly) “moved that the Hamilton, Wesleyan (as staunchly Methodist in its attitudes as the name suggests), Williams and Michigan fellows shake hands, make friends and take a drink but that the Wesleyan delegate be excused from drinking anything but lemonade.”

The initial incarnation of the first Southern alpha of Chi Psi was hard-earned and short-lived, interrupted by the thundering cannons of war between the states. There were 18 members of Alpha Sigma by 1861, and all volunteered for service in the Army of the Confederacy. Of the 53 brothers of Sigma in its initial five years of existence, 52 served in the military. In closing down the chapter – a common occurrence among southern fraternities in the war years – the brothers tossed onto a roaring bonfire the charter, constitution, bylaws and all fraternity records, divided the furnishings among themselves and rode off to battle. That leaves us today with little documentary evidence of the alpha's earliest years.

The stout founders of Alpha Sigma, even in their brief time as members of the national fraternity, raised a standard that would be seized and carried forward by later generations. There were only 18 members when the chapter dissolved, but in the six years of Sigma's initial existence, the alpha produced a UNC valedictorian and two chief marshals. Though little known today, the position of chief marshal was prestigious and highly coveted in earlier years. Such individual recognition of Sigmas is all the more impressive in light of the fact that the alpha's first "honor man" was never initiated because his graduation coincided with the chartering of the alpha.

Sigma brothers also played important roles in the founding of Alpha Upsilon at Furman University in 1858. John M. Richmond journeyed from Chapel Hill to Greenville to initiate the Furman petitioners with the assistance of Hamlin Beattie, an Alpha Delta brother who had helped establish Alpha Sigma while completing his postgraduate work at UNC. Both Richmond and Beattie later played similar roles in the founding of Alpha Omicron at the University of Virginia in 1860. Interestingly, the Furman petition, strongly supported by Alpha Sigma, was accepted by the national quickly and "without opposition" – a stark contrast to the onerous chartering process experienced by the founders of Sigma.

In its brief 19th century existence, Alpha Sigma clearly fulfilled its role as mother alpha of the South. In addition to its contributions to the founding of Alpha Upsilon, the alpha also played a significant role in the founding of Alpha Beta at the University of South Carolina, Alpha Gamma at the University of Mississippi and Alpha Omicron at the University of Virginia. In addition, James Walker was among those who in 1857 strongly supported the chartering of Alpha Kappa at the Manhattan-based Free Academy, which is known today as the City University of New York.

There were 53 active brothers of Alpha Sigma in the 1855-61 period, and six of them served at the inauguration of new Southern alphas. All of these alphas disbanded during the War Between the States but, with the exception of Alpha Sigma itself, all started afresh soon after the war. Interestingly each of these alphas (Upsilon, Beta, Gamma and Omicron) has gone dormant at least twice since the founding, but all except Upsilon are active and vigorous today.

As these historical notes suggest, the brothers of Alpha Sigma were campus and fraternity leaders from the beginning.

Late in life, John Richmond, a member of the class of 1858, described the brief early years of the original Alpha Sigma. Writing of the final commencement before Sigma went dormant, he stated: “I was not present on the occasion, but I imagine every heart of Sigma must have swelled with just pride when, at commencement 1860, the two most prominent and attractive figures of over 500 young men – [William] Wooster, valedictorian, and [Joshua] Wright, sub-marshal – wore the Chi Psi badge” – carefully hidden from the rude gaze of public scrutiny, one presumes, according to the national fraternity’s ultraconservative policy.

An unhappy episode in the national fraternity’s history involved Alpha Delta, which had been a source of continuing support to the founders of Sigma. The Princeton alpha went dormant in 1859 after Princeton University’s hostile administration declared fraternities and other so-called secret societies “unlawful” and began requiring new students to sign a pledge not to join them. Although many students continued to express interest in pledging Chi Psi, the brothers unanimously agreed that it would go against their grain – and against the underlying precepts of Chi Psi – to encourage or even allow others to ignore the pledge they had signed to gain admission to the university.

‘NO HAPPIER YEARS’

The years between 1861 and 1928 saw vast changes in public attitudes, in politics and in the national and regional economies. Severely damaged by the war and even more deeply wounded by its aftermath, the university itself closed its doors in 1871. Following an economic and spiritual resuscitation, UNC reopened in 1876 under the forward-looking leadership of President Kemp Plummer Battle. By the turn of the century, the renaissance was complete, and the university was again moving forward with renewed vigor under the new leadership of President Francis Preston Venable. . .but still without an active alpha of Chi Psi.

In 1893, Robert E. Coker transferred to UNC from the University of South Carolina, where he had become a Chi Psi at Alpha Beta. He soon met Dr. Walter D. Toy, a university professor and a Chi Psi from Furman University’s Alpha Upsilon. Together, they began an effort to reestablish Alpha Sigma. Dr. John M. Richmond, who had become a Sigma brother a generation earlier, learned of their interest and quickly offered his support. The fraternity spirit among the three Chi Psis was strong, but the timing was poor. It was about this time that the South Carolina and Georgia legislatures outlawed fraternities, and it appeared that North Carolina was on the verge of following suit. Happily, that never happened, but the black atmosphere hovering over fraternities in the Not-So-Gay-After-All Nineties quashed the fledgling Coker-Toy-Richmond initiative.

It was not until 1928 that Sigma reclaimed its place among the active alphas of Chi Psi. And this time the chartering process was even slower-moving than before. One reason for the long delay was the resurgent hostility to fraternities by faculty and administrators that characterized the latter years of the 19th century, an attitude that spilled into the early part of the new century. Another was the reluctance of the Chi Psi Executive Council to expand – even in cases of rechartering dormant alphas. Yet another roadblock was the lingering animosity of North vs. South, which seemed particularly strong within the cloistered ranks of Chi Psi.

In 1923, however, a new band of brothers-to-be took up the fight to reestablish Chi Psi at the University of North Carolina. Their struggle was difficult and often frustrating. In a terse reply to the original 1923 petition to recharter Alpha Sigma, the Executive Council stated that its conservative policy ruled out further expansion (there were 23 active chapters at the time) although it granted a charter in that same year to Alpha Iota Delta at Georgia Tech. In fact, the slow start and weak financial condition of Alpha Iota Delta appear to have been cautionary signals for the Executive Council in considering further expansion. Whatever the underlying reasons, the Executive Council shut the door firmly, urging the Tar Heel contingent to petition “some other fraternity.”

The wearying campaign to breathe new life into Alpha Sigma eventually took five full years but succeeded in spite of initial resistance from the university and the national fraternity’s refusal even to consider the first petition to reestablish Chi Psi at UNC.

The seeds of the new Alpha Sigma were sown in 1923 by Pollock Irwin and Joe Temple during a leisurely walk in the woods surrounding the UNC campus. Both had declined opportunities to pledge various fraternities and agreed that they would prefer to start one of their own – one with few members at the outset and with high principles and lofty goals. Soon thereafter, Irwin, Temple and a small circle of friends created the Alpha Chi Society and elected Oliver Rowe president. They quickly identified and recruited some of the university’s top students as members of the new society. Thinking back on those quiet beginnings, Irwin wrote some years later that “we had our difficulties, but I can remember no happier years in my life.”

Early in the existence of Alpha Chi, the brothers pored over a well-thumbed copy of *Baird’s Manual*, which listed and described every national fraternity. Their unanimous choice was Chi Psi. The brothers of Alpha Chi reacted warmly to the conservatism of Chi Psi, though they would later come to view the Executive Council as perhaps too conservative with respect to the rechartering process. They also admired the fraternity’s high ideals, national reputation for excellence and the friends they knew who had joined Chi Psi on other campuses. So the brothers made an early – and unanimous – decision to petition Chi Psi to accept Alpha Chi as the new Alpha Sigma.

The brothers of Alpha Chi were joined by a number of Chi Psis who were members of the university faculty or had transferred to UNC from other universities. This small but aggressive group focused single-mindedly on persuading the national fraternity to grant a new Alpha Sigma charter. The Executive Council’s response, however, was rapid and unequivocal: No!

Disappointed but not discouraged, the brothers of Alpha Chi redoubled their efforts to excel and to attract the highest possible quality of members. The petitioners for the new Alpha Sigma soon found invaluable allies among Chi Psis living in Chapel Hill. Robert E. Coker, by then a professor of zoology on the UNC faculty, and Dr. Walter Toy, Coker’s ally in the aborted 1893 attempt to revive the alpha, were joined by Coker’s cousin, Dr. William C. Coker, a professor of botany. They and other Chi Psis were instrumental in the eventual success of the undergraduate group. Toy, the Cokers, George C. Taylor (another Chi Psi alumnus (B ’97) who had joined the faculty), Judge Walter F. Stackhouse, T ’95, of Marion, SC, and Judge Frank Cooper, II ’93, of Albany, NY, became strong supporters of Alpha Chi. Together, they pressured the Executive Council relentlessly on behalf of the petitioners.

As one example, Judge Cooper penned a strongly worded letter in May 1925 to Clifford Williams, chairman of the Executive Council and in the beginning a stubborn opponent of the rechartering of Alpha Sigma. "I am not an expansionist," Judge Cooper declared, "and I do not believe in expansion as a general proposition. I am strongly opposed to Dartmouth, was not in favor of Yale and was not in favor of Georgia Tech, but I do believe that North Carolina is a strategic location and the opportunity is most excellent at this time." The two judges – Cooper and Stackhouse – made it hard for the Executive Council to continuing saying "no," but that remained the official answer to every plea.

Nelson T. Levings presented the first formal petition to recharter Alpha Sigma at the 1924 national convention. Although the petition was sharply declined, Levings found some influential supporters in the process. Among them were John Anderson (who served as president of the national fraternity from 1923 to 1930), Milton Smith of Denver, Samuel Blagden of Williamstown, MA, and J. Truman Bidwell, the newly appointed Visitor and future chairman of the Executive Council (1951-55). Levings, a Mississippian who attended the University of Virginia (where he became a Chi Psi) and graduated from the University of Chicago, was an ardent supporter of Alpha Sigma and, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, of the rechartering of Alpha Omicron at Virginia.

In his efforts to win Executive Council support for the rechartering of Alpha Sigma, however, Levings was pushing a very large boulder up a very steep hill. Evidence of the Executive Council's continuing hostility toward Southern universities lies in this 1925 exchange of correspondence between Ralph J. Ricker, X '90, and Executive Secretary H. Seger Slifer:

"Dear Brothers in Chi Psi:

"Practically all the literature regarding the unusually suitable group of students at the University of North Carolina now petitioning Chi Psi for a charter with which to revive our dormant Alpha Sigma, is in my hands. I have lived in the South for several years, and I have thought right along that, whether wittingly or unwittingly, we were denying the South a square deal by not bridging the distance and by withholding sufficient contact with the rest of the fraternity. I was an *ex-officio* member of the committee which eight years ago examined the petitioning group at the University of Virginia, where the threatening war clouds were largely instrumental in preventing a revival of the dormant alpha there. I was present at the 1920 convention in Chicago when all the arguments for and against the South were advanced. I therefore know thoroughly whereof I speak when I advocate with all the powers of persuasion I have, that you grant this request.

"Yours fraternally,
"Ralph J. Ricker, X 1890"

“Dear Brother Ricker:

“I acknowledge receipt of your letter of June 9th relative to the extention (*sic*) into the University of North Carolina. This matter was discussed fully at a Council meeting on June 7th and, in view of present conditions, the Council will present the petition to the Convention *with the recommendation that it not be acted on favorably.*

“Fraternally yours,
“H. Seger Slifer”

In December 1925, Judge Cooper again wrote to urge Clifford Williams to support “the revival of the old Alpha Sigma.” He enclosed a 10-page supporting document, which, among other things, noted: “It has been urged by some that we want no more chapters in the South because it is backward and Southerners do not take enough interest in fraternities.” Judge Cooper disagreed with that view and commented that “there are. . . a number of us who feel very strongly that it will be most unfortunate if we let this opportunity go by to revive the alpha at North Carolina at this time.”

The testy Williams responded in typical fashion. After stating that a committee would visit UNC in due time to inspect the university and Alpha Chi, Williams ended with these comments:

“Frankly, I have not yet read the enclosures with your letter of December 10th. Please advise people communicating with us to be brief. There is a young man named Levings who has mailed us volumes about North Carolina. As a consequence,. . . his communications are no longer read by the members [of the Executive Council] and they thought one of the enclosures with your letter was a copy of something he had previously sent us.

“These remarks, you understand are not official, purely personal. We would not hurt Levings’ feelings for anything.”

Judge Cooper got the point. On Christmas Eve, he responded that “it will apparently be difficult to obtain a charter for an alpha anywhere, even in Heaven if that were possible.” He also pointed out that “Levings is not a crank but earnest in his effort to make the fraternity see his vision of the New South and the necessity for the revival of the alpha at North Carolina. . . . He has just been married and has no time to spend chasing rainbows.”

While the Williams-led Executive Council, supported by Executive Secretary Slip Slifer, dug in its heels, Alpha Chi got on with business. The Chapel Hill Chi Psis helped the Alpha Chis move from their temporary quarters in a downtown mattress factory straight onto Fraternity Row. With the help of virtually every Chi Psi in Chapel Hill, the petitioners formed a stock company – with Everett Henley serving as treasurer – that underwrote the purchase of the Pi Kappa Alpha house as the new home of Alpha Chi. Although the petitioning process moved with glacial speed, the brothers of Alpha Chi were undaunted in their efforts to become one of the university’s leading fraternities. Despite the absence of a national affiliation, they succeeded in pledging some of the most promising students on campus and, according to a contemporary, soon “had members in practically every field of campus interest, ranging from literary endeavors to athletics.”

It was in this same period that the Interfraternity Council took over and expanded the role formerly filled by the university’s Panhellenic Council. According to one account, the new council’s function was to regulate such matters as “time of initiation, time of pledging, scholastic standards, rushing procedure, etc. and act as a clearinghouse for all problems relating to fraternities.” In that respect, at least, little has changed in the intervening years.

Symptomatic of prevailing attitudes in Chapel Hill in the post-Victorian 1920s was the suspension in 1925 of dance privileges on the campus, an action triggered by a December “Germans” dance where, university President H.W. Chase asserted, conditions and behavior “were of such a character as to indicate a real lapse in the sense of responsibility. . .” The Twenties might have roared elsewhere, but in Chapel Hill it was more of a low purr!

In the Spring of 1926, Clifford Williams and Slip Slifer finally boarded a train en route to Chapel Hill “to investigate a group of students at the University of North Carolina. . .who are petitioning for a Chi Psi charter.” Typical of Williams’ condescending attitude to anything Southern, he asked a Chicago banker to provide an introduction to a Chapel Hill banker “if there is a bank in the town.”

Williams and Slifer stopped at George Washington University in Washington, DC, and at the University of Virginia on their way to Chapel Hill. President W.M. Lewis of GWU told them that “North Carolina, in his opinion, was equal from an educational viewpoint to the University of Virginia but much more progressive and had the greatest future of any school in the South.”

Their verdict on the quality of fraternities at UVa was not exactly flattering. “We found the fraternity houses at Virginia rather poorly furnished and untidy, and the members the same,” they wrote in their formal report to the Executive Council.

In Chapel Hill, Williams and Slifer met with the four Chi Psi alumni on faculty as well as representatives of the local Greek community and university officials. University President Chase expressed a more benign view toward fraternities than he had toward dancing some six months earlier. He also felt, as Williams reported, that the parvenu university down the road – Duke – would benefit UNC by acting as “a spur to the state legislators to continue to provide amply so that the state institution might not be outdone by the ‘tobacco’ university.”

One can imagine how sharply Williams was biting his tongues when he reported on the meetings with members of the Alpha Chi Society. His report stated:

“They would appear creditably on the campus of any Northern school. . . .They have some men from the North, and they have a great many men with a long Southern pedigree, which is quite important at the University of Virginia but doesn’t count for so much at North Carolina. In spite of the pedigree feature, all of the men are in earnest as indicated by their scholarship record and the struggle they have had financially to get themselves properly housed. There are not many men of any great means in the group. The ‘pedigreed’ men are not disposed to stand on their pedigree alone but are, all of them, very earnest workers internally and in the college.”

The report noted that Alpha Chi had purchased the PiKA house in Fraternity Row for \$9,500 and invested another \$1,500 to make necessary repairs and install central heating. Williams conceded that the house was “nicely furnished, well taken care of and orderly,” adding that “it has none of the slovenly appearance of some of the houses we visited at Virginia and North Carolina.”

In a personal addendum to the report, Slip Slifer agreed with Williams' views on the merits of UNC and Alpha Chi but added that "I do not, however, feel that the Chi Psi fraternity should further extend at this time and would cast my vote against any expansion."

By the end of 1926, Alpha Chi ranked No. 1 among UNC's 34 national and local fraternities in scholarship and showed no "lapse in the sense of responsibility." The only reason the fraternity failed to receive the Panhellenic Council's silver cup for scholarship was its lack of a national charter. Further evidence of the quality of the Alpha Chi membership came from the Order of the Golden Fleece, which tapped the president of Alpha Chi, Walter E. Crissman, as one of four students to be inducted into the university's highest honorary society that year.

Although the Executive Council of Chi Psi remained aloof from Alpha Chi, several other national fraternities were deeply impressed by the remarkable success of the fledgling group and invited Alpha Chi to petition them. Some even offered to waive the petitioning process and grant an immediate charter. But the founders stood firm. They had decided in the beginning that it would be Chi Psi or nothing, and attractive proposals from other well-established fraternities failed to sway them. Looking back, one can only marvel at their tenacity in the face of repeated snubs from Chi Psi and frequent offers from other highly regarded national fraternities.

In the end, Chi Psi alumni from several states became ardent supporters of Alpha Chi. Working with the actives, they formulated petitions and sent them to every alpha of Chi Psi as well as to individual members. As pressure mounted from several directions, the Executive Council finally granted Alpha Chi a hearing at the 1925 national convention. Over the next year, the Executive Council made an in-depth investigation of every aspect of Alpha Chi and its members. President Clifford H. Williams and Executive Secretary H. Seger Slifer (known to brothers everywhere as "Slip") visited the UNC campus for a first-hand evaluation of the then-local fraternity. Although both were strongly opposed to rechartering Alpha Sigma, they conceded that Alpha Chi had "potential." Even so, they insisted that the organization prove itself by becoming one of the leading fraternities on campus before the Executive Council would seriously consider granting a charter.

The puzzled brothers thought the record clearly showed that Alpha Chi was *already* among the top fraternities on campus. Even so, Alpha Chi was quick to answer the challenge. The 1926 rush season netted 11 truly outstanding pledges, many lured from the clutches of top national fraternities. The new recruits were drawn from the circle of current and rising campus leaders, and their activities ranged from the academic to the athletic.

At least one key member of Alpha Chi was already a Chi Psi. Linn Garibaldi had quietly slipped away to Chicago where he was initiated into Alpha Epsilon Delta at the University of Chicago. [*Editor's Note: Weakened by World War II and the policies of then-president Robert M. Hutchins, Epsilon Delta closed its doors on the Chicago campus in the 1940s only to be reborn at Northwestern University in 1947.*] In a terse, handwritten letter to Alpha Chi on January 4, 1925, Nelson Levings conveyed the news of Garibaldi's initiation and cautioned the brothers to "keep to yourselves the fact that Garibaldi came to Chicago expressly to go Chi Psi." He added: "Don't mention it to a soul until after this school year is over, especially to any other Chi Psi."

By this time, Alpha Chi had a number of Chi Psis among its members – students who had transferred to UNC from other universities. In addition to Linn Garibaldi, there were Eri B. Hulbert III, EA '27; Wex S. Malone, EA '28; Parmelee Ward, EA '28; Stanley Beckwith, AA '27; J. Everett Henley, AA '27; Granville H. Swope, AA '30; and Lindsey M. Gudger, IA '28. Like Garibaldi, each of these brothers had started at UNC, joined Alpha Chi, transferred to another university where they were initiated into Chi Psi and then returned to the Chapel Hill campus.

With a stronger-than-ever core of brothers and pledges, Alpha Chi developed a proposition in 1926 that summarized what the local fraternity could bring to the national and, again, asked

Refounders of Alpha Sigma

After a half-century of dormancy, Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi was reestablished at the University of North Carolina on June 1-2, 1928. The founding brothers were:

- Oliver Reagan Rowe
- Joseph A. Temple
- Walter E. Crissman
- Pollock L. Irwin
- Mark T. Lambeth
- Henry T. Thompson
- William G. Morgan
- John O. Allison
- Killian Barwick
- George Kenneth Cavanaugh
- Linn K. Garibaldi
- Arthur R. Hollett
- Edwin E. Koonce
- Lawrence H. Wallace
- Parmelee Ward
- Burnham S. Colburn Jr.
- Manly C. Crowson Jr.
- Henry W.G. McIntire
- Donald M. McIntosh Jr.
- Walter S. Spearman
- Henry M. Baggs
- William O. Bennett
- Robert Hunter Cheatham
- Robert A. Hovis
- George N.P. Leetch
- Frank R. McNinch Jr.
- John R. Teague Jr.
- Roy W. Franklin
- Harold W. Glascock II
- Robert Reeves

permission to join Chi Psi. The proposal included Alpha Chi's commitment to raise seed funds of \$16,000 (a staggering sum in the 1920s) as well as a pledge to maintain its excellence in recruiting. The \$16,000 cash requirement was another Williams/Slifer tactic designed to stall the Alpha Chi petition.

Fortunately, the brothers had supporters who were willing to help fund the rechartering of Alpha Sigma. Nelson Levings was instrumental in the purchase of the Alpha Sigma property in 1927. He was joined by Milton Smith, Ψ '87, in purchasing an option on the Lindsay property. Brother Levings secured financial support from several other Chi Psi alumni, including Edward C. Dwelle, AA '01, Raymond Hunt, BΔ, '03, David R. Coker, B '91, Cornelius VanLeuven, P '00, Alester G. Furman, U '86, Williams S. Nelson, B '00, J. Waties Thomas, B '98, John P. Thomas Jr., B '74, WC Cleveland, T '05, Robert H. Chapman, Ψ '18, William H. Beattie Ψ '16, and George R. Morgan, Ψ '16. When all was said and done, Alpha Chi had \$17,000 in the bank.

By the end of 1927, the brothers of Alpha Chi had met all of the requirements placed on them, and a revival charter finally, if reluctantly, was granted. Alpha Sigma breathed new life on June 1, 1928! On that day, 21 upperclassmen were initiated, followed on June 2 by the initiation of seven from the lower classes. Five years after submitting its

petition, Alpha Sigma again was alive and well.

In November 1928, Sigma dispatched to alumni its first alpha letter following the revival. The letter announced a highly successful pledge season with nine new pledges from five states. Interestingly, four of the nine were legacies – two of them double legacies. The oldest legacy traced back to the original Alpha Sigma: Thomas Badger III of Fayetteville, NC, who was related to Fabius J. Haywood, Σ '61. The pledge class also included two men with unusually close ties to Sigma – Robert E. Coker Jr. of Chapel Hill, son of Professor R.E. Coker and cousin of Professor W.C. Coker, and George E. Levings of Asheville, brother of Nelson Levings.

Extracurricular activity was extremely high as Sigma reestablished its position on campus. Walt Spearman was editor of the *Tar Heel* (not yet daily at that time), and George Cavanaugh was president of Phi Beta Kappa. Sigma also supplied two of the eight new inductees into the Golden Fleece honorary society that year as well as assistant editor of the *Yackety Yack* yearbook, president of the North Carolina Collegiate Press Association, three members of the Glee Club, five participants in the Carolina Playmakers and five members of the YMCA cabinet. Burnham Colburn led the organization of Rifle and Fencing Clubs, which were new to campus. And Wex Malone wrote the music for a new musical comedy presented by the Wigwag and Masque troop. Sigma also was well represented in athletics with brothers active in varsity football, tennis, track and boxing.

It was at about this time that student politics took on new importance on campus. The University Party (primarily supported by fraternity and sorority members) had launched itself on the campus scene in the mid-1920s as a counter force to various anti-Greek parties emanating from dormitories and boarding houses all over Chapel Hill. It wasn't until 1946 that the anti-Greeks finally coalesced under the banner of the Student Party. From the beginning, Chi Psis played active roles in campus politics and, on at least two occasions, both the student political parties were headed by Sigma brothers – Dick Jenrette and Banks Talley in 1951 and Phil Smith and Robin Britt in 1963. In 1964, the opposing candidates for president of the student body were both Chi Psis! In the end, Brother Robert Spearman edged Brother Paul Dickson that year in a closely run election.

Meanwhile, back in the 1920s, even before granting of the new charter, the UNC brothers had been eyeing a plot of ground considered by many as the most attractive property available in Chapel Hill. Immediately following the rechartering, the brothers purchased the 350' x 350' lot studded with oaks, chestnuts and a century-old stand of English boxwood. The property, which included a good-sized white frame house and some minor outbuildings, was fronted by streets on three sides and cost \$27,500. The archives fail to disclose how Sigma disposed of the PiKA house on Fraternity Row, but presumably the sale of that property helped pay for the new.

Depression and War

With a new charter in hand and a new Lodge to house them, the brothers of Alpha Sigma were euphoric. Then came the crash of November 1929 and, worse yet for Chi Psi, the mysterious December fire that burned the white frame Lodge to the ground on Christmas night. Since the conflagration occurred during the holidays, the Lodge was deserted. There is a legend – but no proof – that the brothers for some unexplained reason took all their personal belongings home for the holidays, so neither life nor loot was lost in the tragic fire. Still, the fire presented one more problem in a time of travail. The alpha's days of trouble, trial and tribulation were far from over.

With the revived alpha clawing its way toward the top tier of UNC fraternities, the loss of the Lodge was a near-catastrophic blow. Along with the bad, however, there were two pieces of good news: The dining hall (which was separate from the Lodge itself) was intact, and \$9,000 in insurance would partially offset the cost of rebuilding.

Clearing the land and rebuilding the Lodge would have been difficult under any conditions in those mid-Depression years, but the Central Office conspired to make things even tougher than they needed to be. Newsletter after newsletter was filled with the promise that “construction will start by the end of the school year” – or the beginning of the next school year or after the first of the year. The problem was twofold: financing, of course, but also the Central Office’s disagreement with the plans drawn by a North Carolina architect.

The dark years were just beginning. Student enrollment was down, pledges were few, money was scarce, the future was uncertain – and the Lodge was a heap of ashes. To compensate for the loss, the brothers continued to use the small building in a corner of the fraternity grounds as a dining room and leased a nearby apartment to serve as the office and general headquarters. At the same time, they launched a drive to raise funds to build and furnish a suitable new Lodge. With the nation mired in the Great Depression, few were sufficiently interested or financially able to contribute to the building of a fraternity house. At about that time, Bob Avery, who was #1 at the time, prodded the disconsolate brothers themselves into investing sweat equity to provide a temporary home for the alpha. They erected a plain but functional building that served as a somewhat primitive Lodge consisting of a lounge and meeting room. The smallish frame building continued to stand well into the latter half of the century and is fondly remembered by generations of Chi Psis as the “Avery Memorial” and to some as simply “the shack.”

But a first-class fraternity requires a first-class home, even in desperate economic times. So several Sigma alumni met in February 1933 to devise a scheme for financing a new Lodge. George Cavanaugh, Linn Garibaldi and Arthur Hollett formed a building committee and had plans drawn for a new structure. In keeping with the times, the proposed Lodge was modest in size and style – too modest, in the view of the Executive Council. The council turned thumbs down on the proposal and called in a Chicago architect to design the sturdy and spacious brick Georgian Lodge that caused envious eyes to bulge in the Depression-ridden 1930s and remains today one of the finest fraternity houses to be found on any campus. Construction began in November 1933 and was completed the following May.

By a stroke of good timing, the Chi Psi Educational Trust had raised \$2 million in 1929 prior to the stock market crash, and Sigma was able to tap that source to help finance the new Lodge. Even with construction costs depressed in the mid-1930s, the new structure came in at a price of \$32,000 with the Educational Trust funding a portion of the project and holding the mortgage.

Financing by the Educational Trust turned out to be a mixed blessing with Clifford Williams, president of the Executive Council, carping constantly at the Sigma Corporation. With construction barely underway, Williams managed to pick a peck of nits in a letter dated December 20, 1933, ending with these words:

“Don’t think we are ugly, but we are determined in this matter. . . . Good luck and merry Christmas to all.”

Linn Garibaldi soon wearied of the niggling and informed Williams that “you are not dealing with college boys on this proposition, and I wish your correspondence to me to be on this basis.”

Garibaldi eventually asked George Cavanaugh to deal with the worrisome Williams. By Spring 1934, however, Cavanaugh’s patience also was wearing thin. In responding to the latest letter from Williams, Cavanaugh sought to set the record straight. He was not sparing in his criticism of several items attributable to the Chicago architectural firm the Executive Council had hired to design the Lodge. As an example, he pointed to “the utter folly of putting pine floors and plaster wainscoting in a fraternity shower and bathroom.”

In closing his detailed four-page response, Cavanaugh commented: “It has been and is extremely difficult to not only handle the voluminous detail and burden of the actual project but to also have to paint a word-picture of the situation at each step. . . . We have endeavored patiently to meet every demand made upon us, but. . . there are limits to the time, money and energy at our disposal. We therefore ask that you kindly endeavor to be as cooperative as possible through the remainder of this project to expedite and facilitate its completion.” In other words, get the hell off our backs!

When the brothers returned for the Fall 1935 academic session, they moved into the new Lodge for the first time. All the pressure of financing the project, all the troubles associated with construction and all the carping from the Central Office were behind them. Actually, the carping was not gone; responsibility for harassing Sigma was simply passed from Cliff Williams to Slip Slifer. In a May 10, 1934 letter, for example, Brother Slifer warned that “the acquisition of the new Lodge will bring added burdens and responsibilities” – a view that the brothers weren’t especially anxious to hear.

After numerous false starts, the Lodge was finally in place, but the high academic standards of Alpha Sigma were a thing of the past. In his 1934 report, Visitor Cass Kemp commented that “scholarship has been poor. . . and last year the alpha was among the worst on the campus.” In the same report, however, Kemp noted that the initial Faculty Tea – “the first of its kind on the campus” – was a success, and the alpha’s intramural teams continued to be among the university’s strongest.

Weakened by an absence of quarters and strong recruiting efforts by competitive fraternities, Chi Psi had sunk by that time to its nadir at UNC. When the brothers moved into the new Lodge in September 1934, there were only eight actives – but Alpha Sigma was ready to charge back up the hill of campus leadership. Alumni provided ongoing support – more moral than economic but vital nonetheless. By the tenth anniversary of the “new” Alpha Sigma in 1938, Chi Psi had registered major advances in regaining its traditional strength and prestige.

But the resurgence certainly wasn't instantaneous. Jack Atwood recalls the conditions at Sigma when he entered UNC in 1934: "The men of Alpha Chi initially gave Chi Psi a group of brothers as good or better than any fraternity on the hill. But the 1930s failed to live up to the expectations of the refounders. Those were the dark years with small pledge classes and limited quality. It must have been tough in those days – no fraternity house to speak of, a large piece of vacant land, only a promise of improved physical facilities and better things to come. This couldn't have been very impressive to an 18-year-old undergoing the rush pressure from old, established fraternities that were superior in numbers, local prestige, housing and tradition.

"I have spent all my working life in sales and marketing," Atwood states, "and Chi Psi in the early 1930s was certainly not an 'easy sell.' It must have been most difficult to persuade young men to pledge Chi Psi. The fact that some good men did pledge is a credit to the brothers of that day." Only six men pledged in 1934, but the quality was high, and most went on to distinguish themselves on campus and beyond.

The 1935 rush period was pivotal for the struggling alpha. Alumni such as Linn Garibaldi, George Cavanaugh and Billy Blair dedicated frequent weekends to lend their support to identifying desirable rush candidates among the incoming freshmen and helping the actives plan for the crucial rushing season. Walter Spearman, the newly appointed "resident counselor," was always on hand to help. Spearman was only the second such fraternity counselor at UNC and the sixth in all of Chi Psi.

All of the advance work and planning paid off. In a November 1935 letter to brothers and alumni, #2 Donald Kavanagh described the rush period as "the most successful Summer rushing that Sigma has ever known." He reported seven "excellent" pledges and "a number of equally good prospects." Kavanagh also reported on the brothers' extracurricular achievements and declared that the second annual Faculty Tea had again been a smash hit.

Alumni support was strong but, unfortunately, not broad. Most of the work and responsibility fell on the traditional "horses." Slip Slifer underscored the problem in a 1936 letter to the president of Sigma Corporation:

"The first thing that strikes me in looking at this [Sigma Corporation financial] statement is the small responsibility shown by the alumni of the alpha through dues and donations of only \$25. I think the alpha itself has done mighty well to contribute as much as it has in rent when its membership has been so small. The alumni have failed to play ball with the boys."

Thanks to continuing support from alumni and aggressive leadership by such men as Jack Atwood (who later served as Fraternity Visitor for two years), John Foreman and Voit Gilmore, Chi Psi elevated its academic, if not its economic, standing. But the recovery didn't stop there. Alpha Sigma also reclaimed its leadership in intramural athletics and won new laurels in intercollegiate athletics. Brother Ben Dilworth, for example, played football and in 1940 captained the Tar Heel basketball team that won the Southern Conference championship. Dupont Kirven captained the UNC golf team, Fred Ullman ran track, Jack Atwood threw the discus [and won the intramural wrestling championship in his weight class], Bob Hesse played lacrosse, Bill Watson played basketball and John Foreman and Mace Gwyer were on the tennis team. In the Summer of 1936, Gwyer was a winner of the Middle Atlantic Intercollegiate doubles tennis title, and Foreman finished second to a Tar Heel teammate in the singles championship. The UNC tennis team was undefeated that year and was declared national champions in the pre-NCAA tournament era. John Foreman went on to win an award far more important than runnerup to the regional singles champion when he was selected to receive a coveted Rhodes Scholarship.

Gilmore became a prominent campus leader – president of the Carolina Political Union and member of the Golden Fleece, among other honors. In 1961, President Kennedy selected Dr. Gilmore to serve as the first director of the US Travel Service. In 1997, Gilmore received the Charles J. Parker Award for meritorious achievement from the Travel Council of North Carolina.

Furman Bisher, who subsequently gained recognition as one of the nation's finest sportswriters, transferred Furman University to UNC in 1936 and joined Chi Psi. He remembers another athlete of some distinction. As Bisher recalls, Ben Dilworth, an end, played next to a "hulking tackle" from Pennsylvania. "The tackle wanted to play fullback but was consigned to line duty because he wasn't mobile enough for the backfield. That made the unwilling lineman very unhappy," according to Bish, "and he grumped a great deal to Ben before Ben took flight. The hulking one played through his freshman season but then gave up football for boxing (briefly) and theater. His name was Walter Palanske from Allentown, Pa.," Bish says, "but we know him now as Jack Palance."

In the early 1930s, Brother Whit Bissell participated in campus dramatics and went on to a lengthy theatrical career. In his senior year, Bissell was one of 25 successful candidates (out of 800) for an apprenticeship in Eva la Galliene's civic repertory company. He went on to appear in 15 Broadway productions, more than 100 films and some 350 TV shows. In 1994, Brother Bissell received a Life Career Award from the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films. Among his best-known films were *Hud*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *Birdman of Alcatraz*, *Airport*, *The Magnificent Seven*, *The Caine Mutiny* and *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*.

Beyond this growing involvement in campus affairs, Sigma's popular dance parties and faculty teas set a high social standard for others to follow. What began in 1934 as a traditional faculty tea eventually took on a life of its own, became one of the hottest tickets on campus and even influenced grades [if we are to believe the memory of certain bothers]. In 1937, the faculty team won the imprimatur of President Frank Graham, who attended along with a number of deans.

Sigma launched its first newsletter in 1937 – *Tar Heel Taps*. The origin – as well as the meaning – of the name is obscure, but the newsletter was crammed with items of current interest. The second edition of the publication, for example, reported in February 1938 that scholarship was at a high level but not quite at the 1937 level when Chi Psi topped all UNC fraternities scholastically. Fred Ullman and Voit Gilmore were members of the Order of the Grail, and John Foreman was in Phi Beta Kappa and a candidate for a Rhodes Scholarship.

Campus activities were extensive with Chi Psis active in all major campus organizations and well represented on the university's athletic teams. A number of physical improvements to the Lodge had been completed, there were no arrears of actives or alumni and the Lodge turned a rare profit for the year. All that led the brothers to believe that they were in good position to win the alpha's first Thayer Trophy. Unfortunately, it went that year to Alpha Nu at the University of Minnesota.

In 1940, Philip A. Walker became Sigma's latest member of Phi Beta Kappa and first recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship.

With war clouds on the horizon, Alpha Sigma undertook a fundraising campaign in 1941 to retire the remaining debt on the Lodge. The effort was aided by a conditional grant of \$7,500 taken from a \$100,000 gift from John Wendell Anderson, E '90, to the Chi Psi Educational Trust. The Anderson gift was the cornerstone of the Philip Spencer Memorial Trust, established in the fraternity's centennial year. In addition to the cash, Anderson – who had served from 1923 to 1930 as the sixth president of Chi Psi – purchased a permanent home for the Central Office in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Anderson grant to Alpha Sigma was a dollar-for-dollar matching gift for contributions up to \$7,500. To stimulate contributions, the active brothers created a newsletter titled *The Stigma of Alpha Sigma*. The stigma, they explained editorially, was the debt overhanging the alpha – “Sigma's only stigma.”

Certainly there was no Sigma stigma on the fields of friendly strife at that time. During the Fall quarter, Sigma won the fraternity title in intramural basketball and volleyball and challenged for the football championship as well. The alpha also was well represented in intercollegiate sports with brothers on the varsity football, baseball, track, cross country and tennis teams (coached by John Kenfield, father of Brother Johnny Kenfield).

The period from 1935 to 1940 had been one of resurgence for Alpha Sigma, but progress was again interrupted by the rumble of war – this time by a world conflict that called college men to arms and wreaked vast change on campuses throughout America. Navy V-5 and V-12 programs took over fraternity houses for the duration. Evicted by the military, Alpha Sigma rented space over a Franklin Street store for meetings and social affairs – clearly an undesirable alternative but one necessitated by the need to house military personnel.

A minor flap arose in 1943, when the Sigma Corporation complained that the detachment of Air Corps meteorologists housed at the Lodge was seriously damaging the dining room floor as a result of incessant ping pong matches. The detachment commander huffily responded that he had personally inspected the Lodge and concluded that “no damage to the floor is apparent at

this time,” adding his opinion that “the playing of ping pong will not damage the floor” in the future.

The Chi Psi register lists 50 graduating seniors in the years 1942-45, but many of them did not actually graduate until returning to campus after the war. Vic Seixas, for example, is shown as a member of the class of 1945, but his actual graduation date was 1949 after he took time out for military service and a postwar swing of the world’s major amateur tennis tournaments. Brother Seixas went on to represent his country in Davis Cup play, and he won most of the world’s major championships, including the Wimbledon (1953) and US Open (1954) titles (both singles and doubles) in the days when those were the only tennis championships that really mattered.

Howard Odum is another who experienced *academia interruptus* in the 1940s. He, too, was a member of the class of 1945 but ended up serving as an Army meteorologist during the war. That stint introduced Odum to a science that barely existed in those faraway days – environmental science. Today, Dr. Odum has some 600 publications, including six books, to his credit and is recognized as one of the world’s preeminent authorities on environmental science and systems ecology. In 1987, he received the Craford Prize of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences – his field’s equivalent to the Nobel Prize.

The war’s impact on fraternities was pervasive. After 94 consecutive years of annual conventions, extending back to 1848, Chi Psi suspended this annual event after 1942. The fraternity resumed the conventions in 1946 when almost every alpha that had been active before the war had been reactivated. The single exception was Epsilon Delta, which fell victim in 1942 to the University of Chicago’s abolition of both fraternities and intercollegiate athletics. Someone remarked that this bomb was a precursor to the development of the atomic bomb, which also occurred at the University of Chicago. In 1947, Epsilon Delta was reborn a few miles north on the Evanston campus of Northwestern University.

Six brothers of Alpha Sigma lost their lives in the war: John R. Teague Jr., Archie Lindsay, Taylor O’ Bryan, Richard B. Pethick, Samuel T. Nicholson III and Ralph D. Eaton.

An odd chapter in the history of Alpha Sigma occurred in 1940. In its short history, Alpha Upsilon at Furman University – founded with the support and active assistance of Sigma – pledged every available member of the Furman family from 1858 through 1881. That included Charles M. Furman; his brothers, James and Davis; his son, Alester; and his cousins, John, Samuel and S.M. Furman. Charles’ grandson, Alester G. Furman Jr., attended the family university after fraternities had been banned in 1898, so Alpha Sigma invited him to become a brother in Sigma. That was in 1940, a year after Alester’s own son, Alester III, had graduated as a Chi Psi from Amherst (Alpha Chi).

When Alpha Upsilon was founded at Furman in 1858, James Walker was #6 of Alpha Sigma and, with the assistance of John M. Richmond took on the task of organizing the Upsilon startup. (In that same year, Walker and James M. Richmond were instrumental in the founding of Alpha Beta at the University of South Carolina.) When Alester Furman Jr. was invited to become a brother in Alpha Sigma, the invitation was issued by then #1, Philip Walker (no relation). Walker’s letter to Furman speaks volumes about the bonds of brotherhood:

“We have been informed of your close family connections with the Chi Psi Fraternity. We understand that Chi Psi would have been your choice of fraternities had not the alpha at your alma mater been dormant at the time you were in school. With this in mind, Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi, in the spirit of our “family fraternity,” cordially invites you to become initiated into the Bonds of Brotherhood at our formal initiation in April 1940. . . .As Chi Psi has no honorary members, you will be initiated regularly into the fraternity, taking your place as a full-fledged Chi Psi among our alumni. It would please us greatly if both your father and your son could be present to attend the ceremonies at your initiation.”

The three generations of Furmans joyously attended the unique initiation ceremony.

“Fraternity life in the early 1940s was shadowed by World War II, as the draft, enlistment deferrals and increasing military activities on campus occupied the thoughts and plans of all of us,” Richard Pollock observes. “The local scene was brightened by the presence of such Navy notables as Ted Williams, the ‘Splendid Splinter’ of the Boston Red Sox; Doc (Mr. Inside) Blanchard of the championship Army football team; and Bob Eberly, the ‘boy singer’ of the popular Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra – and his frequent ‘girl singer’ visitor, Helen O’Connell. Together, they had made huge hits from such musical standards as *Tangerine*, *Amapola* and *Green Eyes*.”

Another prominent Navy-paid musician on campus at that time was Otto Graham. Graham had been a music major at Northwestern University but earned greater fame as an All American in both football and basketball and, later, as the perennial All Pro quarterback of the Cleveland Browns. While the campus population was bolstered by the military presence, the civilian component was sharply diminished. At one point, only about 10 brothers were on hand to keep the alpha going.

A milestone event in UNC student government occurred during the war years – the drafting and ratification of the university’s first written student constitution. Since opening its doors in 1795, UNC had muddled along with an unwritten constitution, very much in the spirit of the British constitution, which has never yet been committed to paper. But by 1946, factions were warring with one another and Douglass Hunt made the writing of a constitution the key plank in his campaign for Speaker of the Student Legislature. Hunt won by the underwhelming total of four votes and, in very unpolitician-like fashion, set out to actually implement his campaign promise.

Major concerns were voiced by Greek-letter societies – fraternities and sororities alike – with respect to how the written constitution would deal with governance issues. Speaker Hunt appointed a nine-member Constitution Drafting Committee, which included Chi Psis Jack Lackey and Bert Dillon, to address these and numerous other matters raised by campus factions. After two votes of the student body, the constitution finally was adopted in April 1946 and subsequently approved by the administration and trustees. Historians Albert and Gladys Hall Coates view this as “the highest peak in the 151 years (1795-1946) of student government in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.”

The Postwar Years and Thereafter

In the early postwar years, universities everywhere were hit by an influx of veterans taking advantage of the GI Bill of Rights. At UNC, 1,500 of the 3,800 students who enrolled in the Fall of 1945 were military veterans. Students on average were older, classes were larger, housing was scarcer and times were faster than in the 1930s, which served as a quiet bridge between the Roaring Twenties and the Fabulous Forties.

Fraternities throughout the nation were shuttered during the war years, and by 1946 only eight Chi Psi alphas had resumed activities, and some of those had invited nonmembers to take residence in the Lodge to help meet expenses. Sigma was among those that resumed full operation with brothers only living in.

“The days immediately following World War II were unique in college life and the fraternity experience,” in the view of Vic Seixas. “You had a combination of veterans and regular students together for several years. Those – like myself – who had started college before the war and were interrupted, were some three to five years older when we returned. I feel I appreciated college and the fraternity life more as a result of my wartime experiences.”

A resurgence of antifraternity attitudes emerged on many campuses, including Chapel Hill, in the immediate postwar period. The Chi Psi Central Office attributed the negative views of university administrators to “the manner in which we operated before and during the war. . . . For some years before the war, we in common with other fraternities failed to fully recognize the purpose for which the fraternity was founded: The social development of the man [in terms of] leadership, the ability to get along with people, self-discipline, etc. In order for Chi Psi to maintain continued existence,” the statement declared, “it will be necessary for us to return to the original purposes of the fraternity.”

One problem that plagued Chi Psi in the postwar '40s was a widely shared reluctance to become involved in campus activities – perhaps attributable, at least in part, to the fact that the veterans had learned never to volunteer for anything. Another reason, Seixas believes, was the Lodge's location. “We were a good distance from the heart of the campus [in a period when shank's mare was still the favored – or, at least, the most frequent – mode of transportation], and that tended to isolate us somewhat.”

Paul Wheeler, the fraternity Visitor, shared that view. In his October 1946 report, he noted that “Chi Psi on the North Carolina campus is considered to be in a class by herself, outside the sphere of other campus fraternities. Exclusiveness often denotes the spirited organization, but when exclusiveness implies a remoteness, then lack of interest in external activities is indicated. The actives show practically no interest in campus activities.”

“It was during these postwar years that we made an intensive effort to remedy that situation,” Brother Seixas recalls. “As #1, I urged the brothers to become more involved in various campus activities. We also geared our rushing activity toward getting pledges who were interested in participating actively in campus affairs. As a result, eventually, we had several brothers on the football team, a half-dozen or so on the baseball team, and I was on the tennis and basketball teams.

“We had by far and away the best touch football team on the campus, having won the fraternity league and beating the nonfraternity champions, 61-0, in the championship game! I doubt there has ever been a team to equal that collection of athletes,” Seixas boasts. “We challenged the varsity football team to a game, but they refused! [*Editor’s Note:* Given what that group achieved, there is more than hubris involved in Vic’s estimate of the quality of that rare intramural team. At the same time, it should be understood that Chi Psi’s challenge to the Tar Heel varsity preceded the arrival on campus of a pint-sized tailback named Justice.]

“With all this, we at least made a start toward eliminating the stigma of campus isolationism,” Seixas says. “It’s ironic that Chi Psi has now completely reversed that scenario and has a prominent position on the UNC campus and a ‘coign of vantage’ among fraternities. The multitude of Morehead Scholars that seems to flow endlessly into Alpha Sigma augers well for the future of Chi Psi at North Carolina.”

With veterans swelling the ranks of college students everywhere in the late ’40s, construction cranes became common sights in Chapel Hill. The Lodge itself underwent expansion in 1947-48, with the brothers adding a spacious dining room, new study rooms on the second floor and an impressive chapter room on the third floor. In addition, Al Dickson reminds us, “The Avery Memorial – the small, single-room structure in the back of the property, which had once served as a temporary Lodge – was still standing. We converted it into a club room with candles and checkered tablecloths. Kudzu [the quintessential ravenous southern weed] grew around the building, and an annual pledge chore was to dig it out. It always grew back in time for the next pledge class.”

Kudzu was the least of the problems in those early postwar years, however. Not only were the brothers not participating in campus activities, they seemed equally disinterested in classroom activities. By 1947, scholarship had faltered with Sigma ranking 27th out of the 28 Greek-letter societies then on campus.

Beautiful and much-needed as it was, the new wing added yet another burden. Total cost of the addition and interior furnishings amounted to \$50,000. With only \$6,000 on hand, the Sigma Corporation took on a \$44,000 mortgage obligation, which became a persistent encumbrance for years to come.

But in the beginning, it was all lollipops and roses. Kurt Gilliland recently dug through some old alpha correspondence and pieces of minutiae ratholed years earlier by his father-in-law Dan Boney. In sorting through the yellowed files, Kurt came across a houseparty program (circa 1948) celebrating the opening of the new wing of the Lodge. The program notes that the occasion was designed to enable the brothers “to express their grateful thanks to generous alumni for their unselfish efforts in making possible the successful continuation of the Chi Psi Troupe [aka “Chi Psi Partymakers”] at the University of North Carolina.” It must have been one helluva party, because the program lists me as one of the “feature players,” and I have absolutely no recollection of any of this!

A recurrent theme over the years has been the alpha’s often-dire financial situation – directly traceable to the cost of the new wing. At a 1952 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Sigma Corporation, Harvey Johnson proposed a new fundraising scheme: sending a dues bill each year

to all alumni. The board agreed, setting the dues at \$10 a year. A year later, the corporation had collected \$80. Apparently, not even the 12 officers and directors were moved to pay up.

A 1951 appeal from the corporation netted pledges (not actual money) totaling \$50 – barely enough to cover the cost of the mailing. The campaign committee (Brothers Garibaldi, Rowe and Hovis) expressed disappointment with the results. But by then they should have been inured to it. It seems unhappily traditional with Alpha Sigma that getting money out of an alumnus is at least as tough as squeezing blood out of a stone. Maybe tougher.

It wasn't only the mortgage-saddled corporation that was suffering; the Lodge, too, was up to its buns in financial woes. After winning the Thayer Trophy for the first time in 1951, Sigma found itself in a financial morass only months later. With an operating deficit of some \$1,500 for the academic year up to April 1952, the actives adopted an austerity program. They abolished waiter scholarships for the first time, raised the meal charge, eliminated rebates for brothers who did not spend the weekend on campus and sharply curtailed day-to-day maintenance on the Lodge.

At one point, the brothers entertained – and thankfully tabled – a proposal to replace Miss Etta and Miss Bertha with one male cook. Jim Ramsey, #1 at the time, sent out a plaintive appeal to alumni to “contribute \$1 or \$2 to pull us through this crisis.” The records don't disclose the extent of the response, but it seems safe to conjecture that the postman wasn't overburdened in delivering checks to 321 West Cameron Avenue.

In June 1952, Dick Jenrette, chairman of a new Centennial Mortgage Reduction Drive, appealed to all brothers for financial support. He didn't mince words: “Frankly, we're in debt up to our necks! Our indebtedness stands at \$42,000 and, as things are going right now, we'll never bail ourselves out,” he declared. The frustration stemmed from the fact that the original mortgage – \$44,000 in 1948 – had been reduced by only \$2,000 four years later.

Picking up on an earlier idea, Jenrette's committee established the Ten-Dollar-a-Year Club – a sound idea and a modest request. The response was even more modest. Six weeks later, Brother Jenrette penned a followup letter, characterizing the response to the financial appeal as “one of the biggest disappointments I've had since joining Chi Psi.” The only contributions received, he said, came from Bob Hovis, '30; Voit Gilmore, '39; Jack Steet, '50; Jenrette, '51; and John T. Dixon, a 1900 graduate of the University of Wisconsin (Alpha Iota). The goal was to raise \$3,000 annually, but the contributions added up to only \$68.35!

As Walt Kelly's Pogo remarked on another occasion, “We have met the enemy, and he is us!”

In the 1950s, there was another, far-more-serious enemy: the Communist hordes streaming across South Korea. By the Winter quarter of 1951, the Korean War was exerting a negative impact on the campus. At Alpha Sigma, for example, 58 actives and pledges left in December for Christmas vacation, but only 47 returned in January. Military enlistments accounted for a major portion of the shortfall. So severe was the impact of this new war so soon after the last one that spirits sagged at many UNC fraternities – but not at Chi Psi.

Although the postwar startup might have been slow in the late '40s, the activist brothers of Sigma left few extracurricular stones unturned in the early '50s. They even turned to song. As

Frank Allston remembers, “Singing around the piano after dinner with Budd Grover, a master of music improvisation, became common.” This inspired pledge Larry Stith to single out the best – or perhaps merely the least-bad – singers to form a choral group to participate in the annual campuswide Valkyrie Sing. Either the brothers were better than they thought or Stith was a pure magician. In any case, Chi Psi won the “Sing” in both 1951 and 1952, declared victory and retired from the competition. Doug Young, who provided piano accompaniment for the group in 1952, says Chi Psi all but stopped the show that year with a splendid rendition of *You’ll Never Walk Alone*.

Young also adds a footnote on Larry Stith, who went on to a successful career in music. “Larry played piano for the comedy act of Andy and Barbara Griffith, which was popular throughout the area and much in demand. We always knew when they had an engagement, because Andy would stop by the Lodge to pick up Larry. Andy’s treatment of the Southern dialect,” Young says, “was pretty much the same then as it was in the early years of *The Andy Griffith Show*, but he had the amazing ability to speak like a Shakespearean when given such a role.”

By 1951, the alpha had worked its way back to the top echelon of Greek societies in terms of scholastic average, and nine of the 37 active brothers made Phi Beta Kappa that year. There also was a great surge of extracurricular activity with Dick Jenrette heading the University Party and serving on the Student Council. Zane Robbins was sports editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*, and he and Frank Allston were elected to the Publications Board. Banks Talley headed the Campus Party and was secretary-treasurer of the student body, and Budd Grover served as secretary of the Interfraternity Council. Ken Barton was appointed chairman of the university’s Freshman Orientation Committee, and a dozen or so Sigma brothers participated as orientation counselors. Ed Waller and Ed Stevens served in the Student Legislature. In intramurals, Sigma placed third among 52 fraternities, dormitories and other organizations that fielded teams. Two brothers were tapped for membership in the Order of the Golden Fleece, and six others were tapped by the Order of the Old Well.

Reacting to the Visitor’s earlier criticism of isolation from other Greek organizations, Sigma inaugurated a program of exchange dinners with other fraternities and – more interesting by far – began entertaining leading sororities at candlelight dinners in the Lodge. The brothers headed to Wrightsville Beach for an April beach party, and the traditional Spring houseparty followed in May.

In September 1951, Sigma hosted the 110th annual convention of Chi Psi Fraternity. And what a party it was! The convention record departed from its usually staid, starchy and soporific summary to offer the following observations:

“It would take a short book to adequately cover the social side of the 110th convention. When Sunday rolled around, the lack of sleep was quite apparent. Perhaps it would be apropos to say that [this] was one of the nonsleepingest conventions in the long history of Chi Psi. . . .

“The delegates dined at the formal Morehead Planetarium on Wednesday evening. . . . Later, the party adjourned to a local rathskeller where they were once more brought back to reality.

“A southern barbecue was held at the Lodge Thursday evening. . . .When the throats of the delegates were relined, they agreed that it had been a memorable occasion.”

Among the convention highlights were the awarding of the Thayer Trophy to Alphas Sigma and Psi and the presentation of the coveted Distinguished Service Award to Brother Linn Garibaldi.

The assembled delegates also took some momentous decisions, including these:

- ◆ “Be it resolved that the badge of Chi Psi be worn conservatively at all times, preferably half in and half out of the shirt or vest pocket.”
- ◆ “Be it resolved that when and where possible a period of constructive work be substituted for horseplay and physical hardship.”
- ◆ “Be it resolved that. . .the words ‘Hell Week’ be changed to ‘Pledge Week’.”

Hell Week and horseplay were, of course, unknown to Alpha Sigma, but Al Dickson remembers one of the Lodge’s storied hazing rituals. “Hazing was an accepted practice at the time,” he confesses, “although no Chi Psi pledge was ever struck with a paddle. A favorite of the actives was the pledge walk – a midnight blindfolded ride of small groups of pledges far into the countryside. The midnight ride was preceded by a strip search to make sure the pledges had no money, matches or other items that would help them attract attention or buy their way back to the Lodge. After dropping the pledges in a remote location, the actives would roar away, leaving the pledges to find their way home. Much to the chagrin of the brothers, the pledges often beat them home, having arranged for a taxi to follow – lights out – at a discreet distance.”

That particular ritual perhaps grew out of the nightfighter and survival training experienced by many of the returning military veterans. Apart from the differences in life experience, Brother Dickson says, the age gap also was significant between the veteran actives and the new pledges fresh out of high school.

Frank Allston served for two years as dining room manager in the early '50s when there was still a postwar age mix among the brothers. He found that satisfying the culinary idiosyncrasies of a disparate group of brothers, ranging in age from 18 to 30, was a daily challenge. And his sometimes-off-the-wall dining ideas didn't always help matters. An example:

“In 1951, a new food craze – pizza – was fast taking hold,” Frank recounts, “and I decided to add it to our noontime bill of fare. It was a great idea, but implementation left much to be desired. In my enthusiasm for the idea, I had neglected to acquire a recipe.”

Before leaving for class one bright morning, Frank supplied Miss Etta and Miss Bertha [staunch Southern cooks both] with his “best guess” of the ingredients of pizza. “When I returned,” Frank remembers, “I encountered a disaster in the kitchen. The cooks were standing with quizzical expressions in front of a serving table laden with plates of tomato stew in soggy crusts. We served this odd concoction, but most of the brothers quickly opted for peanut butter and jelly – and I had to eat crow.”

Neither of the cooks claimed expertise, then or later, in pizzamaking, but their usual offerings were delightful to see and delicious to consume. As good as the food was, it was never enough. Before leaving for the night, Bertha and Etta would fill the pantry sideboard with loaves of gummy white bread and industrial-size jars of peanut butter and jelly. To further quench the ravenous Sigma appetites, about 10 pm each evening the “sandwich man” would make his regular visit to the Lodge. He often left with full pockets and an empty larder.

To jump briefly ahead, things had changed by the 1960s – not Sigma appetites but the means of slaking them. John Strickland describes how Sigma replaced the traveling sandwich man of the 1950s: “Two pledges each night had ‘Pops duty,’ making the rounds in the Lodge at 10 pm to take food and drink orders from the brothers. We then carried these orders down the street to Clarence's Bar & Grill (aka ‘Pops’) and returned with food and drink for the hungry brothers. My strongest memory of this duty was the inseparable pair of Bill Pugh and Dick White, who lived on the third floor across from the Cave. I don't think either one ever missed placing a 10 pm order (cheeseburgers, lettuce and tomato, Pabst Blue Ribbon) – unless they were already at Clarence's.”

The 1950s were a time of notable progress for Alpha Sigma, but a time of challenge as well. The UNC campus was jammed to the breaking point with unprecedented enrollment approaching 7,500. Imagine that! Postwar prices were edging ever upward (tuition for state residents had reached \$50 per quarter by the early '50s) and fraternities, stimulated by a late wave of service veterans who had more experience – and certainly more imagination – than the typical college freshman, had become known as party havens.

In common with other campus fraternities, Alpha Sigma found itself drifting away from a total commitment to scholarship. It was at about that point that the national fraternity's executive secretary, Slip Slifer, took a special interest in the alpha. Brother Jack Atwood, who worked closely with Slifer in two years as fraternity Visitor, remembers him as "a true gentleman in every respect." The ever-proper and indefatigable Slip poked, prodded, cajoled, threatened, encouraged and challenged the brothers to reclaim Sigma's former glory. And they did.

Slip was pushing the alpha forward with the able support of Dick Jenrette who took a leading role in the 1950s drive to restore Sigma to its position of campus leadership. Some of the brothers (Bob Burgess, Sam Homewood, Harvey Johnson, John Wilson and Walker Worth among them) had known Dick in his native Raleigh and were quick to spot his leadership potential. They made him Sigma's No. 1 recruiting target in 1947 and gave brother Vic Seixas the job of selling him on Chi Psi. Vic turned out to be as good at salesmanship as at tennis, and Dick became the crown jewel of that year's pledge class.

As an aside, it should be noted that Dick – who later became an ardent devotee of restoring historic homes – got his first taste of restoration at 321 West Cameron Avenue. He designed the handsome brick walkway that leads from Cameron Avenue to the steps of the Lodge and recruited a clutch of brothers to assist in the hard job of hauling, dumping and leveling sand and then laying some 15,000 bricks in the Jenrette-designed herringbone pattern. As his nephew, Joseph Jenrette, recalls, it probably was Dick's "first effort at creating a classical symmetrical form."

In the early 1950s, to give something back to the community, the brothers began inviting children from a Durham orphanage as guests at an annual Christmas party. There were special treats, plenty of food and punch, a Santa Claus (Jim Ramsey one memorable year) and gifts for all the kids. It was hard to tell who enjoyed it more – probably us.

Launching a pattern of political action that was to become a Sigma tradition, Banks Talley was elected president of the newly hatched third party on campus – the Campus Party. Soon after – in 1953 – Baxter Miller, who was not a member of the Campus Party, became the first Sigma brother elected to serve as Speaker of the Student Legislature. Bob Spearman in 1963, Jed Dietz in 1967 and Jim Hoffman in 1997 followed him in that role.

In the early 1950s, Dick Jenrette led the Sigma brothers in scouring the student body for bright young men who would become future campus leaders. They not only found the men they were seeking, they also persuaded them to pledge Chi Psi and help the alpha regain its lost luster. Reflecting that return to prominence, in 1951 Sigma won the first of the 11 Thayer Trophies the alpha had earned by 1998.

Sadly, Sigma fell from its hard-earned pinnacle the following year. Visitor Warren Haight reported that rushing results were mediocre, finances were in the tank (a \$1,600 deficit for the year), the internal organization was slack and the alpha had dropped to the bottom of the fraternity scholarship ranking. Underscoring the disastrous – but, thankfully, temporary – fall was an anonymous handwritten note at the bottom of the visitor's report: "A rotten situation!"

The brothers of the early postwar years did a magnificent job of rebuilding and enhancing the alpha. So, too, did the alpha's loyal alumni. As late as the 1950s and 1960s, many members of the

Political and publishing leadership

In 1964, Bob Spearman (son of Walter Spearman) became the first Chi Psi elected to the student body presidency, though he had been preceded as president in 1951 by John Sanders, who later became an alumni initiate of Alpha Sigma. Spearman also posted the highest scholastic average in his class and became president of Phi Beta Kappa in his senior year.

Other brothers who served as UNC student body president were Paul Dickson III (1965-66), Robert Powell Jr. (1966-67), Thomas Bello (1970-71), Ford Runge (1973-74), William Moss (1977-78), Jim Phillips Jr. (1978-79), John Kelly (1979-80), Scott Norberg (1981-82), Michael Vandenberg (1982-83), Kevin Monroe (1983-84), Paul Parker (1984-85), Bryan Hassel (1986-87), William Hildeboldt (1990-91), Matthew Heyd (1991-92), James Copland IV (1993-94), Calvin Cunningham III (1995-96) and Mohan Nathan (1997-98).

The brothers of Alpha Sigma also took major roles in editing the university's heralded student newspaper, *The Daily Tar Heel*. Walter Spearman in 1928 was the first Chi Psi to hold the editorship. He was followed in that role by Dick Jenrette (1949), Zane Robbins (1951 on an interim basis), Fred Seely (1964), Fred Thomas (1965), Jim Cooper and Greg Turosak (1974), Gregory Porter (1977) and David Schmidt (1985). Numerous other Sigma brothers have served in various editorial positions on the newspaper and on the Publications Board, which is responsible for administering all student publications. At least seven Chi Psis (Furman Bisher, Walt Spearman, Bill Fuess, Zane Robbins, Frank Allston, Peter Range and Ken Clark) have been inducted into the North Carolina Journalism Hall of Fame.

refounding group remained frequent visitors to the Lodge. Among them were Oliver Rowe, Linn Garibaldi, Pollock Irwin and Bob Hovis. Walt Spearman, our longtime faculty advisor, was a live-in resident counselor in those days and always available to lend a helping hand. In fact, Walt remained an active supporter of the fraternity from graduation until his death in 1996.

Except for occasional lapses, scholarship has been a traditional focus for Chi Psi, and this was certainly true throughout a good portion of the 1950s. It was in that decade that the Morehead Scholarship program was launched, and the Morehead winners soon became annual targets during rush season. Doug Young was impressed when a telegram arrived to wish the brothers a successful rush in 1954. It came from Vic Seixas, the 1954 men's and (with Tony Trabert) doubles champion in the US Open

In May 1955, nearly 200 actives, alumni and guests celebrated Alpha Sigma's centennial with a luncheon at the Carolina Inn followed by an afternoon reception and evening banquet at the well-decked-out Lodge. Dick Jenrette took time off from his investment banking business to coordinate the

event, Slip Slifer showed up in his best bib and tucker, Bob Montgomery served as master of ceremonies and Linn Garibaldi delivered a moving anniversary address. That same year, 1955, brought Sigma's resurgence from the 1952 depths – and the alpha's second Thayer Trophy.

The Roller-coaster Sixties

Toward the end of the 1950s, the University of North Carolina cracked down sharply on fraternity academics. The antifraternity bogey-man had returned with a vengeance. In 1959, the university decreed, at least 60% of a fraternity's membership was required to attain a C average or better. A year later, the requirement escalated to 80%. The penalty for failure to meet the university's rigid standards was academic probation for the local chapter. Failure to correct the deficiency could cost the chapter its rush privileges. All of this occurred at exactly the wrong time for Alpha Sigma. After years of academic leadership, the fraternity had slipped to the bottom of the UNC barrel – 24th out of 24 fraternities in 1960, earning probationary status from the university. Only two years earlier, Chi Psi had ranked third in academics.

Although Alpha Sigma had pulled up from 24th to 15th by 1961, the university suspended rush privileges the following year because fewer than 80% of the members had an overall C average.

After four years of harsh university-imposed standards, Brother Pete Bondi, who was No. 1 at the time, proposed a new standard. Instead of focusing on current-term averages, he suggested, it would be more appropriate to require a 2.0 cumulative grade point average of all fraternity members. Beginning with the 1962 Fall term, the university replaced its draconian grade policy with the standard proposed by Bondi – but compliance remained challenging.

A few words about the nature of Alpha Sigma in the 1960s are in order. Although the times differed sharply from earlier periods, the nature of Alpha Sigma brothers, in some fundamental respects, remained much the same. Jack Hill reminds us that the alpha was a bit starchy in some ways. “The attitude of the fraternity in general was decidedly formal,” he says. “It was the last fraternity at Chapel Hill to require jackets and ties at dinner, and this may have been due in large measure to the strong influence of Northeastern boarding schools.

“In the early- to mid-1960s,” Hill recalls, “the fraternity had something of a dual personality with men from Southern high schools (including a number of Morehead Scholars) and a somewhat larger contingent from Eastern boarding schools – from three schools in particular: Deerfield, Andover and Groton. The formality of these all-male schools in the 1950s and '60s transferred to Chi Psi and gave the Lodge something of the feel of a Princeton dining club. I recall, too, that the caliber of *a cappella* singing was especially high at Chi Psi, owing in part to the presence of a number of brothers with glee club experience.

That same Jack Hill – Dr. S. Jackson Hill, distinguished professor of music at various US universities as well as Cambridge – was a bit of a rogue in his undergraduate days. Here are some anecdotes from his own confessional pen:

- ◆ “As official University Bell Ringer for the small carillon in the Morehead Patterson Bell Tower, I had a key to that marvelous kingdom of wonders and was often involved in late-night pranks. Some of us would occasionally go to the bell tower at midnight and make all sorts of wonderful noises. Most popular were the midnight renderings of boisterous rock-and-roll hits, but equally charming was the terrific noise made by a number of men ringing every bell in the tower all at once on a count of three! The clangorous bong could be heard for miles. There was a loggia around the level where the control levers were located, and from its doorway one had a good view of any approaching traffic. We invariably stationed someone there to report the approach of any campus police vehicles.

“When a flashing light was spotted in the distance, we would immediately douse the lights, rush down the stairs, leap over the boxwoods and escape through the stadium. By the time the campus police arrived, the tower would be dark, silent and totally abandoned. I always figured that somehow the university would know who had keys to the bell tower and who would be likely to be creating the disturbance – but I am pleased to report that I never once heard anything from those late-night antics. Needless to say, the bell tower was the perfect place to hide the Chi Psi silverware when our pledge class stole it as a pledge prank – a common prank but an ingenious location in which to hide the booty!”

- ◆ “I confess to being the main perpetrator of what came to be known as ‘library pranks.’ We started out in one of the small departmental libraries but were so ‘successful’ that we soon moved our act to the high-vaulted, domed, Corinthian-columned great reading room of the main university library. The best library prank was the torn-pages caper. I had spent 15 cents at a second-hand bookshop for a massive collection of German economics periodicals bound in sedate dark cloth.

“Our prank consisted of shelving this handsome volume in the library and then returning at a time when the reading room was crowded with students engaged in quiet research and study. Two of us would enter noisily into the silent room, and one would say, ‘Oh, it's just over here!’ loudly enough to cause most of the occupants to look up in annoyance at the disturbance. I would take our planted book off the shelf and put it in a conspicuous place on a nearby table, open it and loudly proclaim: ‘Yes, here it is!’ I would then time it perfectly so that just as everyone looked up again, annoyed with the ongoing disturbance, I would tear out the page. While the observers sat there aghast in total disbelief, I would hand the page to my colleague, close the book, put it back on the shelf and we would exit. A spy we had planted in the room would later report to us the reaction that followed our departure. About a month later we would repeat this prank in front of a new audience. As I recall, David Nash and Joe Jefferds were frequent co-conspirators in this venture. Years later when I introduced myself at professional conventions, people occasionally would say that they knew my name from the stories of the library pranks at Chapel Hill in the early ’60s.”

Unlike some of the brothers, Jack Hill had no difficulty in mixing the whimsical and the intellectual. Others, however, continued to struggle to meet the academic standards proposed by Brother Bondi and adopted by the university.

Realizing that the alpha was not being true either to the present generation of brothers or those who had gone before, Sigma leadership, driven primarily by Luke Fichthorn and Phil Smith, insisted on improved scholarship and greater involvement in campus activities. To focus attention on the positive aspects of brotherhood, Sigma abandoned the hazing practices of earlier years – not only during pledge week and the initiation ceremony but throughout the year. Instead of treating pledges as servants, upperclassmen began treating them as future brothers.

With the support of faculty advisor Walt Spearman, the alpha pulled up its academic socks and soon regained its accustomed excellence. While the alpha as a whole was at the bottom of the academic barrel in 1962, the pledge class ranked No. 1 on campus. The 1963 pledge class duplicated that feat and also won the university's Best Pledge Class award.

In 1960, Sigma had only one campus leader – Rick Overstreet, chairman of the Student Party. In spite of that and the university-imposed probation, Sigma pledged 26 men that year – at a time when there were only 27 actives! The alpha's financial situation also was rocky, leading #4 George Fonda to insist that all actives and pledges move into the Lodge to, in the words of Phil Smith, “generate sufficient revenue to pay our mortgage and stave off bankruptcy.”

The strong 1960 pledge class helped inject new fervor into the alpha. Robin Britt succeeded Rick Overstreet as chairman of the Student Party, and one of his first actions was to persuade pledge Bob Spearman to run for president of the freshman class. Bob ran and won – the first of a series of his political successes. As rush chairman, Britt sharpened the alpha's focus on achievement-oriented freshman, and Morehead Scholars became particular targets.

During the year, Phil Smith was elected chairman of the University Party. He recalls with amusement a *Daily Tar Heel* editorial that condemned Britt and Smith for charting the course of UNC student government in the collusive environment of the Chi Psi dining room.

While the brothers' academic and extracurricular lives had regained vitality, the Lodge's plumbing was the pits. Luke Fichthorn, #1, designed and contracted for a new second-floor shower room and assorted other plumbing niceties. Money, however, was still short so the brothers wrote a fundraising letter, ostensibly issued by the Sigma Corporation. Since there was, in fact, no active corporation at that time, Brother Dan Boney, a 1951 graduate, arranged refinancing of the mortgage, and alumni kicked in a sizable amount in response to the “corporation” letter.

Plumbing was not the only source of concern. Increasingly annoyed at the path the postman took in cutting across the front lawn with his daily deliveries, Jack Crane took it upon himself to erect a wall along the length of the Cameron Avenue frontage. The addition not only rerouted the postman, it also enhanced the appearance of the front of the property.

Campus success continued for Chi Psi. Larry Ehrhart won election to the presidency of the sophomore class, and Bob Wilson was elected to head the freshman class. Bob Spearman was elected president of the student body, and Fred Seely was elected co-editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*.

Spearman was not reluctant to use his presidential powers to benefit Chi Psi. When *Esquire* magazine selected UNC as the site for photographing the main feature of its annual back-to-school edition, the editor asked the student body president to recommend where the magazine could find models and an appropriate locale for photographing the multipage feature. Not surprisingly, Spearman suggested that the Lodge could meet both needs. The resulting feature might have inflated a few Sigma egos but proved highly useful as a recruiting tool.

Alpha Sigma earned its third Thayer Trophy in 1964 (1951 and 1955 marked the first wins) and its first Goodbody Award for superior scholarship. Showing that those wins were no fluke, the alpha collected three more Thayers over the next six years and won four of the next five Goodbody Awards. The university joined the national fraternity in recognizing the uncommon excellence of Alpha Sigma in 1964, selecting Chi Psi to receive the Robert B. House Award for most outstanding fraternity. The Interfraternity Council chipped in with special recognition of its own, voting the pledge class the most outstanding of the year. And *The Daily Tar Heel* added editorial plaudits:

“It is time to give credit where credit is due – this time to Chi Psi fraternity, winner of the R.B. House trophy as the outstanding fraternity on campus. . . . I do not have to base my comment on Chi Psi on the reports handed out by the IFC. Fred Seely, my co-editor, is a member, and I have had ample opportunity to watch from rather close range as The Lodge made its climb to the top.” [Editor’s Note: As the DTH pointed out, Hugh Stevens wrote the editorial “without the prior knowledge of his co-editor, Fred Seely, who is a member of Chi Psi.”]

Analyzing the fraternity’s uncommon pattern of success, Stevens concluded that Chi Psi doesn’t succeed by accident. “Rather [this success is] the result of two things – an especially talented group of men and the desire to be more than just another ‘sharp’ fraternity. Of the two factors, the latter is by far the most important. Call it what you will – spirit, desire or something else – it is the thing that makes or breaks a fraternity. Whatever it is, the Chi Psis have it, and their excellence in many fields is merely a manifestation of this intangible quality. . . . Because they have not been content to sit idly by and watch the campus move about them, but have instead made a positive effort to contribute to its progress, they have benefited both themselves and the campus.”

Phil Smith sums up the alpha’s stunning comeback this way: “What a trip – from academic probation and near-bankruptcy to academic leadership and acknowledged excellence at UNC and throughout Chi Psi.” The catalyst, Phil contends, was commitment to group goals, effective recruiting (of both men and money) and effective action to achieve the agreed goals.

All this not only positioned Alpha Sigma as the top dog among Chi Psi alphas but also established Chi Psi as the top fraternity on the UNC campus. Thanks to the gritty determination of its leadership and the unstinting support of every brother, Chi Psi had elevated itself from the lowest rung on the academic ladder to the highest in four feverish years.

Mike Brown believes the "national" character of the Lodge was – and is – a distinguishing characteristic of Chi Psi. “Most fraternity houses are made up of people from the same area or part of the state,” he observes, “but there is no typical Chi Psi. As the undergraduate years went by, we came to understand that this diversity was our greatest strength. We had many unique individuals from all over the country and world (one of my roommates, Louis Bush, was from Brazil). As we passed into the late 1960s, fraternities became less popular,” Brown says. “Social issues such as civil rights and the Vietnam war had polarized campus institutions, and many questioned the relevance of fraternities as social groups. Chi Psi, however, remained strong during those years, partly because of the diverse membership.”

Jay Lacklen also shares some memories of that period and the impact on the Lodge of a war half a world away. “Vietnam hovered over us during our entire Lodge tenure,” he recalls. “Most of the firebrands were on the ‘anti’ side – sort of the fashionable thing to be – but we also had a fairly strong Navy ROTC contingent, and the two groups seemed to coexist pretty well but often engaged in earnest arguments.”

Lacklen recalls when a staunch pro-war professor was invited to speak at the Lodge in 1968. “Apparently some of the firebrands didn't know his leanings,” Lacklen says, “and innocently asked if he didn't find the war abhorrent. He quickly responded: ‘Of course not. Who could possibly think that?’ The firebrands' mouths dropped open as they sat in stunned silence. They never recovered that evening. No one had ever challenged their assumptions so fearlessly. They had confirmed and reconfirmed their shared position among themselves so often they apparently thought it to be universal. Three cheers for the speakers program.

“The pro-war side got its comeuppance, too,” Lacklen remembers. “One brother epitomized the gung-ho navy/marine officer ready to win the war for freedom and honor. Following graduation in 1968, he fairly sprinted out the Lodge front door to the rice paddies of Vietnam. Yet, before I graduated in 1969 he had returned – wounded, crippled, bitter and vehemently antiwar. As he hobbled around the Lodge on a cane he would speak to anyone who wanted to discuss the war. His transformation sobered me. When I wound up in Vietnam two years later, I was eager for the experience, but wary of my rationale. Every time I started to get gung-ho I would remember our ex-marine on his cane.”

Notwithstanding the social distractions posed by war abroad and civil rights struggles at home, the brothers worked hard and persistently to achieve campus and national honors. But they didn't work *all* the time. It was this period that gave birth to what has become the largest faculty-student mixer on the Carolina campus – the Faculty Cocktail Party, successor to the Faculty Tea initiated in the 1930s. A new day dawned in the Fall of 1963 when a brash New Yorker advised a rookie campus affairs chairman on how to run the time-honored faculty tea.

Dick Lewisohn, donor of the unsolicited advice, criticized the “loathsome event” and promoted his better idea: “If we want anybody to come,” Dick declared, “we need to give them liquor, feed them roast beef, include wives and send formal invitations to faculty homes so the wives will open them.” Dick's confidence in his own concept overwhelmed the waffling uncertainty of the new social chairman. Having no better ideas of his own, the chairman did as he was told.

The landmark evening arrived, but, as fate would have it, three Chi Psi volleyball teams were playing for the intramural flight championships and would be late returning to the Lodge. Thus, a membership of 50-plus was reduced by half just when bodies were badly needed to create conversation and entertain any faculty visitors who might stop in. Humiliation hovered near.

Just before the appointed hour, the first faculty *couple* arrived. Others quickly followed, and the downstairs cloak closets filled, then overflowed into the cooler niche and then onto the second floor sleeping porch. Dinner arrived and the faculty filled the dining room. Fear of failure was replaced by another fear – insufficient tables, chairs, cutlery, food and, of course, drink.

The volleyballers returned and were turned away at the door: "No room; no food; feed yourself; goodbye."

The party continued well into the night. Finally the guests left and the Sigma jocks were allowed to return. By the mid-1960s this annual ritual had become so popular that the brothers had to begin holding two each year. Academic blackmail of a gentle sort was not entirely unknown, and it was a brave soul indeed who could turn down a faculty request for an invitation to this elite event. "By the time I graduated in 1967," Jim Medford says, "members of the faculties where a number of us had taken courses (English, German, political science, journalism) demanded that they be included on a permanent list of invitees, and I recall making up such a list in 1967." This event became so popular with the faculty during the 1960s that the brothers had no choice but to hold two faculty cocktail parties annually just to meet demand – and avoid academic retribution.

Many of the memorable parties, of course, were private affairs. In the late '40s and early '50s, it was common to produce "programs" covering the entire weekend – usually a parody of a popular news or feature publication produced by the alpha's journalism majors. In those days, most of the houseparty dates were "imports" because of the low ratio of women to men on campus and the stringent university policies regarding coeds. The guests would take rooms in nearby private homes because the Carolina Inn was the only hotel available – and its rooms at that time were severely limited and a bit pricey for college men.

Mike Brown recounts one party that featured an indoor wading pool. "The entire dining room was converted into a wading pool with cinder blocks and heavy plastic sheeting," he says. "How the foundation survived, I'll never know. Each Fall the beautiful trees around the Lodge contributed to a leaf party with the furniture downstairs removed and replaced with three feet of leaves. Motorcycles, ridden by people with and without clothes, would pass through from time to time.

"Almost every Saturday night there were poker games that would begin after dates were taken home and continue until Miss Bertha began serving breakfast. Many participated in these poker sessions, but the hard core consisted of John Yelverton, Bill Pugh, Fred Thomas, Dick Goldman, Jim Headlee, 'Jungle Jim' Medford and Jim (Chicken) Little. These games and other events and parties," Brown notes, "were sometimes interrupted by Brother Fred Thomas of the 'Church of What's Happening Now' singing and preaching in his inimitable style."

Sometimes the social events got out of hand. Hard to imagine, but true. Again, Brother Brown enlightens us: “One Spring the field we normally used for our beer-bust softball game was taken, so we shifted to a nearby elementary school playground. Little did we know that alcohol on school premises was a misdemeanor in North Carolina. Someone called the Chapel Hill police and all of us, dates included, were hauled to the local courthouse on a Saturday afternoon to answer for our crimes. As #3, I was part of the team that negotiated a plea bargain of community service to get everyone released.”

John Strickland remembers a number of “special annual events,” including the brothers-only Christmas party. “Anonymous gift-giving was a highlight of this event and never failed to bring out the infectious laugh of Jim (Chicken) Little.”

But it wasn’t always party time at the Lodge during the Smoky Sixties. In the latter part of the decade, student unrest became rampant on the nation’s campuses, a new brand of social liberalism flowered and Greek-letter societies again fell into disfavor among large segments of the newly righteous student body and faculty.

Alan Neely, however, remembers the earlier years of that turbulent decade at Alpha Sigma. “Richard Ross, social chairman, decided we needed our own nightclub,” Neely relates. “After a ‘highly professional’ presentation to the brotherhood, each brother was assessed a whopping \$6 to dress up the basement of the Lodge. The amount gathered went for thick orange shag carpeting, black paint and a pseudo-ski lodge fireplace with unvented gas logs, which represented the Fire Marshal’s worst nightmare. Someone donated a battered stereo system. At the bottom of the steps leading to our ‘nightclub’ was a hand-carved plaque with this inscription, taken from Pericles: “For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without the loss of manliness. [*Editor’s Note: Is that Pericles I hear twisting in his grave?*]

“Thus was born *Exotica*,” Neely says. “The contributor of this hokey name is, thankfully, lost to memory – but it stuck. In our 1960s fantasies, we had created the ultimate make-out room (public though it was). With the lights seldom on, the intentionally dimmed fire from the gas logs provided less than adequate illumination to navigate across the unusually crowded, invariably reclined, masses. Virginitly was said to be ever at risk when a date descended to *Exotica*. Wishful thinking no doubt exceeded fact,” Neely concedes. “These mysteries we may never know, but we certainly enjoyed thinking of ourselves as dangerous.”

In a similar vein, Dick Goldman reflects on the origin, growth and success of the Lodge’s very own band – the Zookeepers. “By 1964,” he says, “there was enough musical talent available in the Lodge that when bands would play for parties, some of us would take over and play during their breaks. On one such occasion, John Yelverton finally found his instrument. Although he had never played drums before, John sat down and winged it – beautifully – on the drum set. Taylor Branch [*Editor’s Note: Yes, that Taylor Branch – the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian*] and I would grab the electrical guitars and sing, and all of a sudden it appeared that we might have the makings of a band. Bill Guy joined us, and we decided to form a band, but there were two missing links – a lead guitar player (Branch and I were both rhythm guitarists) and a bass player.

“We started networking,” Goldman recalls, “and found Charlie Pettis (later known as Charlie Guitas) who became the lead guitarist and Alex the weightlifter, who became the bass player. The band was formed with Yelverton and me doing most of the lead singing and Taylor Branch occasionally taking the lead. (*A Little Bit of Soap* was Taylor's big number.) The harmony was terrific, and the surprise was that Yelverton could sing and even imitate many of the current hit musicians, including Mick Jagger. As a result, Rolling Stones music became a hallmark of our group. Although Scott Ackerman and Alan Neely never took up singing with the band, they continued to work *Exotica* and the living room with their guitars and ballads.”

Goldman offers a postgraduate sidebar to the story. “Some members of the Zookeepers regrouped in the 1970s,” he says. “Fred Thomas, another singing Chi Psi from the pledge class of 1964, joined me in going professional in 1972. We called ourselves Allen and Watson, using our middle names. We were best known for political satire, including our original song *A Boy Named Tricky Dick*, a parody set to the music of *A Boy Named Sue*. [Editor's Note: Where are they now when the world is waiting for the *Ballad of Bawdy Billy*?] After a year, we expanded into a five-piece show group. In order to add more musical depth, we sought out Charlie Pettis, the lead guitarist of the former Zookeepers, and Bill Guy, who played keyboard for the Zookeepers and sang. This group, named Town Hall after the beer hall in Chapel Hill, thrived for one and a half years before disbanding late in 1974.”

Not everything in Chapel Hill or on West Cameron Avenue was in harmony in those years. Student unrest was alive and growing. Jim Medford remembers 1963 as “a turbulent year” at UNC. “Integration forces were clashing with segregation forces in Chapel Hill as well as the rest of the South,” he says, “and social and political issues were the subject of pervasive and sometimes acrimonious discussions at the Lodge with very definitive groups forming for and against the Civil Rights push.”

There also was a brouhaha over the newly enacted Speaker Ban Law, Medford relates. “Brother Paul Dickson had helped organize, with the assistance of a lawyer in Greensboro, a very effective opposition to the speaker ban. Student groups invited two controversial speakers (Herbert Apetheker, a member of the Communist Party, and Frank Wilkinson, who had taken the Fifth Amendment before the House Un-American Activities Committee) to Chapel Hill, and their subsequent debarment precipitated a confrontation that led to legal action. There was not unanimity in the Lodge concerning the actions being taken by me and others who thought the law should be overturned,” Medford says, “but everyone in the Lodge showed great support to the outside world.”

This, of course, was not the only divisive incident to hit the Lodge in those difficult years. One year, Medford says, “there was heated debate when one of the brothers brought a black girl to the pledge formal. Since all the brothers knew in advance what was going to happen, we had innumerable meetings to discuss the situation, and tempers sometimes flared. When the time came, however, everyone behaved wonderfully (even Miss Bertha, who was strongly opposed to the whole idea).”

Even in this strained environment, Sigma brothers found time for academics and extracurriculars. Medford tells the story of one unusual, if not unique, episode in the Lodge's history. "In 1965, Chi Psi's entrant in the North Carolina frog jumping contest won and became the state's entrant in the annual frog jumping contest held in Calaveras County, California. Regrettably, the high-jumping Chi Psi frog suffered an anxiety attack and did not even budge when it got to California." [*Editor's Note*: The frog's reaction was not unlike that of various Tar Heel basketball teams that likewise have stalled under the harsh glare of the NCAA's Elite Eight or Final Four.]

In the mid-1960s, the university made another of its periodic – some would say quixotic – changes in rushing policy, shifting the rush season from Fall to Spring. John Strickland was among those caught in the switch. As he tells it, "My class had to wait until second semester for the rush season. I vividly recall walking onto the Lodge grounds during the last night of rush, surrounded by torches, singing brothers and many of the friends I had made in the first semester who would join me in pledging Chi Psi. Thus began an involvement with the life and management of Chi Psi and Alpha Sigma that continues today."

John describes his 31-member pledge class as "awesome" and says it was, and is, the largest pledge class in the history of Alpha Sigma. "Our group was a wonderful mix of 'yankees' and 'grits,'" he says. "Most importantly, we were the best and brightest pledge class – and graduating class, for that matter – in the history of the Alpha – which means in the history of Chi Psi! [*Editor's Note*: It's disturbing to think that he might actually *believe* that! Apparently modesty was not among the virtues of that sterling pledge class.] Many bids were issued because there were so many great candidates that year, and everyone who received a Chi Psi bid accepted it! The brothers did not quite know what to do with us. (We later became 'digits' for a short time. I believe this concept was a Phil Smith invention)."

"The class of 1968 was the longest-serving pledge class in Sigma history," according to Strickland. We ran afoul of two policies: In addition to UNC's new requirement for freshmen to defer rush until the Spring semester, there was a Sigma requirement for pledges to complete one full semester before initiation. Our initiation was planned for September 1965 – eight months after we had pledged! I remember coming all the way down to Chapel Hill with my friend and fellow pledge, Terry Colby, in August 1965 to help prepare the Lodge for the Chi Psi [124th] Annual Convention. But then we had to leave because 'mystic' things would happen at the convention that pledges could not see or hear."

Boomers, Xers and Others

Fueled by ideas and attitudes that emerged in the '60s and reached full flower at Woodstock in the penultimate year of that perplexing decade, the Sizzling Seventies brought accelerated Vietnam War protests, the sound of Jimi Hendrix, the music of Carole King, streaking, recreational drugs, spaced-out days and disco nights. The decade brought the Watergate scandal, the end of the draft lottery and the opening of the diplomatic door to China. It also brought the flowering of the me-generation, *Roe v. Wade*, the bizarre Patty Hearst episode and the resounding success of *The Godfather*. Jerry Ford pardoned Nixon, and Jimmy Carter pardoned the draft dodgers.

In 1970, campus unrest reached the boiling point following the tragic killings of four Kent State students during an antiwar protest. With a student strike threatened at UNC, Brother Tom Bello, president of the student body, addressed a gathering of thousands in the Pit. “If the only way that this nation is going to notice us is for us to strike, we strike” Bello said. “We strike today, we strike tomorrow, the next day, the next day, the next day. . .” According to reports, the crowd’s ovation drowned him out at that point. Three days later, according to university historians Albert Coates and Gladys Hill Coates, “the university faculty recognized the validity – if not the necessity – of the student strike. They declined to strike themselves but voted overwhelmingly not to punish students who did.”

Bello, another of the Sigma Rhodes Scholars, controlled the students effectively, led the strike and avoided violence. The 1970 *Yackety Yack* noted that Bello’s actions marked “the transformation of a student body president into a student body leader.”

As indicated by the strike episode, activism was much in vogue in that period. Bill Pappas describes the situation this way: “The early ’70s were a time of protest and social unrest, and although we missed many of the marches and demonstrations of the mid- to late-’60s, there were trips to Washington for Vietnam protests and civil rights demonstrations in the South. We awakened one morning to find that one of the brothers had been arrested in a small eastern North Carolina town as a result of his participation in a civil rights demonstration. It took one of our alumni attorneys to make certain that he was not prosecuted for the felony with which he had been unfairly charged.”

Looking back at the ’60s from the vantage point of the ’70s, a national commentator, Paul Harvey, summed up college students of the 1960s in these harsh words:

“A generation hiding in the ivy from the draft sat-in, loved-in, shot-up and freaked-out. They dropped acid and dropped out. They talked revolution without the slightest idea what it was. They tried to evolve suddenly and, as Darwin knew, there is no way. In a wall-to-wall world, they tried for the vertical – and for the minuscule few who went straight up – most went straight down.”

That stinging assessment was offered a decade after the fact when the sons of the Sixties were older and presumably wiser. It was a lead-in to Paul Harvey’s observation that Chi Psi is different. “On the University of North Carolina campus alone, Chi Psi includes 14 Phi Beta Kappas and four Rhodes Scholars,” Harvey noted. “Of 70 active brothers, 35 are Morehead Scholars. Evidence of [this] excellence is unmatched among fraternities,” he declared.

By 1971, the interior and furnishings of the Lodge were beginning again to look a little the worse for wear – downright shabby, some might say. It was time for a makeover. Dick Jenrette, arranged for a stem-to-stern renovation by Otto Zenke, based in Greensboro and widely hailed at the time as one of the nation’s top interior designers. Bill Pappas recounts some of the story: “Several of us trooped to Greensboro that Fall to ‘select’ furnishings and discuss architectural plans with Otto – in reality an opportunity for us to see what Otto envisioned as the quintessential southern gentlemen's club.

“After the renovations were finished in the Spring of 1972, the change in the Lodge was dramatic and profound – from a dark, worn series of cavern-like rooms to a New York men's club. Most of us had no idea how to treat the new furnishings, recalling that the night prior to the remodeling was the scene of an enormous food fight that completely trashed the dining room and part of the small living room. The renovation of the basement area under the kitchen – *Exotica* – was not a Zenke project but was no less amazing, though for different reasons.”

The “new” Lodge was put to good use. According to Pappas, “It saw Rush Coffee Houses that showcased the talents and wit of our brothers as well as such friends as the band ‘Arrogance,’ which played at many social events and came to use the Lodge as its unofficial headquarters. The programs at these Coffee Houses ranged from the sublime to the absurd, but provided a far more accurate representation of the character and personality of Chi Psi than traditional fraternity rush events.”

Alpha Sigma pledged its first African-American brothers in 1973 and 1974, a significant milestone for Chi Psi in that era. And, in some ways, a millstone as well. Ten years later, a Visitor’s report described the situation in these words:

“For many years, Alpha Sigma has been plagued by nonacceptance among the other Alphas in Region III. There are a number of reasons: First and foremost, the alpha has openly pledged black members. The brothers of Alpha Sigma have experienced more criticism from their neighboring Chi Psi alphas than from any group on the UNC campus. Alpha Sigma’s success, combined with their interracial pledging practices, have caused many alphas (mostly Southern) to openly condemn them.”

The implied absence of criticism from others in Chapel Hill and the vivid description of condemnation within Chi Psi paints an interesting, though certainly not pretty, picture. Something similar had occurred many years earlier when a transfer student from an Eastern university wreaked havoc with the Fall rush. In a 1936 letter to George Cavanaugh, Linn Garibaldi expressed great concern:

“I am afraid we are going to have a little trouble with a new transfer who has come down from Hamilton. He is of the distinct yankee type and already they have run into some difficulty about [the transferee] balling a cousin of _____. Although _____’s cousin is one-quarter Jew, he does not attend the church and goes with the best crowd in Asheville, as would naturally be the case. . . .Neither of us could find anything wrong with the boy or any reason why the fraternity should not pledge him, but this fellow from Hamilton has stirred up things.”

Happily, there is less criticism from within today and, in fact, a number of other alphas have belatedly followed Sigma’s lead in looking at men rather than color or creed.

Because of Sigma’s prominence and leadership on campus and because Chi Psi attracted individuals who would not have gone through rush but for Alpha Sigma, the Lodge was always full with a waiting list for live-ins. Pappas says the peak (at least for his time) came with 43 live-ins –“including one in the closet across from the second-floor phone booth and two in *Exotica*.” The number of actives was generally in the 125 range, and every bed on both sleeping porches was taken throughout the year.

In the 1970s, Alpha Sigma continued to display its campus and national leadership. In 1972, for example, George Butler received the first Stanley Birge Award as the outstanding upperclassman in the fraternity, based on “exceptional loyalty and leadership in fraternity affairs.” Four of the first five winners of the Birge Award were Sigma brothers. On campus, five Sigma brothers served as president of the student body during the 1970s.

Three Chi Psis were especially influential in the development of student government at the university. Tom Bello, as mentioned earlier, spearheaded a student strike in 1970, triggered by the violence at Kent State University. In contrast to the bloody Kent State uprising, Bello made sure that the UNC strike was a peaceful, but highly effective, one. Interestingly, Bello was the first independent candidate elected to the presidency of the student body, and his victory marked the beginning of the decline of the university’s long-established political parties, which have not elected a student body president since 1969.

Jimmie Phillips journeyed from political obscurity to president of the student body. In a stunning eight-horse race, Phillips upset the early favorite, Craig Brown, who later commented that Phillips’ “platform at first struck me as unrealistic, although the coming year proved that to be a mistaken observation.” Brown characterized Phillips as “charismatic and instantly likeable” and noted that he “conducted a spirited campaign, superbly organized by [fellow Sigma] Tom Terrell.”

Despite his lack of campus political experience, Phillips quickly streamlined the organization of student government and subsequently expanded the role of student government with the university’s Board of Trustees. One of Phillips’ chief lieutenants was a Chi Psi brother, John Kelly, who succeeded Phillips as head of the student body. Kelly was, in fact, the first president elected without a runoff in 20 years. Perhaps the high point of his administration was persuading the Board of Trustees to ignore the administration’s proposal for a hike in the student health fee in favor of a *reduction* in that fee – the first-ever reduction in student fees.

Mo Nathan, the latest Sigma to head the student body, was elected by the widest margin in history – nearly 1,800 votes more than his closest competitor. Nathan became the 18th Chi Psi to serve as student body president and the 13th in the last 20 years.

Significantly, Alpha Sigma was not only leading the fraternity field in academic and extracurricular achievement, it also was a leader in innovation. In the early 1970s, Sigma worked closely with university officials to offer evening courses for credit in the Lodge itself. After experimenting with noncredit courses taught at the Lodge, faculty members were ready to test the idea of expanding the program to include full-credit courses. The idea originated at one of Sigma’s increasingly popular faculty teas, which had by that time become the faculty cocktail party. Apart from those who favored the Long Island variety, tea-drinkers were a vanishing – or vanished – breed.

In any case, it was agreed that for two years the Lodge would offer three full-credit courses, partially funded by the Chi Psi Educational Trust. One of those courses was landscape architecture. So impressed were they by the spacious grounds surrounding the Lodge, that one architecture class developed a landscape renovation plan, which the alpha received gratefully and implemented promptly. As a result, the Chi Psi grounds today are not only the largest but also the handsomest fraternity property in Chapel Hill.

Joe Hodges recalls a sidelight of that course on landscape architecture. “The course helped the Lodge post a grade point average of 3.4 during the semester when 30 of us took Landscape Architecture and received ‘A’ for four hours of credit,” he says. “Even Reid Phillips received credit although he thought he had dropped the course. Reid tried to rectify the situation but, when presented with substantial paperwork, he walked out the door, commenting that ‘I’m not going to do more work to drop this ‘A’ than I did to earn it.’”

Buddy Jenrette, who describes himself as “an inveterate gardener,” was instrumental in rehabbing the well-used grounds of Chi Psi in the mid-1970s. Jenrette sees three distinct “themes” to the property and describes them in this way:

“What first catches the eye is the formal setting of the front lawn. Those English boxwoods are of a size and quality to be termed Southern botanical aristocracy. Left over from a previous house on the property, they are spectacular and must be cared for by knowledgeable people. In today’s market, they are priceless. The brick wall was built by Crazy Crane. The herringbone brick walkway was designed and built in 1950.

“The second theme is the large side yard with the massive oaks. David Adams and I asked William Lanier Hunt, noted horticulturist and founder of the NC Botanical Gardens, to inspect the trees, and he classed them among the finest specimens in the region. The side yard has the feeling of an English park with those trees and the rusticated stone wall along Ransom Street. [*Editor’s Note:* That wall was built, according to legend, by slave labor in the 19th century.] Dr. Hunt and I felt that nothing could be done to improve the area as long as the trees were protected. We developed a maintenance program and had the trees pruned and cared for. To enhance the woodland feel, I transplanted a bunch of dogwoods from our home in Raleigh to the side yard to liven up the area in Springtime. I planted another pink dogwood, donated by John Strickland, in the front corner of the grounds at the edge of the property. Happily they were all still there when I last visited.

“The third theme was the playing field by the basketball court. This area was for me a continuing nightmare because of the constant wear that it endured. I remember a picture in one of our pledge books of David Adams, George Butler and Lynch Christian covered in mud back there in the midst of a rugby game. Despite Chi Psi’s reputation as home to more Rhodes Scholars, Morehead Fellows, student body presidents and Golden Fleece members than any other organization, there also was a strong tradition of athletics.

“There are a few other vegetative matters worth remembering. Behind the basketball goal there used to be some of the finest kudzu [*Editor’s Note*: Sounds like an oxymoron to me] in the South. I’m not sure if this is the exact kudzu that inspired James Dickey’s poem of the same name when he attended a reception at the Lodge one year, but it surely was world-class kudzu.

“Along the driveway next to the playing field is a Prince Pawlonia Cigar Tree, a relatively unusual tree. There is also a beautiful red maple in the side yard next to the dining room. This tree was a gift to the university by a group of Canadian students visiting during a Canadian-American Days festival in 1973. Because no one knew exactly what the protocol was to turn the tree over to the university, they brought it to me to temporarily plant at the Lodge until someone could find out. Twenty years later, I noticed the tree had grown to a stately 30 feet. I suppose university officials should be invited each October to enjoy the Fall colors of *their* tree.”

By the Fall semester of 1975, Chapel Hill was quickly losing the right to describe itself as “small,” but a few vestiges of the old village remained. Highway 54 bypass was still a two-lane road, though it was beginning to get crowded in the morning and evening rush hours. Durham and dear old Duke were still 12 miles away, but car dealerships, traffic lights and restaurants were beginning to crowd the formerly open spaces between the rival universities, and city limits were creeping towards each other at an alarming pace.

Franklin Street, the commercial hub of Chapel Hill, was home at that time to several locally owned businesses and restaurants, including the Carolina Coffee Shop, Ye Olde Waffle Shoppe, Huggins Hardware, Milton’s Clothing, Julian’s (where Alexander Julian first developed the sense of style that has elevated him to the top rank of American designers), Continental Travel and, just a few steps below street level, Danziger’s Rathskellar. The boast of since-departed Hector’s Restaurant (“Famous Since 1969”) had not yet lost its humor, and if you wanted to cross Franklin Street, there were two crosswalks in the vicinity of the Carolina Coffee Shop. Neither had lights or crossing signals, but both had signs directing traffic to stop for crossing pedestrians.

Franklin and Rosemary Streets were dotted with signs of late-’60s and early-’70s culture, but even that seemed to be drifting inexorably into history. Nixon had by then left the White House. The United States had pulled its last troops out of Vietnam and long, shaggy hair had become more a nuisance than a “statement.” Judging from the handsome group photographed in front of the Lodge the previous Spring, long hair had gone the way of crew cuts, zoot suits and keychains. Whatever it was that influenced the nation and its university campuses in 1968 and the years following, the pendulum in the mid-’70s was swinging in the opposite direction. And its movement was as rapid as it was distinct.

On April 15, 1977, some 200 actives, alumni and friends gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the rebirth of Alpha Sigma. John Strickland, as president of the Sigma Corporation, served as master of ceremonies. Among the distinguished speakers were Walt Spearman and two brothers who were instrumental in refounding the alpha: Oliver Rowe and Linn Garibaldi.

The Lodge continued in the 1980s as a spawning ground for campus leaders. John Kelly completed his term as president of the student body in 1980 and was followed during the decade by five other Sigma brothers: Scott Norberg, Michael Vandenberg, Kevin Monroe, Paul Parker and Bryan Hassel. In a 1982 article published in the heat of Brother Norberg's successful campaign, *The Daily Tar Heel* noted that some had accused Chi Psi of operating "a well-oiled political machine."

Robin Britt notes that it all began with the focus on pledging Morehead Scholars. The tradition of campus leadership, he says, "has perpetuated itself [at Alpha Sigma] because people see that positions of student leadership aren't beyond their reach." They see others doing it and figure, "Why not me?"

The latter years of the '80s brought significant change to the UNC fraternal system. After years of slippage, the Greek community had degenerated into a loosely organized collection of fraternities and sororities with no formal governing board. And the university administration was again focusing intently on the hole instead of the fraternity doughnut, seeing only the negative aspects of social fraternities and largely ignoring the positive.

The town, too, was changing and already had outgrown its traditional "village" designation. As Drew McNally recalls, "No longer was [Chapel Hill] looked upon as a college community but as a growing, diverse city. This caused public attitudes to change about fraternities and their social activities. The town passed noise ordinances, and the state of North Carolina raised the legal drinking age from 19 to 21. The cost of living rose and Chapel Hill municipal taxes increased significantly during this period. These developments," McNally concludes, "had a profound effect on the atmosphere on campus and at the Lodge. It became more difficult to recruit new members due to increasing restrictions placed on the fraternal system by university and local officials and the lack of university support. Higher costs of membership deterred some potential new members."

Although Alpha Sigma's membership declined from 125 brothers in 1986 to 85 in 1990, the fraternity adapted and continued to prosper. The Lodge continued to take an active role in campus activities and, according to McNally, "The Chi Psi 'conspiracy' remained an important part of the Lodge. Brothers held key positions in student government, Honor Court, *The Daily Tar Heel*, performing arts, campus Y, freshman orientation program. The alpha also started the Carolina Student Credit Union during this period. In addition, the Lodge continued to contribute important members of the university varsity teams, including fencing, crew, rugby, ice hockey and football. Older brothers encouraged younger brothers to participate in campus activities, thus continuing the Chi Psi tradition in many of the top posts on campus."

After more than a half-century of hard use, the Lodge reached the point in the late 1980s where extensive renovation was necessary. Alumnus Bruce Johnson, a professional architect, redesigned the interior and supervised the construction project. The original Lodge cost \$32,000 to build in 1934, but the renovation cost more than \$50,000 – most of it underwritten by contributions from alumni, thanks to an aggressive capital campaign launched by alumni Joe Hodges and Tom Terrell two years before the renovation began. The Chi Psi Educational Trust kicked in additional funds to refurbish the library and study areas. The construction phase began in May 1989 and ended – finally – in November. When it reopened, the Lodge stood once again as the showplace of the UNC fraternity system.

The renovations, according to Drew McNally, “were quite extensive due to many years of wear and tear. The fondly remembered ‘Blue Room’ – the blue-tiled shower room on the second floor – was discovered to have several leaks that were causing significant water damage. It was replaced by a more modern, tan-tiled integrated bathroom and shower room that incorporated several precautions to prevent future water damage. The new design also called for larger water pipes so that one no longer had to shout ‘flush!’ in order to prevent a fellow brother from being scalded by hot water in the shower.

“It was discovered during the construction phase that a key structural support near the entry foyer was not supporting the weight of the three floors above as needed. This was remedied and several new steel support beams were added throughout the Lodge,” McNally reports. “These new beams were covered by solid oak trim in order to maintain the Lodge’s traditional Georgian facade. The project also included a modern heating and air conditioning system. While many brothers have fond memories of sleeping on the unheated sleeping porches in the depths of January, the new convenience was [warmly] welcomed by the active brothers.

“Rush remained a focal point every semester and that process remained very selective,” McNally says. “We strove to bring in unique individuals with strong character who would be able to contribute to the Lodge in complementary ways.”

Both Alpha Sigma and several of its brothers received important awards during the 1990s. In 1994, Dick Jenrette received the North Carolina Award in Public Service – the highest award the state can bestow. Banks Talley received the same award a year later for his “contributions in education, historic preservation and the arts.”

David Ball, one of several Sigma brothers who have won Rhodes Scholarships, provided some interesting insights on the alpha in a 1992 article published in *The Purple & Gold*. Here are some excerpts:

“Alpha Sigma’s lessons about how to deal with people [was] the reason. . . I [received] the [Rhodes] Scholarship. . . Alpha Sigma has had a tremendous impact on my development as a person who respects and values other people. . . The alpha inspired excellence. Although it didn’t make me into a good student, it did provide a good atmosphere for continuing to do well in school. . . .

“My values changed as a result of the brothers of Alpha Sigma, and so did the way in which I dealt with people. My freshman year, I was a pretty big snob. I thought people who made good grades were ‘smart,’ people who held campus offices were ‘leaders’ and people who got into good law schools or got plum investment banking jobs were ‘successful.’ The Lodge was ‘impressive’ enough to make me interested in, and continues to be so.

“But these assumptions were challenged every day, both passively. . . and actively as well. Brothers at the alpha have less tolerance for phoniness than any other place I’ve been, and one earns respects from a brotherhood based on strength of character. . . . People like me, who thought as freshmen that they knew everything, learn a lot very quickly.”

In cooperation with the Carolina Union, Alpha Sigma sponsored a number of receptions in 1993 for distinguished speakers. The sessions were open to the public, and the Lodge was invariably crammed wall to wall with guests. Among the featured speakers were William F. Buckley Jr., editor of *The National Review*; Arthur Schlesinger Jr., the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian; Edwin F. Meese, US Attorney General under Ronald Reagan; and Nadine Strossen, president of the American Civil Liberties Union. Taken together, the distinguished guests covered an uncommonly broad political spectrum.

Somewhere along the way in the 1970s or 1980s, somebody must have blackballed a guy named Howie Carr. Howie now writes a column for *The Boston Herald* – and he’s still ticked off at Chi Psi. Shortly before the 1992 election, Howie decided to tell the world – or at least that little part that revolves around the Hub of Boston – about Bill Clinton. Nothing wrong with that; politicians are fair game. But young Howie decided to trash Chi Psi while he was at it.

“Oh, yes,” he wrote, “we all know the Bill Clintons of the world. I went to college in the South, and there were so many of these fork-tongued brown-nosers oozing around down there they had their own fraternity. In *Animal House*, it was Nedermeyer’s gang. At my school, it was Chi Psi. ‘The Lodge.’”

“Let me tell you, if you wanted to get past the front door at the Lodge during rush [*Editor’s Note*: Howie apparently didn’t – or, if he did, he probably didn’t have much time to study the interior], you needed at least two notarized letters from congressmen. If Bill Clinton had gone to Chapel Hill, he would have been in The Lodge.”

One can well understand why the brothers dropped the black marbles when Howie’s name came up. It’s somewhat more difficult to understand how in the world he got a rush invitation in the first place.

In 1994, Alpha Sigma received a new honor when Phil Smith was selected to succeed Mike Illuzi of Alpha Rho as executive director of Chi Psi. Phil served in that capacity for one year before returning to North Carolina to pursue personal business interests.

In January of that same year, tragedy struck at the Lodge. Christopher Todd Stewart accidentally shot himself while visiting Chi Psi friends. It started when Stewart and Scott Barnes, both students at Appalachian State University, began handing around a Glock 40-caliber semiautomatic gun that Barnes had purchased earlier in the week. The magazine had been removed from the gun but, unbeknownst to the visitors, a shell remained in the chamber. Stewart, for some reason, put the “unloaded” gun to his chest and pulled the trigger. Brothers who were qualified as emergency medical technicians rushed to his aid, but the medical examiner confirmed later that no amount of CPR could have saved the young man’s life.

Less than two months later, Alpha Sigma brothers launched a cash-for-guns swap. In cooperation with Chapel Hill police, the brothers organized the buy-back program to get weapons off the street and out of private hands. Mike Workman, one of the organizers, said: “We felt strongly that we needed to do something after what happened here [in January]. We want to get any guns we can off the street.”

In 1995, the Order of Omega, the national Greek leadership honor society, established a chapter at UNC, and Don Beeson, '82, was among the first fraternity alumni selected as Honor Initiates of the society. Beeson was selected because of his significant contributions to UNC and the Greek community. In 1997, Tejbir Singh, '98, was inducted into the Order of Omega in recognition of his leadership skills, service to campus and community and academic standing.

Alpha Sigma received a particularly significant UNC award in 1997 – the Outstanding Campus Involvement Award. Chi Psi was the only fraternity on campus to have 100% of its members involved in campus activities. In addition, Sigma ranked No. 2 scholastically among all fraternities on campus with an overall grade point average of 3.12.

Soon after, *The Daily Tar Heel* ran an article disputing the claim that Chi Psi was seeking to corner the market on student achievement at UNC. The following was taken from the December 8, 1997 edition of the student daily:

“The typical fraternity image is one more reminiscent of *Animal House* than the White House [*Editor’s Note: One might argue that the differences, these days, are minimal*]. But one UNC fraternity is redefining that stereotype. . . .With so many Chi Psi fraternity members holding high-profile positions. . .in student organizations, one would think there was some kind of conspiracy.”

After compiling an unprecedented run of 13 student body presidents in 20 years, Chi Psi was attracting growing attention throughout the campus community. But the presidency was only the beginning. In addition to Mo Nathan, student body president, the list of honors for 1997-98 included the names of Franklin Golden, senior class president; James Hoffman, speaker of the Student Congress; Amar Athwal, chairman of the Student Congress Finance Committee; Charles Harris, Student Attorney General; and Calvin Cunningham, a former student body president who served in 1997 as Chief Justice of the Student Supreme Court. Outside the student government arena, David Lee served as president of the Clef Hangers, a popular singing group.

The Lodge continued to embellish its record of excellence as the millennium drew to a close. In 1999, Nic Heinke became the 14th Chi Psi in the last 21 years to win election as student body president, and Matt Van Hoose earned a Fulbright Scholarship for foreign study. In that same year, fraternity scholarship at Carolina reached a peak with 23 chapters registering GPAs of 3.00 or higher. Alpha Sigma was the campus leader with a GPA of 3.316. The alpha also was among the leaders in campus involvement with 85% of the brothers active in various campus organizations. Overall, Chi Psi was No. 2 in the IFC competition for the most outstanding fraternity.

Sigma also bucked the trend toward smaller Chi Psi alphas as the century drew near a close. Writing in the Spring 1999 issue of *The Purple & Gold*, Dr. George Ray, current president of the national fraternity, noted that “As a national fraternity, Chi Psi may be perilously close to refining itself out of existence. Being a small, select fraternity,” he stressed, “does not mean that we should maintain small alphas.” Dr. Ray noted that some of the fraternity’s 30 alphas have realized that “larger pledge delegations translate into stronger alphas.” He listed 11 alphas that pledged 17 or more men in 1999 with Sigma leading the list with 26 pledges.

Thanks to the efforts of Brothers Dan Boney, '51, and Kurt Gilliland, '92, UNC in 1999 agreed to catalog, preserve and house all available Sigma historical documents in the University Archives. Based on my own research efforts, all they'll need is a shoebox.

A major *fin de siecle* project involved the launch of a \$700,000 campaign to finance a major renovation of the Sigma Lodge and grounds. Brothers Leonard Herring, '48, and Dick Jenrette, '51, gave the capital campaign a major boost with identical \$100,000 contributions, but a major fundraising drive looms if Sigma Corporation is to complete the extensive and urgently needed overhaul. A priority was the installation of a sprinkler system to guard against fires such as the one that swept through the Phi Gamma Delta house in 1997, and the Herring-Jenrette contributions enabled the corporation to address that need on a timely basis. Simultaneously the contractor began installation of Internet wiring throughout the Lodge in anticipation of the university-mandated requirement for all students to have laptop computers by the year 2000.

Other projects include repairs to the slate roof, replacement of the front porch, which was severely damaged by Hurricane Fran, and, of course, extensive interior work. Time passes, styles change and generation succeeds generation, but the need for capital to fund the future of Alpha Sigma seems never to end.

Current brothers attribute the alpha's success in campus activities to a strong rush program. Many of the men who later earned prominent positions on campus already were actively involved in student government or other extracurricular activities when they pledged Chi Psi. Rather than settling for couch potatoes and party boys, Chi Psi continues to seek self-motivated individuals who are well equipped to carry on the fraternity's and the alpha's tradition of excellence. That tradition, begun in 1855 and regenerated in 1928, is alive and well today at 321 West Cameron Avenue in Chapel Hill.

Alpha Sigma has won plaudits from many sides, has been champion of many events, has gained myriad individual and alpha honors. But Alpha Sigma and Chi Psi are not about events, awards and victories. They are about relationships that produce lifetime value from the fraternity experience. That, too, is a tradition worth remembering.

Perhaps Joe Hodges states it as well as anyone. Referring to his own graduating class, Joe says:

“Today the class of 1975 is a representative sample of what Alpha Sigma has produced over the last three decades. We are doctors, lawyers, businessmen and educators; fathers, godfathers and bachelors (in some cases, again). We are spread across the United States and both oceans. We realize we may never again experience the richness and diversity of the group of individuals whose company we kept on a daily basis at the Lodge, but for as long as we have our memories we will always have unique recollections of a unique time and place.”

Having begun this brief, informal history with a series of quotations from observers of the fraternity scene, it seems appropriate to close with another. The following observation by Oliver Rowe succinctly crystallizes the true meaning and purpose of fraternities:

“A college fraternity. . . must contribute something of real value to the educational process. It must contribute something extra that cannot be obtained in the classroom. It must give each brother some of the stuff from which success is made.”

Generations of Sigmas have followed the wisdom of Brother Rowe and have made such contributions a way of life. In doing so, all of us – old brothers and new – have been recipients of “some of the stuff from which success is made.” And that is at the root of Alpha Sigma’s tradition of excellence!

Commitment to Excellence

A distinguishing characteristic of Alpha Sigma from the 1950s to the present has been its enduring commitment to excellence in recruiting and the achievements of its brothers. That, in fact, is the cornerstone of the alpha's unique tradition of excellence.

Some years ago, for example, there were 70 members of Alpha Sigma, and 35 of them were Morehead Scholars! Through 1997, UNC had produced 35 Rhodes Scholars, and eight of them were Chi Psis. The alpha also has produced several Fulbright Scholars and countless Phi Beta Kappas. In addition, literally hundreds of individual honors have been captured by Sigma brothers who have been inducted into the Order of the Golden Fleece, the Grail, Order of the Old Well and other honorary societies. Beyond all this, several brothers have been honored by the fraternity's own highest awards. And the alpha itself has been perhaps the most distinguished in America over the last half-century. Some of the awards earned by Alpha Sigma and its brothers are listed below.

Thayer Trophy	Goodbody Award	Albert S. Bard Award	Stanley Birge Award	Distinguished Service Award
1951	1964	Oliver Rowe	George Butler	Linn Garibaldi
1955	1968		Joseph Hodges	Walter Spearman
1964	1974		Donald Hughston	Richard Jenrette
1965	1975		Hubertus Vander Vaart	Oliver Rowe
1969	1976		Thomas Terrell	George Kenneth Cavanaugh
1971	1980		Matthew Cheek	
1976	1994			
1977				
1978				
1983				
1984				

A number of the brothers of Alpha Sigma also have held high office in the national fraternity. Oliver Rowe served as President from 1977 to 1985, Dick Jenrette chaired the Chi Psi Educational Trust (1967-71) and Tom Oxholm and Shawn Poole later served as treasurers of that organization. Among those who served as trustees of the Educational Trust were Linn Garibaldi, Tom York, Banks Talley, Dick Lewisohn, John Strickland, Don Hughston, James Cooper and Donald Keel.

Phil Smith served as executive director of the national fraternity (1994-95). Jack Atwood (1938-40), Charles Huntington (1962-64), Al Smith (1971-73), Joe Hodges (1976-78) and Don Beeson (1983-84) served as Fraternity Visitor. Tom Coolman in 1962-63, Al Smith in 1971-72 and Don Beeson in 1983-84 edited *The Purple and Gold*.

TURNING BACK MEMORY'S PAGE

For those who, like myself, are unable to recall the words to any Chi Psi song other than *Here's to Philip Spencer*, it might be worth mentioning that the title of this section comes from that rousing Chi Psi anthem titled *As We Journey through Life*. The seldom-remembered opening lines go like this:

*Whenever we turn back memory's page, to happy college years,
Still let us pray that, come what may, brothers we'll be true.*

Doesn't rhyme, but the sentiment's nice. To help readers turn back memory's page, this section presents a collection of thoughts offered by brothers of Alpha Sigma dating from 1938 to 1990. Their observations are organized chronologically based on the graduating class. Some are lengthy, some terse but, with minor exceptions offered in the interest of clarity, all are untouched by the editorial hand. In some cases, comments shown in [brackets] are provided in the interest of clarity – or additional information.

H. Ward Beebe, '32. After the fire in 1928 and the start of the Great Depression in 1929, things became progressively worse on campus and also for the fraternities, most of which had new houses replete with large mortgages and dwindling memberships. Alpha Sigma, with its Lodge in ashes, had no mortgage and about \$10,000 of insurance money in the bank. Therefore, our misfortune was, in a way, or good fortune. Almost all fraternities on campus were in financial trouble, and some went bankrupt. In most houses, there was great pressure to sign up as many pledges as possible for financial reasons – anyone who could pay dues. To give an idea of how bad the situation was, the University enrollment dropped from more than 3,000 students to fewer than 1,800 over a two-year period. Most of them were stone broke. There were only about 35 student-owned automobiles still on campus. Our Chi Psi brothers dropped to about 14 or 15 plus a few pledges. We were low in numbers but strong financially and, particularly, in spirit and pride.

It was decided that the best way to survive was to keep our numbers low, avoid the cutthroat pledging competition and make the best of what we had. In addition to our fine dining facility, we, of course, had the beautiful four-acre, stone-walled property. With the excellent and enthusiastic leadership of #1 Bob Avery, we worked very hard at beautifying the grounds, the boxwoods, etc. Also on the property was an ancient smokehouse, a very small, one-room shack and the dilapidated remains of a small barn. Everything received our attention, including the old bar, which we miraculously turned into a cozy entertainment spot complete with furniture and a small bar. This improvement was the brainchild of Bob Avery, and for years it was referred to as the Avery Memorial.

President Franklin Roosevelt was elected in 1932 at the bottom of the Depression and immediately took charge of the country in a big way. He called in all the gold and raised its price from \$20 an ounce to \$35. He also created the NRA and a number of other agencies. These actions caused a rapid rise in prices, which affected our plans for a new Lodge. The Sigma Corporation fortunately moved quickly by revising the plans to accommodate the rising costs and to get things going right away.

I was in summer school and staying in the one-room cabin at the back of the property when they finished construction on the new Lodge. I noticed that several of our large oak trees had begun to look sickly. Dirt in sizable quantities from the construction work on the Lodge had been piled around the roots of the trees. The contractors thought removal of the dirt was not their job. I suspected the dirt was killing the trees, so I called on Dr. WC Coker, a Chi Psi and UNC professor of botany. Dr. Coker was famous for his arboretum and certainly knew his trees. He confirmed my suspicions and gave me \$20 to get someone to move the dirt immediately.

After a quick search, I found a very hungry farmer who had a mule, a drag pan and a boy helper. His charge was to be 65 cents an hour. When I questioned the price, he replied defensively that "it's 40 cents for the mule and drag pan, 20 cents for me and 5 cents for the boy." Things were real tough in those days! Total cost was about \$36. As this was a sizable amount of dirt, I decided the best place to put it and easiest for the drag pan was to fill the back corner of the lot, which for some reason dropped off rather sharply.

While this project started out to be simply a job to get rid of the dirt, I decided to use the drag pan to level and smooth the surface, thinking we could create a flat base for a tennis court, an idea for the future. While the vision of a tennis court might have been impractical, I understand that in later years that area has been used for basketball. At any event, the oak trees survived to recover from their ordeal, and a wound up with a level piece of ground – all for \$36.

Jack Atwood, '38. On a long train ride from Chicago to Chapel Hill in the Fall of 1934, I met Johnny Foreman and Bob Hagey. We became good friends and went through Fall rush together. Bob Hagey's persuasiveness convinced Johnny and me to pledge Chi Psi. Some years later I learned that Bob came from a long line of Chi Psis and that his mind had been made up before he ever left Chicago.

Appealing to our egos, Bob did a masterful job of selling the two of us on the idea that Chi Psi needed our help to build the Alpha back to the glory of its 1928 reactivation. We would probably not have joined had it not been for the imposing presence of the new Lodge and the spacious grounds. With only 8 to 10 members rambling around the beautiful new Lodge built to house 35, how could we fail to make it better? Our enthusiasm was boundless. The opportunity to create from the bottom up generated a sustained determination to succeed. And we did help make it better. John McRae and Fred Ullman joined our pledge class, and then we were 5. After our initiation, I think our total membership was about 15. Not very large in numbers, but we were 10 feet tall.

We fielded some excellent intramural teams, beginning a tradition that remains a hallmark of Alpha Sigma. We made some contributions to campus life and started to receive recognition for it. Each succeeding year showed improvement – more and better members and increasingly active participation in campus activities. It was also in this period that we started hosting faculty teas. In 1936 we filled up the Lodge with 35 active Chi Psis. I was #5 and later #1 in my senior year. Our grade average was tops. We were represented in all facets of campus life. In the Fall of 1939, we pledged 17 young men. Finally, Chi Psi took its place as one of the outstanding fraternities in Chapel Hill.

Furman Bisher, '38. I arrived at University of North Carolina as a junior in 1936, transferred from Furman University to work on a journalism degree. I'd left a pretty good situation,

manager of the Furman football team and sports editor of the student newspaper, but if I were to whet my skills, limited as they were, I needed what a J-School could give me.

Thus, I was a latecomer to Alpha Sigma, and the roommate assigned me in Mangum Hall was Ben Dilworth, a scholarship football and basketball player from Bryn Mawr, Pa. Though Ben was a freshman and I a junior, we were quite compatible. He played freshman football for awhile, then decided to concentrate on basketball and later captained a Carolina team that won the Southern Conference championship.

It was due to Ben Dilworth that I became a Chi Psi. Once he was pledged, he convinced some of the brothers that I was worthy of becoming a Chi Psi, and before my junior year was out, I became one, a somewhat over-age pledge. One reason was that I was a fair intramural athlete, played on the Lodge football, basketball and softball teams, even wrestled, but without distinction. Our Lodge teams were good, but we never won any championships.

The honors I won at UNC were minor. I worked with the UNC football team as a manager, wrote a few things for the *Chapel Hill Daily* but did little to distinguish myself on campus. We were a happy group, and happiness is not a measurable commodity. We had a grand old kitchen commander named Etta. I waited tables occasionally, a duty that went with my scholarship. I once served the table at which Frank Porter Graham, then the university president, dined as our guest one evening. I was offered a bounty to spill a bowl of soup on the president, but I managed to resist temptation.

My time at the Lodge was short, of course; but in lasting friendships and fraternal relationships over the years, it was long in personal value. A deep and lasting respect for fellow Chi Psis has remained with me to this day. Time and distance has limited relationships with Alpha Sigma brothers, though I did cross paths with Dilworth at Pearl Harbor during WWII. Sorry to report, he passed away a few years ago.

Occasionally, I have time with Jeff Torborg, the former major league baseball manager, who was a Chi Psi at Rutgers, and we never fail to renew our fraternal brotherhood. Another is Alester G. Furman III, who was a Chi Psi at Amherst, now a member of Augusta National Golf Club.

But to reflect on my time at Chapel Hill, it wouldn't have meant nearly as much to me, nor would it have been as productive academically, socially and in the joy of living had it not been for Alpha Sigma. Here was a rube from a hamlet in the hinterlands where the natives didn't know what a fraternity was. In the process of becoming a brother, his rough exterior was burnished to an acceptable point and Chi Psi became a permanent fixture in his life.

[*Editor's Note.* Bisher went on to become one of the nation's most eminent sportswriters and, despite his disclaimers about success at UNC, the walls of his home today are heavily laden with awards for marvelous sports reporting. On a personal note, Bish helped me get my first post-college job on the staff of the *Atlanta Constitution*, where he served many productive years as sports editor before moving to the sister *Atlanta Journal*.]

Richard Pollock, '44. Walt Spearman was always there for us and was extremely supportive, as was Dr. Bill Morgan, then on the student infirmary staff. Our membership by the early 1940s

had dwindled to less than 10, as military service continued to take its toll, but at no time was there any reduction in the brothers' loyalty or commitment to Alpha Sigma.

A word must be said for the support given to me by Roland Parker, Dean of Men, in my 1944 roles of Interfraternity Council president, Speaker Pro Tem of the Student Legislature, chair of the House Privileges Board and #1 of Alpha Sigma. While Dean Parker was dean to all men on campus, he was extremely sensitive [unlike many administrators of earlier eras] to the contributions made by fraternities to the university and to the war effort.

It was a time of uncertainty and of tremendous change. In the face of adversity, however, the indomitable spirit of Alpha Sigma prevailed.

Victor Seixas, '45. World War II veterans were able to return to college on the GI Bill of Rights, which paid our tuition, books, etc. – everything but spending money. I had saved about \$5,000 during my service time and bought my first car, a Chevrolet convertible, for about \$2,500! So my education after the war was quite inexpensive (about \$400 a year) and made even more enjoyable with a car. I lived at the Lodge and thoroughly enjoyed that life.

All in all, college was fun and life in the fraternity made it even better. Making lifelong friends is a great part of the Chi Psi experience, and I will always be grateful for the years I spent at Carolina and at the Chi Psi Lodge. [*Editor's Note.* As one who shared one of Vic's years at the Lodge, I recall how he managed to supplement that GI Bill spending money. Vic was an avid poker player – learned no doubt in the Army Air Corps and on those extended world tennis tours – and would sometimes join the frequent games in the Lodge's "library." He must have lost from time to time, but those were the games I was never in. What I remember is seeing Vic build his pile until he could afford to place a lengthy payphone call to one of his current friends – especially one who was among Hollywood's top starlets of the time. Another happy remembrance of Vic is the felicitous nickname bestowed upon him by an admiring sportswriter: *Gracious Seixas with the Singing Racket.*]

Billings S. Fuess, '49. When I was graduated in 1945 from high school in West Orange, NJ, the draft was breathing down my neck. It seemed best to put in time at Chapel Hill while I was able before Uncle Sam tapped me for service in World War II, which was still raging in the Pacific. So off I went that summer after graduation to start my freshman year at Chapel Hill – on the train with my father, for gasoline rationing wouldn't allow us to make the trip by car.

Why did this "Damn Yankee" go to North Carolina for my college education? The answer is easy. I knew that I was going to college there as far back as I can remember. My mother's North Carolina roots predate the American Revolution. Her ancestors were Scots who settled in North Carolina and Virginia in the early 1700s. One ancestor, William Glasscock, married Esther Ball, daughter of Captain Richard Ball, son of Colonel William Ball. Richard's brother Joseph had a daughter named Mary who married a fellow named Augustine Washington and had a son, George. My Greensboro-born grandfather always referred to him as "Cousin George."

So there I was at age 17 in Chapel Hill in the summer of 1945. A piece of good luck: I was assigned a dormitory room in Battle #1 on Franklin Street right across from the Post Office and a greasy spoon, the Carolina Cafe, where I enjoyed the most delicious and indigestible breakfasts imaginable.

Two more pieces of good luck:

- For my roommate, I drew a fellow from Storrs, Conn., whose father, J. Harold Lampe, had just been tapped to become Dean of Engineering at North Carolina State in Raleigh. My roommate was John Lampe, who became a member of my Chi Psi pledge class. We have been great friends ever since.
- In the room next door was a tennis-playing upperclassman, Cliff Tuttle, who was there, he told us, because his fraternity house (he kept calling it the “Lodge”) was being refurbished for the return of its members after a few years of damage suffered from housing military students. It turned out that Cliff was a ranking member of Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi.

John Lampe and I didn’t really know about fraternities and were unaware that Cliff might be on the lookout for good pledge material for Alpha Sigma. Looking back, I suppose good prospects were hard to find, with draft boards yanking many freshmen off to the bonds of soldiery. In any event, John and I accepted the unbeatable offer from Chi Psi, whose members impressed us mightily. What a grand decision we made.

In those years, the alpha faced the challenge of postwar reconversion and the flood of returning veterans. Chuck Kemper, in the 1994 *Chi Psi Convention Handbook*, describes those years as “difficult times.” That is an understatement. It was *upheaval*— a totally unprecedented time as seasoned, tempered men in their mid-twenties – some almost 30 – rushed back to begin or resume educations interrupted when they were teenagers. Now they were no longer wet behind the ears; John and I were.

Alpha Sigma had almost as many brothers from the North as from the South. There were a number from the Philadelphia area. I recall John Dezouche (Nick) Nichols, a #1, Tom Hood, Tom Light and Vic Seixas. From Long Island there were Bob Judd, who succeeded Nick as #1, and Bob Gockley, who played a grand upright piano. My fellow New Jerseyan, Bob Finehout, was our most avid and knowledgeable movie fan. He stimulated my interest in motion pictures and film scores as art. Bob has devoted his career to educational films.

With the help of our alumni and Executive Secretary Slip Slifer, we built Alpha. Sigma and contributed to the burgeoning University life at Chapel Hill. We were blessed with two outstanding local fraternity advisors: Dr. William G. Morgan, ’27, and Walter Spearman, ’28. Dr. Morgan was on tap at the infirmary in case of emergency for any of us. He and Walter steered us straight. Walter was my faculty advisor as well, and he guided me through Journalism School. It’s a tribute to him that my portrait now hangs in the Journalism School’s North Carolina Advertising Hall of Fame. Walter and Dr. Morgan would visit us often. So would other Alpha Sigma alumni – for alumni meetings, which I attended as both #3 and #4 of the Lodge. I remember with great fondness the inspiring presence of men like Oliver Rowe, Linn Garibaldi, Kennett Blair, George Cavanaugh, Cheatham Coley, Bob Hovis and Everett Henley. These were impressive and caring men.

I don’t remember any of the fabled faculty teas in my years at Sigma. I do have vivid memories, though, of our entertaining President Frank Graham, a magnificently kind and intelligent man, at a Sunday afternoon dinner. The highlight of the event took place after our meal, prepared by our incomparable cook, Etta, when Dr. Graham wanted to stroll the grounds and check out our

ancient boxwoods. At one point, he strode up to the large, overgrown boxwood circle in front of the patio. He parted the branches to peek inside and found in the center an old stained mattress and several empty beer bottles. With raised eyebrows, followed by a chuckle, he released the boxwood branches and continued back to the Lodge. In a 1995 visit I poked my head into that same boxwood circle in search of a mattress, and saw – to my chagrin – nothing. What has happened to Chi Psi?

We were a diverse group with diverse interests and talents. Vic Seixas fanned the flame of our interest in tennis then – and later when he went on to take Wimbledon. Paul Nold, golfer *par excellence*, owned a spiffy convertible. Several brothers were outstanding baseball players. They made up the heart of the Carolina team — a championship team, as I recall. Vinnie DiLorenzo, southpaw pitcher from New Jersey, wowed the fans as well as the southern baseball groupies. Solomon (Hamp) Coleman went on to pitch Triple-A ball in Montreal. In addition, there were Joe Proctor, Jim Kelly, Tom Clayton and George (Buck) Hardee, our star catcher [who later was voted into the North Carolina Baseball Hall of Fame]. One of my roommates was Reid Towler, who was Carolina’s head cheerleader. And what a dynamic leader he was.

Some of us had to show our extracurricular talents in less physical ways: BMOC types like Jack Lackey, the philosopher from Hamlet, and the quietly confident Bert Dillon; printer’s ink types, including the droll Dick Jenrette (Why did he ever drift off to the dreary world of investments?); John Lampe, who handled circulation for *The Daily Tar Heel*, and Bob Finehout, the movie critic. I wrote columns and drew editorial cartoons for the newspaper — as well as cartoons for the naughty humor magazine, *Tarnation*.

A few brothers at the time were sons of faculty members. These included Dick Jente, whose father headed the German Department; Tom Odum, who was a notorious birdwatcher even then; and Glen Haydon, whose father headed the Music Department. One brother, Phil Walker, was an assistant professor of history. I’m told that Phil is now a professor of history at UNC-Asheville. It was Phil who introduced me to the great song *Atlanta Blues*. While sipping a beer, he would tilt his head back and sing, “Make me a pallet on the floor. . .” I do the same thing today.

Brother John Street was the son of James Street, a well-known author of many best sellers, including *Tap Root*, which had been successfully turned into a big box office motion picture. James Street lived down the street from the Lodge and joined us often for dinner. We were indebted to him when he replaced our dilapidated old ping pong table with a brand new one, which we moved back and forth from the shack (or “Avery Memorial”) to the new extension of the front patio that was part of the new wing then going up. It was impossible to win a ping pong game if your opponent was Vic Seixas. He could put such a fierce spin on the ball that it would bounce back over the net to him before you could take a swipe at it.

We all benefited greatly from Roy Gillikin’s legendary abilities as a lady’s man. Alpha Sigma sponsored Roy’s then-current girl friend, Betty Brown, in the 1948 *Yackety Yack* Beauty Parade. Betty, a stunning blonde, took the prize to the delight and pride of us all. She would have won even if James Street hadn’t been one of the judges.

In those years Carolina always boasted nationally ranked basketball, football, baseball, tennis and golf teams. We were winners, and did our best to live up to it. There was no television then, although famed bandleader Kay Kyser was beginning to contribute money to the University for

radio and television studies.

Maybe because we didn't have to sweat to keep up grade averages, [*Editor's Note*: There were no GPA requirements at that time] or maybe because we all sensed a new relief and freedom, studies sometimes took a back seat to social and cultural affairs. Movies were a big deal. Foreign and "art" films were popular. Cigarettes were cheap and everyone lit up. Beer was plentiful. It lit us up, and the beer parlors on Franklin Street were busy from noon to late at night. Jeff's Campus Confectionery was still going strong on my last visit.

If you wanted gin (Dixie Belle) or bourbon ("flavored with wood chips"), you had to go to Durham. And you had to look 21 to buy it. If you wanted Chinese food, you also had to go to Durham. Now there are dozens of oriental restaurants in Chapel Hill. If you wanted a good meal in Chapel Hill then you had to go to the Port Hole – or, if you could afford it, the Carolina Inn. [*Editor's Note*. Your dining venue of last resort, then as now, was Lenoir Hall. The only thing notable about Lenoir Hall is that Ted Williams once hit a baseball over it.]

Big bands were building to their peak, and were still playing romantic, danceable music. The University Dance Committee snared many top groups for our proms and dances – including Vaughan Monroe, Harry James, Tommy Dorsey and Stan Kenton. At Alpha Sigma we were fortunate to have our own fine band: Bob (Monk) Montgomery with his wailing tenor sax and solid sidemen. They filled the Lodge dining room (now the lounge) with pulse-pounding music. We jitterbugged in the living room. And between sets we sipped refreshments. All was copacetic except for one little problem: no coeds were allowed above the first floor. And no liquor was allowed on the first floor. We overcame that stumbling block, as I remember, with sneakily spiked punch provided by Jimmy Wilson's home-brewed white lightning and – of all things – grape juice. It ruined the rugs. And many romances [as well as various vital organs].

That brings me to the dating situation. It was different then. Women were admitted to the University at Chapel Hill only in their third year. This meant that we freshmen had to use every trick at our command to get a date with a coed, for those worldly, newly returned veterans were outpointing us at every turn. They had (government) money. They had cars. They had stubble. They had experience. So we discovered the lovely town girls. One glorious side benefit: they were allowed upstairs.

The Lodge was our pride. It was a little farther from campus than other fraternity houses, but it was an invigorating and pleasant walk as eight or ten of us strode down the muddy path to classes. The University was a manageable size. It was easy to get from class to class. And there was plenty of parking on campus for those who were fortunate enough to have cars. As we were coming out of the war, most people – including faculty members – rode bicycles.

As the University began to grow, Alpha Sigma grew with it. In 1948, our alumni launched construction of a large east wing. As it was going up, the new addition provided new challenges to the brothers. We lost several existing study rooms when the construction began. So two to a study room now became three. It was pandemonium. We took it in stride, for we were excited about the improvements the addition promised.

It was disappointing to me that I finished my schooling and had to leave before the addition was finally in place. But in looking back, I think the old Lodge turned out to be just fine for us. The facility and its fellowship were enough to make your heart swell. As it turns out, even before the

new addition, we were busy laying a solid foundation for the actives to come.

Two quick references to the powerful impact of Alpha Sigma on my life after Chapel Hill. First, I got my first job through Chi Psi. D. Howard Moreau, publisher and editor of the weekly newspaper, *The Hunterdon County Democrat* in Flemington, NJ, was a Chi Psi from Middlebury College in Vermont. He hired me and I worked for him for three valuable years.

Second, I owe meeting my wife to Chi Psi. Brother Jerry Tools called me in December of 1950 from Florida and told me that he'd be up my way for the holidays. I invited him to a New Year's Eve party in Flemington, and offered to get him a blind date. He agreed. The girl I was dating agreed to furnish a blind date for Jerry. We picked up Jerry's date and went to see the new year in. Jerry went back to Miami after the holidays. And I went in search of the girl he'd dated. I found her, and we have been happily married now for nearly 50 years. With four children and eight grandchildren.

How glad I am that I was there at Alpha Sigma when I was, able to share in the thrill of it all, and to find the enduring bonds of brotherhood. My life has not been the same since.

Albert M. Dickson, '51. When I entered UNC in 1947, there was a great age difference between the actives and the new pledges fresh out of high school. World War II had brought major changes – and some hidden benefits – to the university. Prior to the war, for example, all the walking paths on campus were of Carolina gravel – an orange mess that turned to glue in rain. The Navy and its preflight school determined that its cadets could not keep their shoes shined in such conditions, so the Navy bricked every walk on campus. A few of us decided that we should brick the walks at the Lodge. The alumni bought the bricks, and Dick Jenrette, Dan Boney, Tommy Steed and I – plus any transient help we could find – spent about a year laying first the circular front walkway and then extending it around the side and in the back. I feel we left at least a part of ourselves at Sigma.

We sang a lot in those days. After dinner, Budd Grover would play the piano and Bob Cathey [a rawboned baseball player from the mountains of western North Carolina] would play the gut bucket (ask any old-timer what that is!). There was great camaraderie.

With new postwar brothers, grades rose. We had six Phi Beta Kappas in one year. Hazing was discontinued, largely through the efforts of Dick Jenrette. By 1951, the Alpha had survived the war years and was well launched into the postwar period of excellence, which continues today.

Richard H. Jenrette, '51. My decision to join Chi Psi was reinforced during Rush Week when a pleasant young man in my hall at Alexander Dormitory also decided to pledge there. Fred Matthews, who was from Asheville, became a good friend. It was nice to have a companion to walk and bicycle with on the long distance between Alexander and Chi Psi each evening for dinner. (In those days, few students had cars – there were no more than a dozen owned by the 50 or so members of Chi Psi.)

Dinners at the Lodge were memorable. For one thing, we had to wear coats and ties. I later discovered Chi Psi was the only fraternity following this custom. I rather liked the idea – a touch of class. Dinners were fun, and the food was much better than Lenoir Hall fare (Miss Etta, aided by Miss Bertha, were the long-time cooks). There was an old piano in the hall on which Vic Seixas and Billings Fuess, who later became one of Madison Avenue's top

advertising copywriters, used to bang out duets. Bud Grover was even more talented on the piano. We would all gather around the piano and sing along (this was before after-dinner TV silenced such camaraderie). It was also before completion of the new east-wing dining room (with acoustical ceiling to absorb sound – a further deterrent to singing).

Chi Psi in those years was wonderful but far from perfect. For one thing, there was something of an isolationist attitude. We had lots of athletes but no student leaders and little campus involvement. Brothers stayed in the Lodge and did little fraternizing with other fraternities. Chi Psi was not a member of the prestigious German Club, a group of 13 fraternities that sponsored campus dances. Academically, Chi Psi ranked near the bottom among Carolina's 26 fraternities – embarrassing to me but no one else seemed to care.

It was Vic Seixas who suggested that I be appointed Rush Chairman at the end of my freshman year – a fateful decision that put me in a position to influence the future. The midnight meetings of the brothers after nightly rush sessions were contentious, to say the least. One blackball could disqualify a candidate. I was determined to pay more attention to the scholastic achievements of the incoming class, but that didn't sit very well with the "party boy" contingent. We argued. I wheedled, cajoled, compromised sometimes, and we finally pledged 14 new members. That pledge class later produced half a dozen Phi Beta Kappas. I compromised on admitting a few more "party boys" to keep everyone happy. Later, I, too, qualified as a party boy – but not then.

We also stopped being so isolationist. Chi Psi began to invite sororities to the Lodge for dinners. We also invited other fraternity members to come to our parties, while we in turn went to more of theirs. Fraternity-hopping was a big sport on Saturday night. In those days, you didn't have to be invited – you just walked in with big smile and a paper cup in your hand.

Along the way, I formed some secret political cabals to promote our members to high elective positions. The first was with Chi Phi fraternity. Charlie Loudermilk, president of Chi Phi, was as furious as I when the 13 member fraternities of the German Club declined to broaden their membership to admit Chi Psi and Chi Phi. Sometimes a slap wakes you up. Charlie went on in later life to become a multimillionaire, recently giving UNC \$10 million. Eventually the German Club died a natural death as big formal dances and big bands lost favor. Loudermilk and I also schemed to take over the University Party, known as the political party of the fraternities (rather like the Republican Party). He became chairman, followed by me the next year. We also wrested away leadership of the Interfraternity Council, and I became chairman of that organization in my senior year.

I also formed a cabal with the Dekes through Frank Daniels Jr. (later publisher of *The News & Observer* in Raleigh) and the Betas through Ham Horton (later a senator in the North Carolina State Legislature). The three of us met clandestinely in a small, smoke-filled room behind the Beta house. We decided whom we wanted the University Party to nominate for campus elections, and we usually carried the day – primarily because *we knew what we wanted*. We had an agenda. I learned that if you plan for success, you can succeed – because most people either don't plan or don't care.

By my senior year, Chi Psi was literally running the campus – and has continued to so more or less continuously since then. (Although the Class of 1964 thinks it all started with them, I

submit that they *restarted* the Chi Psi dynasty that the brothers of the early 1950s began.) We also infiltrated the Student Party (all Democrats, all liberals and mostly nonfraternity) while still dominating the more patrician UP. In addition, we controlled the campus media, especially *The Daily Tar Heel*.

To keep the Executive Council current on our progress, we invited Brother Slifer and other national leaders such as Stanley Birge to visit us. And did we ever wine and dine the Chi Psi Visitor (not so affectionately known as the Chi Psi spy)!

Warren Haight, a Chi Psi from Wesleyan, was our Visitor in my senior year. He stayed and stayed – for about two weeks – and we were exhausted entertaining him by the time he left. Fred Matthews, Fred Coker, Rod Hood and I finally took him off to Fred’s parents’ beautiful home in Asheville to get him away from the Lodge before he uncovered more skeletons in our closets. It snowed, and I remember a hilarious ride with the top down on my old Pontiac convertible, singing to the wind and enjoying the incredible beauty of the mountains encrusted with snow and ice. Warren was enchanted – he later recommended that Sigma receive the Thayer Trophy. Years later, after we both had gone to Harvard Business School, Warren and I roomed together in New York for a year or two.

There’s nothing like playing on your home turf, so we invited the national fraternity to come to Chapel Hill for its annual convention in the summer of 1951. It was there that we finally landed the coveted Thayer Trophy. Our joy in achieving this long-sought goal was only partly mitigated by having to share it with Alpha Psi of Cornell. The victory was still sweet. Years later, Warren Haight implied to me that there seemed to be a greater spirit of brotherhood at Alpha Psi. No wonder. The poor brothers of Alpha Sigma had been so beaten and battered to achieve excellence that there was some grumbling deep in the ranks, which Warren picked up on despite our nonstop entertaining of him. If we had not won, there might have been a riot (one man or otherwise), and Warren Haight might not have come back alive from his next trip to the North Carolina mountains.

We also cleaned up and improved the grounds of the Lodge, with Dan Boney heading the installation of all those brick walks that still serve today. It might seem to those who weren’t there that being a Chi Psi in that period was something less than great fun. Dan pressured brothers and pledges alike to lay bricks every afternoon after lunch week after week. I enforced study-hour quiet on weekday evenings. We coerced the brothers into participating in the Valkyrie Sing, which took dozens of nights of rehearsals. Everyone felt pressured to sign up for intramural sports, included wrestling, which we all hated but which figured prominently in the point system for top intramural ranking.

We revived the Chi Psi Faculty Tea, which continues today as the Chi Psi Faculty Cocktail Party. Everyone enjoyed our sorority parties, but this led me to lecture the brothers on their dress. I noted that the Dekes, Zetes and other prep school types wore grey flannels, tweeds, cashmere sweaters, striped ties and the obligatory white-buck shoes. I was determined to make such sartorial splendor *de rigueur* at Chi Psi. We had relatively few prep school, graduates, and our troops needed some dressing up. Generally it worked – we began to look as preppy (or Ivy) as the Dekes, usually known as the campus rich boys. But one night there was a rebellion against this rigorous dress code. Ed Waller and Jonas Kessing, both Californians unattuned to Ivy League standards, conspired to have all the brothers come to dinner in “aloha” shirts –

garish, brightly colored patterns that looked especially revolting when worn with coat and clashing tie. Budd Grover (sometimes referred to as Mother Grover since he acted like the housemother we didn't have) and I were the only two not in on the secret. [*Editor's Note:* Without regard to whether the nickname was or wasn't merited, "mother" is a rather unusual sobriquet for an ex-Marine, which Bud was.]

As usual, Bud and I arrived early for dinner, making sure the lights were turned on, the tables set properly and fully prepared to enforce the dress code. (We would compliment those dressed in the latest Ivy League fashion, while Bud would huff a bit at those in questionable attire.) But our authority collapsed totally that night when the brothers emerged dressed like mobsters from *Guys and Dolls*.

Despite this upwardly mobile drive that might have made Alpha Sigma "unfun" at times, we did have some wonderful times together and it was all worth the effort. Serving as #1 in my senior year, as well as rushing chairman earlier, was a *great* managerial experience, which helped me in later years. Learning how to interact with people is as important, in my mind, as what we learned in the classrooms at Chapel Hill. I have been forever grateful for this experience and am glad I didn't join Sigma Chi!

Flushed with the success of our Thayer Trophy victory in 1951, I hung on for quite a while after graduation. I was so gung-ho that I returned to Chapel Hill for an extra semester in the fall of 1951. Ostensibly, I was taking some business courses (or so I told my bill-paying father). In reality, I wanted to do "one more rush" to make sure what we had started at Alpha Sigma didn't founder. I'm proud to note that the group we pledged that fall went on to win the Thayer Trophy in 1955, their senior year. Ant this time there was no sharing of the award – Sigma alone was the winner. Tom York, #1 that year, went on to become a corporate CEO years later. The thing I liked most about the 1951-52 year was that Chi Psi finally won the damned Valkyrie Sing, on which we had worked so hard. Chi Psi's closing number was a slow, tear-jerking rendition of *Dixie*. As directed by Larry Stith, it started slowly and rose to great power with 60 strong voices. It was truly beautiful – I still have the recording. [*Editor's Note:* Larry Stith was never initiated during his college years because his focus was music rather than academics. He later graduated from the Julliard School of Music and went on to a distinguished professional career. At the well-attended (400 brothers and companions) Founder's Day ceremony in 2001, however, Larry gave up his title as Sigma's longest-serving pledge when he was taken into the brotherhood as an alumni initiate.]

Not long after I left Chapel Hill, the old guard, headed by refounders Oliver Rowe and Linn Garibaldi, decided to retire after holding the Sigma alumni together for so many years. I was tapped to head the alumni group – Alpha Sigma of Chi Psi, Inc. The legacy I received was the \$40,000 mortgage incurred in building the Lodge's new wing in the late '40s – a mortgage akin to \$400,000 or more in current dollars. Some years later, we paid it in full and held a joyous "mortgage-burning party" at the Lodge. It was a proud moment – debt-free at last. [*Editor's Note:* At least for a little while.]

Over the years, as business demands mounted and other alumni stepped forward to take leadership, I moved into the background – still interested and still proud of the accomplishments of Alpha Sigma but uninvolved on a day-to-day basis. Why have I retained my interest in Chi Psi over the last half-century? The answer is a simple one: When you work as hard for

something as I did for so long, it is difficult to turn your back on it and walk away. I am not involved in Sigma affairs today, but I'm still there when needed (usually for money after the expensive Lodge rehabilitation of a few years ago and the more recent upgrading of fire security and installation of internet hookups). I remain involved because I feel a sense of gratitude. The Chi Psi experience was the *best* management training ground I could possibly have had for building Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette, Inc. years later. Rushing was like recruiting young MBAs; serving as #1 was a perfect introduction to the responsibility you have as CEO of a major corporation. Beyond this, Chi Psi was helpful to me in buffing off a young man's rough edges – first mine and then I did it with a vengeance in passing on what I had learned to others.

For me, Chi Psi was a terrific experience in personal development. I never saw any conflict in being a fraternity man and loyalty to the University. Indeed, in recent years my involvement with the University's bicentennial fundraising program indicated that fraternity members later became the biggest donors, despite representing only 10-20% of the alumni universe. Also, I can't help but note that many of the small, well-regarded New England institutions such as Williams, Amherst, Wesleyan, Middlebury and others have slipped in prestige and clout following long periods of fraternity-bashing and, in some cases, outright banning of Greek societies.

Fraternities may not be politically correct according to today's standards, but they are a slice of real life that sooner or later one must come to grips with. I think Chi Psi is worthwhile and has, on the whole, been a positive force in the University community and the broader society. That's why I remain interested and take the time to write these recollection of Alpha Sigma.

Frank J. Allston, '52. I decided in 1940 that I wanted to attend UNC when my family spent the Summer in Chapel Hill. Eight years later, I entered UNC. I pledged Alpha Sigma in the Winter of 1949 and immediately vacated raucous Alexander Hall (my first campus home) to move into the Lodge. I lived there for three-and-a-half memorable years. Why use the adjective "memorable?" I do so because my time at Alpha Sigma and Carolina have had a significant impact upon my later life.

Having been editor of my high school newspaper, I soon joined the sports staff of *The Daily Tar Heel*, where I first met Dick Jenrette, then a sophomore. When I pledged Chi Psi, Dick served as my "big brother." Fond memories of my days at the Lodge abound. Here are a few of them:

- ◆ Polly, the shoulder-sitting parrot with a penchant for nipping vulnerable Chi Psi ears.
- ◆ Touch football games and baseball "pepper games" on the Lodge lawn.
- ◆ Trips to two Carolina bowl games – Sugar in New Orleans in 1949 and Cotton in Dallas a year later. Unfortunately, we lost both.
- ◆ The fantastic mass migration to New York City for the 1950 football game with Notre Dame in Yankee Stadium. Again, we lost.
- ◆ My induction into the Order of the Old Well, Order of the Holy Grail and the Order of the Golden Fleece.
- ◆ Four years of involvement in University Party campus politics.
- ◆ Parallel personal and corporate careers with Brother Zane Robbins. We both majored in journalism, worked on *The Daily Tar Heel*, served on the Publications Board and co-edited *Quirk*, a Spring 1951 Sigma house party spoof of the then-popular *Quick* tabloid magazine. After graduation, we both went into military service, both married girls

named Barbara Brown, both worked for General Electric and both now reside in the Chicago suburbs.

On a hot day in June 1950, while lounging with friends at the beach, music on a portable radio was interrupted by an announcement that North Korea had invaded South Korea. Too bad, we thought, but at least America was not at war. Little did we know then the impact that invasion would have on our lives. When I arrived back at Chapel Hill in the Fall for my Junior year, I learned that several brothers, including a couple from my pledge class, had been called up by small-town North Carolina draft boards that had a quota of one - and those unlucky brothers were it!

Several veterans lived in the Lodge when I moved in, including Max Abbott, Bob Cathey, Jim Kelly, Bo McColl, Vic Seixas, Wick Lyon and Severn Wallis. Among my pledge classmates Lew Chapman, Frank Eckert and Bill Jones were veterans. Al Dickson, was in the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC. NROTC members Ed Stevens, Ed Waller, Jack Bennett, Rod Hood and Jonas Kessing later pledged Chi Psi, as did Ed Starnes and Connie Gravitte, who were enrolled in AFROTC.

Finding an alternative to the draft that would allow me to graduate on time became my top priority on returning to Chapel Hill in the Fall of 1950. Neither of the ROTC units could enroll juniors, so I consulted our Cameron Avenue neighbor Marv Allen, UNC soccer coach, personal friend of my father and a commander in the Naval Reserve. Coach Marv had just the right solution to my quest for time to complete school and to obtain a commission in the Navy. As a result, in February 1951, I enlisted in the Naval Reserve as a seaman recruit and became an officer candidate. For the next year and a half, while my NROTC midshipman brothers were wearing officer-style uniforms weekly, I dressed in my Navy sailor suit every Tuesday evening for Naval Reserve drills in Durham. I survived considerable razzing from the Chi Psi midshipman contingent.

Meanwhile, at the School of Journalism, the Sigma faculty advisor, Brother Walt Spearman, became Zane's and my "J" School personal faculty advisor. Zane and I continued to work on the DTH staff, and I was associate editor when Brother Jenrette was editor-in-chief. In the Spring of my junior year, 1951, I lost an election to succeed Dick, but was elected chairman of the Publications Board in my senior year.

Also in my senior year, I parlayed my lifelong interest in railroads into the position of manager of the Graham Memorial Travel Agency. One day in early Spring 1952, I literally ran into a cute Carolina coed who was later to become my wife of 40-some extremely happy years. Our first meeting was in Murphy Hall when I almost knocked her down as I barged through a door. After picking up her books and apologizing, I regretted not having learned her name. However, within a week, she came into the travel agency to buy an airline ticket to her home at Falls Church, Virginia, over the Easter break. I did not let that opportunity escape. Barbara (or "Frenchie" as she was known on campus) Brown agreed to a date - our first - back in Virginia the following weekend. During the Spring quarter of our senior year, she was my daily guest for lunch at the Lodge. That began a three-year courtship that culminated in our September 1955 wedding with Brother Walter (Bo) McColl as best man. Brothers Jenrette and Ken Barton and pledge Larry Stith served as groomsmen.

There are so many fond memories of Chapel Hill, dating back a half-century. Whenever we are able to visit Chapel Hill, we usually stop by the Lodge and are impressed with the continuing quality of young men who commit to Chi Psi, and the accomplishments of the brothers of Alpha Sigma who have followed us. I remain proud of Chi Psi. The terrific experiences that occurred while I was a UNC undergraduate, a member of Alpha Sigma and a resident of the Lodge made that time of my life truly memorable.

H. Zane Robbins, '52. As the author of this publication, my thoughts and memories of Alpha Sigma are scattered throughout these pages. Still, there are a few that simply don't fit within the narrative flow, so I've included them here.

I entered UNC in 1948 at a time when enrollment was swollen by returning veterans. Classes were crowded and rooms were hard for freshmen to come by. I was saved by the fact that I was on a baseball scholarship, which in those days consisted of acceptance to the University, a free room under the grandstand of venerable Emerson Field – a “room” shared by two dozen other members of the baseball team – and a job officiating intramural basketball and football games.

I soon forsook the shelter of Emerson Field for a “real” dormitory – which turned out to be not a real dormitory at all but one of the campus's tin cans – quonset huts built for temporary use by the military in the 1940s and still functioning when I graduated in the '50s. The only difference I could see between Emerson and the tin can dormitory was that Emerson was free and the tin can wasn't. So when I pledged Chi Psi and was invited to move to the Lodge, I leaped at the opportunity. It was a wise decision in terms of economics as well as ergonomics. The monthly cost of room, board and dues at the Lodge was considerably less – and substantially better – than the cost of living in a dorm and eating (you certainly couldn't call it “dining”) at Lenoir Hall.

My big brother was the since-departed Dave Ferebee, a returned veteran with an eye for good times. My roommate was Dick Jenrette, who had lured me to Chi Psi in the first place. Another roommate was Percy Flowers, a dedicated party animal who later met an untimely death in a private airplane crash. Karl Hill, a party-lover then and a staid Greensboro barrister now, was yet another who shared my second-floor digs at the southwest corner of the Lodge.

Soon after moving to the Lodge, I was startled to see that Vic Seixas – one of the world's premier tennis players, appeared to have a withered left arm. I noticed that apparent phenomenon as Vic walked out of the second-floor shower room one evening just as I walked in. I learned later that Vic's left arm was considerably larger than mine (and, why not? After all, I was a right-handed pitcher), but it looked smaller because all of those cannonball serves had made his right arm much larger than the left.

Vic was a frequent participant in the poker game that ran every evening in the second-floor library. It wasn't until most of the military veterans had graduated that the rest of us managed to get into the game.

The life of a pledge in those days was different from today. In addition to the unannounced and too-frequent midnight walks described by others in these pages, the actives found other creative ways to torment us. One of their favorites was the scavenger-hunt. I recall one such occasion when I had to come back with a 36-C bra and two straws filled with chicken droppings. The bra, as it turned out, was easy pickings. The straws, however, were a different matter altogether.

Scholastics were beginning to take on primary importance in those days, thanks principally to the efforts of Dick Jenrette who was genuinely offended by the alpha's low academic standing in the previous year. Extracurricular activities also were promoted heavily, and most of us – the war-weary veterans excepted – became variously involved in student organizations. Intramurals, of course, were always important to denizens of the Lodge, and we continued to rank at or near the top of the fraternity league standings each year.

In the fall of 1949, a number of us traveled to Charlottesville to visit the University of Virginia's newly rechartered Alpha Omicron. The occasion, as I recall, was a UNC-UVa football game. My recollection is that Jenrette, Frank Allston, Karl Hill and Lew Chapman were in our traveling party, but it could have been six other guys. The Omicron Lodge was – and is – impressive, to say the least. The Sigma Lodge is somewhat remote from campus (three blocks beyond the Carolina Inn) but it's right downtown in comparison to the location of the Omicron Lodge. The address, suitably enough, is Trail's End on Rugby Road Extension.

At one point, capitalizing on the popularity of wingback Bob (Goo Goo) Gantt, Sigma decided to try to pledge several starters on the Tar Heel football team. We did, and they became contributing members of the Lodge – but most of them were never initiated, either because of GPA problems, eventual disinterest on their part or ours or the fact that we had to chase away a nonplaying buddy of theirs from Arkansas because he was one of the most uncouth individuals ever to cross our threshold.

Brother Gantt, by the way, was the source of many anecdotes during his time at the Lodge. I was his big brother and felt it my obligation to sand down some of the rough edges. I decided to teach him to play bridge. There was only one problem: Goo Goo was several times better at bridge than I was. He started calling me “dummy” even when we were trying to defeat the other team's bid. And he was right!

While several members of my pledge class went on to earn advanced degrees, I believe Goo Goo was the only one to earn a PhD.

An oddity of that 13-member pledge class was that four of us – Frank Allston, Lew Chapman, Frank Eekert and I – went to work for General Electric Company after graduation. . .and none of us was an engineer!

Much has been said in these pages about the culinary treats created by Etta, Bertha and their successors. But there are two sides to every story. As I recall, it was on Thursday of each week that the cooks would produce tuna sandwiches for lunch – week after week after week. It wasn't their choice, of course; it was a menu foisted on them by an incompetent dining room manager. But those had to be the absolutely worst sandwiches I ever tasted. Years later, I had meals in China, Korea, Thailand and other Asian ports of call that featured “delicacies” of questionable origin (possibly even household pets) but none of them were as bad as those tuna sandwiches at the Lodge. I had my last tuna sandwich on a Thursday noon in 1952. I expect never to have another.

But, good times and bad (and there weren't many of those), it was all wonderful. The camaraderie, the escapades, the card games, the parties, the always-interesting coat-and-tie dinners – even the all-night study sessions – were wonderful. I'll never get any of it back, but I

wouldn't trade it for the world.

Douglas M. Young, '55. Orientation for incoming freshmen at UNC in 1951 started with two days at Camp New Hope, just minutes from Chapel Hill. Then the real orientation began when we landed on campus. We were put in small groups and each group was assigned a counselor. Though I didn't know it at the time, many members of Chi Psi were orientation counselors: Frank Allston, Lew Chapman, Karl Hill, Zane Robbins, Bruce Crater, Rod Hood and Ed Starnes. Collectively, these men were members of virtually every organization on campus. My orientation counselor was Dick Jenrette. Dick was Phi Eta Sigma, Phi Beta Kappa, on the Interfraternity Council, on the staffs of *The Daily Tar Heel* and the *Yackety Yack*, on the Student Council, Chairman of the University Party, a member of the Order of the Old Well and Golden Fleece. During the orientation, Dick never mentioned to any of us his fraternity affiliation. But when I found out he was a Chi Psi, I knew this was a fraternity that would arouse my interest.

Living in the Lodge in the early 1950s was an extraordinary experience. We averaged 35-45 actives and pledges at any one time. We had great leadership. Jim Ramsey, who had been my big brother when I was a pledge, was #1 in 1952-53. Rod Hood succeeded Jim in 1953-54 and was followed by Tommy York the next year.

Eating at Lenoir Hall, the giant dining cafeteria on campus, had left a bad taste in the mouths of my pledge class. And then we experienced the Southern cooking of Miss Bertha. This humble and most gracious lady made our meals the envy of all other fraternities. She cooked our breakfasts to order, and along with the crisp bacon was the prettiest sunnyside-up eggs you have ever seen. In the evening after dinner and cleaning the kitchen, Miss Bertha's final order of business was to put out several loaves of bread and the inevitable jars of peanut butter and jelly. Chi Psi was a stay-up-late fraternity. It seemed the lights were always on, and as we studied for exams the supply of peanut butter and jelly decreased alarmingly.

Football weekends were always fun. Chi Psi was well represented at the games. Bob Gantt and Connie Gravitte were star halfbacks on the team. [*Editor's Note:* Regrettably, Brother Gravitte died in action while flying a mission during the Vietnam War.] Bob Pfaff, Dewey Chapple and I played in the Tar Heel Marching Band; Ed Stevens was drum major; Jimmy Fountain was head cheerleader and Jim Lewis was a cheerleader. One night we were up through the wee hours making the float for the "Beat Dook" parade. It featured a likeness of Rameses, the university mascot. We constructed the wooden frame, covered it with chicken wire and filled the holes with blue and white crepe paper. Chi Psi won first place with the best float in the parade. Most of the fellows had dates for the big weekends, and the visiting girls would stay in private homes because there were few motels at the time. Always amusing was "Polly," our lovable, crotchety – and very old – parrot, who always screeched "up your leg" when anyone rattled her cage - an expression learned, no doubt, from earlier brothers!

In the 1950s, all those living in the Lodge were required to post their final grades on the bulletin board at the second-floor landing. This created a competition between those rooming on the second and third floors. The ultimate delight of the floor whose members scored the highest was a steak dinner with *all* the trimmings. The losing floor ate pork and beans. I was lucky to be on the third floor. Herb Wentz was my roommate. Down the hall were Bud Carrier, Larry Walker, Bill White, Bucky Coleman and Ken Bryant, only to mention a few. Collectively, our third floor not only had a GPA higher than the campus average but we beat the pants off our

brothers on the second floor - so we ate the steak and they ate the beans. But not surprisingly for Chi Psis, even those guys on the second floor who ate pork and beans, graduated with academic excellence and have become leaders of their communities. This is the kind of fraternity Chi Psi is - second to none.

Peter Bondi, '62. My memories of Chi Psi have almost nothing to do with events; rather, they center around the tremendous brothers. Oh, yes, I remember certain things – like wonderful basketball games behind the Lodge, like convincing George Fonda that I had a magic way of getting multiple Squirts out of the third-floor drink machine for only one thin dime, etc. But it is the Stirling Nellisses, Billy Johnsons, Dave Harpers, Don Millers, Phil Smiths that are most vivid – and, of course, Miss Bertha and Clarence. Those were the best of times. . .and there were no worst of times. [*Editor's Note:* Brother Bondi recently retired from the US Navy as a rear admiral. His final duty was supply officer for the US Pacific Fleet.]

Jackson Hill, '63. Although Alpha Sigma was in academic jeopardy around 1960, that was certainly not the story passed along to impressionable freshmen undergoing rush. Chi Psi's image was largely defined by its stately Lodge, spacious grounds and the gravity of its mood. In general, the hard-drinking houses at Chapel Hill looked down on Chi Psi as “that chess-playing fraternity,” a designation that put Chi Psi squarely in company with several other "serious" fraternities. Of these, Chi Psi was clearly the leader, even at that time just prior to the emergence of the Lodge as an incubator of academic and campus leadership.

One shouldn't think that the formality or the “chess-playing” image represented the length and breadth of the alpha at the time, however. High jinks were rife among the “serious” brothers of Chi Psi. As might be expected, there was the usual devotion to houseparties, not to mention the occasional, if rare, imbibing of alcoholic stimulants by some brothers.

Some anecdotal reminiscences are perhaps not amiss. Cruel and politically incorrect as they might seem in today's climate, two events involving animals loom in memory. One involved the late-night ritual sacrifice of candlefly moths in the barbecue pit on the Lodge grounds during all-nighters. Somehow some members of Alpha Sigma believed – quite sincerely, I am sure – that a moth placed in a paper cup and put in the fire would bring about the high grade so earnestly sought in the coming morning's test or exam.

The other animal incident that I recall was the elaborate scheme to launch a hamster in a small helium balloon equipped with a device to be triggered by a firecracker with a long fuse that would release the hamster's capsule, which would in turn float to earth by means of a small parachute. The names of Jack Crane and Sterling Nellis stick in my mind as the perpetrators of this scheme but, irrespective of its authors, the brothers engaged in a merry chase to follow and retrieve the hamster's capsule as the balloon floated high over the woods to the southeast of the Lodge in the general direction of the Chapel Hill bypass and Pittsboro Road.

It was in my last years at Chi Psi and during the time that I remained in Chapel Hill as a graduate student that it began to take on its strong identity as a leadership fraternity. The unprecedented chain of Rhodes scholars that began in the mid-sixties and continues into the present decade was yet to begin, but by the time that I graduated, Chi Psi had begun to take a decisive role in campus politics through the Honor Council, student government, *The Daily Tar*

Heel and many other organizations. But we were an easygoing bunch. One of my last moments at Chi Psi was the shared experience of a group sitting around watching "Route 66" on television the evening when we should have been over in the stadium graduating! Perhaps that was typical of the Lodge putting its priorities in the right places.

Richard Lewishon III, '64. Legend has it that an invitation to the Faculty Cocktail Party was traded for a ticket to the Final Four. Some legends, like rumors, inflate with each retelling. And some traditions, such as the Chi Psi Faculty Cocktail Party, legitimately become self-perpetuating forces.

Sometime in the latter half of the 1980s, I received a pressing long-distance call from a dear friend from high school days. At first, I thought this tenured, oft-published UNC professor (whose lovely Mallett Street home is a scant half-block from the Lodge) was putting me on when he pleaded, "Dick, you've got to help me out. I need an invitation to the Chi Psi Faculty Cocktail Party. If I can't produce one, my wife will kill me

While I was able to save his marriage and preserve his life, my subsequent call to the Lodge revealed a few shocking facts. The Cocktail Party had, over time, become *the* social event for Chapel Hill's academic community. Since the inaugural invitation was extended in 1963, [*Editor's Note:* The Faculty Cocktail Party in 1963 replaced the Faculty Tea, which originated in 1934.] Chi Psi hosts had wisely included faculty spouses as invited guests. As the number of professors, administrators and staff professionals grew, regrets were counted in single digits. Over time, quotas had to be levied on the number of invitations because the Lodge could not physically contain all those who would come if invited.

The Faculty Cocktail Party had a much simpler origin and a purpose much more specific than to serve as the epicenter for UNC's finest minds and social wags. In 1963, the Lodge was well populated with outstanding scholars, many wearing the mantle of Morehead. Their academic skills would carry them through any classroom ordeal to grades that were the envy of less gifted brothers. ("Less gifted" should not be confused with "socially dyslectic.") *Au contraire*, some brothers had become less gifted because they had been majoring in the more social aspects of academia. And these brothers banded together to organize a Sigma event that would bring to the Lodge all their professors, especially those whose courses were causing grade-point paranoia. The event was planned with precision and extensive attention to detail: the best "vintage" wines available at the ABC store; only premium spirits; *hors d'oeuvres* that would be the envy of an adolescent Martha Stewart; and cuisine that would whet the palate of Julia Child.

If we could loosen up the old codgers, grade points would accumulate like pennies from heaven. (Yeah, sure!) The dinner entrée was a gourmet presentation of chicken veronique, served in a béchamel sauce with grapes, mushrooms and wine. (Have you ever tried to convert a recipe for four to accommodate 150?) Miss Bertha, our chef and savior, tolerated our culinary interference and somehow elevated the evening beyond our expectations.

What we learned in the spring of '63 was that the faculty found us to be as interesting and amusing as we discovered them to be engaging, entertaining and scintillating. Our grades. . . who remembers? We had learned a lesson in life not taught in the classroom and had initiated a Chi Psi tradition whose lore is as legendary as its popularity.

In the fall of 1964, we elected Larry Ehrhart president of the sophomore class and Bob Wilson

president of the freshman class. Moving into spring, Brock Wellons led the pledge competition, which resulted in the pledge class being recognized for having the highest grade-point average on campus and receiving the Interfraternity Council's Best Pledge Class award. In the campuswide elections, Bob Spearman was elected student body president, Pete Wales was elected chairman of the Men's Honor Council, and Fred Seely was elected co-editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*. These were the three most important student positions at UNC and all were held by Chi Psi brothers! At year-end, the Lodge ranked first academically and second in intramurals among fraternities, earning Sigma the Robert B. House Trophy presented annually to Carolina's best fraternity. At the Chi Psi convention at Rutgers that summer, Sigma received the Goodbody Trophy for ranking first academically among all alphas as well as the Thayer Trophy for most outstanding alpha of Chi Psi.

While '60s Sigmas take pride in our successes, the primary value of fraternity membership to us was the effect it had on our perspective and values. We learned tolerance from the diverse geographic, economic, educational, religious and social views of our brothers. We learned the process of successful self governance as we came together to form common aims and accomplish group achievement. We learned to trust, and to give and receive assistance within the brotherhood. We learned conflict resolution, we shared life experiences, and we were accepted for what we were. What a rich life we had.

Philip L. Smith, '64. I arrived in Chapel Hill determined to be a PiKA. (PiKA had mailed me a rush letter with the student body president's picture on the front page and the baseball captain's picture on the back page. I took this to mean that all important people were PiKAs. Since I intended to be important, I, too, should be a PiKA.) I also knew Chi Psi because Larry Craver, '60, was from my high school. Larry was Forsyth County's first Morehead Scholar, and thus my high school administrators assured me that Chi Psi was UNC's finest fraternity.

During rush, the Craver connection prevailed even though I learned Chi Psi was on social probation due to poor grades. My pledge class numbered 26 - and there were only 27 actives! Of my class, 13, still a large number, were initiated. This large pledge-to-brother ratio resulted in a lasting benefit to the lodge - an end to hazing. The brothers did not want to chase us away, and in reality did not have sufficient manpower to participate in the labor intensive activity of hazing!

Our proactive milestone that year was pledging and initiating our first Jewish brother, Dick Lewisohn. While this would be a nonevent today, in 1960 it was a bold statement of diversity and social liberalism.

More steps up the ladder came with the opening of the '62-'63 school year: We had an outstanding rush: aided by what may have been Sigma's first rush newsletter. (The seed planted by the old PiKA brochure finally flowered.) In a move remarkable for a mere college student, our #1, Luke Fichthorn, took it upon himself to repair the Lodge's inadequate plumbing. Luke designed, contracted and financed the second-floor shower room still in use today.

The year's social calendar was enhanced by the "honeys" imported through Chi Psi's UNC cheerleaders. Steve Lynch, Dick Lewisohn, Dick Goldman and head cheerleader Jim Slaughter dominated the squad. The largest event was "The Great Hamster Launch," an affair complete with balloons, gondola, hamster, cigarette fuse, in-air spotter, explosive, parachute, chase teams,

physics theory and untold numbers of hours of experiments and flight planning by Larry Ehrhart, Wyatt McCallie, Guy Eals, Randy Lippard, all the other Sigmas and half the campus.

A critically important event that Spring was the unannounced drop-in visit by Dick Jenrette. Dick was on his way to a sales call on Burlington Industries for his investment banking firm. Dick's involvement with Sigma has been continuous ever since, as he became the Alpha's leading supporter and benefactor.

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Nonetheless, while '60s Sigmas take pride in our successes, the primary value of fraternity membership to us was the effect it had on our perspective and values. We learned tolerance from the diverse geographic, economic, educational, religious and social views of our brothers. We learned the process of successful self-governance as we came together to form common aims and accomplish group achievement. We learned to trust, and to give and receive assistance within the brotherhood. We learned conflict resolution, we shared life experiences, and we were accepted for what we were. What a rich life we had.

Heathcote (Pete) Wales, '65. Perhaps it's an indication of senility, but I have no idea why Chi Psi was in the doldrums from 1955 to 1960 or '61. I thought it was like sports teams, plane crashes, etc. – just cyclical. My memories of Chi Psi have almost nothing to do with events – rather they relate to the tremendous brothers. Of course I remember things like wonderful basketball games behind the Lodge, convincing George Fonda that I had a magic way of getting multiple "Squirts" out of the third-floor pop machine for only one dime, etc. I also remember the "mad bomber" when the Lodge was attacked by firecrackers once a week at around 2 am for more than a month. Perhaps I remember that incident because I was the one who went charging out of the Lodge trying to find the culprit one moonlit morning about 2:00. I was about to return to the Lodge when I looked behind a neighbor's hedge and saw, crouched in the dark, the unrepentant criminal – Don Lord.

In my memory, it is the Stirling Nellises, the Paul Rollinses, the Bill Johnsons, the Dave Harpers, Don Millers and Phil Smiths that are most vivid. Those were the best of times. . .and there were no worst of times!

Lawrence A. Ehrhart, '66. For me, rush began on Cape Cod where Phil Smith worked summers in a local ice house. My mother was still aghast that I was going to UNC, where I was a. Morehead Scholar. When I had graduated from Phillips Academy, UNC was roughly 17th among the senior class. By the time of my graduation from college, UNC had jumped to second

place! A great tribute to the foresight of John Motley Morehead.

While an undergraduate, I had no idea that Luke Fichthorn and Phil Smith had, according to (faculty advisor) Walt Spearman, decided to make Alpha Sigma “big on campus.” But in hindsight, it is now very clear. Luke was a forward thinker; long before ambulances used reverse letters for instant recognition in a rear-view mirror, his vanity plate read “EKUL.” And Phil always could do anything he set his mind to, whether or not it had any academic merit.

A lesson learned about the realities of the world came during the photo session for *Esquire* magazine. While Gene Raymond probably had worn tuxedos before (since he lived in New York at the time), I had never picked up a golf club. That didn’t dissuade the photographer from using me as the model of a golfer.

While there are many memories of hamster launches, squealing pigs, freezing-cold sleeping rooms, tropical ponds on the front porch, disdain for anyone bringing Gallo into the Lodge, etc., the best memory was winning the Thayer Trophy two years in a row. During the early ’60s, Chi Psi had leaders and participants in almost every area of campus life with the possible exception of varsity athletics. And it was done without being overly focused in any one area. Not everyone was a scholar (Morehead or otherwise), politico or anything else. Instead, the brothers were a diverse collection ranging from Fred Seely, a worldly gentleman who entered college in his 30s, to Bob Spearman who could maintain a 4.0 average while running the student government.

Phil Smith, who had been my Big Brother when I was a pledge, was #1 the first time Sigma won the Thayer. When we went to the convention at Rutgers the next year, we could only hope for the impossible. When Phil handed me the trophy, neither of us could quite believe it was really happening. And I’ll never forget driving through New York City at night with the trophy strapped in the back seat of an open convertible. Where did I go that night? Back to Cape Cod where it had all started.

Alan Neely, ’66. In 1964-65, the Lodge had won the Thayer Trophy, had a record number of Morehead Scholars, had locked in virtually every political position on campus and had its own band, The Zookeepers.

These vast and lofty achievements, however, were not enough. There also was *Exotica*! Five or six of us played the guitar with acceptable competence and sang in the folk genre popular at the time. For added atmosphere, we hung a red globe light in one corner of *Exotica*, rigged to illuminate (barely) a singer of soft, mostly mournful (though, we thought, highly romantic) ballads. While the weekend bands throbbed overhead in the dining room, we singers – including Dick Goldman, Scott Ackerman, Fred Thomas, Jim Slaughter and me – took turns setting what we fervently believed to be a seductive mood in *Exotica*.

Richard A. Goldman, ’66. The Zookeepers grew out of a band started with the 1962 pledge class, which included Scott Ackerman, Alan Neely and me. The class of 1963 added to our musical capabilities in the person of Sterling Nellis, who knew some great old folk songs. Neely, Ackerman and I formed a trio and sang folk music regularly in the Lodge. Often we would compete with each other trying to dazzle the young women who passed through the Lodge, including each other’s dates. Alan Neely was instrumental in the rebirth of *Exotica* in 1963, and the folk singing tradition continued there.

At one point, Neely, Ackerman and I were persuaded to sing some Civil War songs for a Chapel Hill student television program. Music became a theme for the Lodge and large groups of Chi Psi would make the rounds of the sorority houses to serenade the ladies in three-part harmony

The pledge class of 1964 brought another group of musicians, including Bill Guy, John Yelverton and Taylor Branch. Taylor would join in some of the folk singing and Bill Guy occasionally would play the piano, but Yelverton had yet to find his musical instrument. Later, quite by accident, he found his calling as a drummer.

Lowry G. White, '66. The mid-60s at Alpha Sigma were heady years. The fraternity had climbed to outstanding status on the campus. We (not I) filled leadership positions in every campus activity. Our grades were tops, we were winning awards from the national fraternity and the University of North Carolina alike.

I had a monkey, Diogenes, who freely soiled the shirts, shoulders, heads, curtain valences, fraternity furniture and anything else that took his fancy. Clarence, the Lodge custodian, suffered patiently, cleaning up after Diogenes. Whatever prompted a fraternity to allow a filthy monkey to run freely through the fraternity house is beyond my comprehension now, but somehow back in those times it seemed appropriate. After all, that was the same fraternity that sported a parrot who routinely flew in one door of the dining room during our dinner, making a large loop the length of the room, and then out the other door, frequently dive bombing into bowls of mashed potatoes or string beans or whatever else it was that Miss Bertha had served that evening.

We all took away different things from the college experience. I graduated with adequate academic education and with incredible social education. I suppose I could have gotten the academic many places, but the social education I doubt could have been topped at any other institution. My own growth within Alpha Sigma was tremendous, and I hold only the best memories of my fraternity years.

James A. Medford, '67. Although I had no intention of joining any fraternity when I entered Carolina, I knew about Chi Psi from David Brown from my hometown of Waynesville and went through rush just to see what it was like. As it turned out, Chi Psi offered me a bid and I accepted, much to the initial consternation of my father who had attended Carolina in the 1920s and was no fan of fraternities.

Part of being a pledge was learning from Phil Smith, #1 that year, the importance of the political parties on campus – the University and Student Parties. In 1963, the Lodge had chairmen of both parties. I became active in the YMCA my freshman year, becoming chairman of the campus Collegiate Council for the United Nations. In 1964, I took over as Secretary General of the Model United Nations, which was going to be held on the Chapel Hill campus, after the student who had organized it flunked out of school. This was the largest model United Nations ever on a college campus at that time, and I believe we had representation from between 75-100 schools. All of the service academies were there as well as most of the Ivy League schools, large state-supported universities and the like. A number of brothers volunteered to help out as transportation coordinators, and a lot of the sleeping porches were given up one weekend to guests from other schools.

It was in the 1963-1967 period that Chi Psi reestablished its dominance on the Carolina campus. In addition to a string of Student Body presidents, the leaders of both the Student and University Parties were Chi Psis. Fred Seely and Fred Thomas were editors of *The Daily Tar Heel*, and any number of other appointed and elected positions on campus were held by Chi Psis. Chi Psi had several members of the Order of the Grail – me, Bob Powell, John Harmon, Bob Wilson, Taylor Branch and Paul Dickson. In 1996 the Golden Fleece inducted Wyatt McCauley, me, Jim Little and Bob Powell. Paul Dickson had become a member of the Golden Fleece a year earlier. A personal note: I am Argonaut No. 748 and my father, William Clinton Medford, is Argonaut 756. He was inducted at the same time that I was – a first for UNC at that time.

Chi Psi was second in the blue division standings in intramurals that year, having won at wrestling (thanks to Bill Johnson and Jay Jacobson) and at horseshoes due to no small measure to Dick White. Chi Psis who were active on various committees or student boards include Stanley Hofmeister, on the Audit Board in the Administrative Affairs Department, Bob Powell and Bob Wilson on the Toronto Exchange Committee, Bill Miller on the National Merit Scholarship Committee and Mike Brown and Steve Powell on the State Affairs Committee. I was chairman of the International Students Board, Bob Wilson chaired the Department of Internal Affairs, Taylor Branch was the director of the Department of Judicial Affairs and on the Honor System Commission, Tom Hayes was an assistant to the Honor Council, Jed Nietz was on the Ways and Means Committee of the Student Legislature and Bill Miller chaired the Men's Honor Council.

Fred Robertson, '67. I had the only beer franchise inside the Lodge in its history. In the Fall of 1967 I was motoring to Washington, DC, at least twice a month to date my still-lovely wife. I would take orders from brothers and transport 20+ cases each trip -- enough profit to pay for gas. I also bought six or seven for me, kept them locked in an old refrigerator in the second floor storage room next to the bathroom and close to the stairs. Some wimps got upset and threatened to report me, so I stopped. It was fun, though.

Michael Brown, '68. The Chi Psi Lodge was in the midst of a significant transition, establishing what would become a new direction for the fraternity, when I pledged in Spring 1965. Sigma recruited heavily that year among the ranks of the new class of Morehead Scholars. We were all impressed that the president of the Student Body (Bob Spearman) and chairman of the Honor Council (Pete Wales) were brothers at Chi Psi.

In any event, 28 of us pledged Chi Psi in 1965, and more than half were Morehead Scholars. This exceptionally large class was also geographically diverse with about one-third from North Carolina, one-third from northern prep schools and one-third from other southern states. This balance was something we actively tried to maintain as the fraternity took on new pledges.

With most of the Lodge made up of Morehead scholars, it was a very bright, active group to be a part of. In fact, during my years the president of the Student Body was always a Chi Psi. One year the candidate of each party was a brother of the Lodge. We also regularly had brothers who led other campus organizations, such as YMCA, Men's Honor Council and *The Daily Tar Heel*. Chi Psis also populated every honor society on the campus and were widely, and probably correctly, viewed as "running the campus." Some admired our group for its leadership; others perhaps resented us.

Because Morehead Scholars were selected on the basis of scholarship, leadership and athletics, the Lodge also led UNC fraternities in academics and intramural athletics. We weren't all scholars but most years the Lodge grade point average was over 3.0, which was unheard of at most fraternities. We didn't win all the athletic events either, but we won our share.

Great times, great people and a great fraternity. Those were the years of the middle and late 1960s at the Chi Psi Lodge.

Jay Lacklen, '69. I can't think of anything profound concerning Sigma in the late '60s. There was the usual. A group of '68 brothers formed a band called the Zookeepers who played most of our parties, including one where our pledges and the Chi Omega pledges ordered all the in-house brothers and sisters to a 5 am party during the week. The Zookeepers played in their pajamas, and the rest of us stumbled around in a stupor. Have you ever seen the Chi Os at 5 am without their makeup? Scary.

When I went through rush in 1966 the brothers told me of the fine library on the third floor that would "be air-conditioned this summer." To the best of my knowledge it has never yet been air-conditioned -- the Big Lie that persisted for decades. When I win the Power Ball lottery, I'll send the #1 a check for the job.

I'd be interested in current Lodge customs. For instance, one rule said that, in regard to the TV on the main floor, a "channel check is *always* in order." After the channel check a vote would be taken. I guess that would be time-consuming now with so many channels. We only had four or five in the '60s.

During one rush meeting a Southern brother who wasn't strong in public speaking stood to give his estimation of a prospective pledge. "Well," he stammered, "I wasn't IMpressed with this guy. On the other hand..." (at that point all side conversations stopped as we wondered if he would say what we gleefully saw coming)... "ah, on the other hand, he didn't, ah, DEpress me either." Mayhem followed.

There were several stock phrases for pledge deliberations, such as the marginal group who were "Indians" (reservations expressed). Others had "flies" (specific problems, e.g., personality flies) or, if anointed as potential pledges, would have "no flies." I squirm as I remember the hatchet men (who smoothly escorted the blackballed rejects out the back door). Some were exceptionally cruel, and I find no pride in them.

One last observation. Twenty years after I graduated I still found my picture of the snow-covered Lodge being used in brochures. I should've put my name on it.

So, there are a few quick observations. I wish we had won a war or freed an ethnic group or brought prosperity to everyone, but we didn't. It was a fine time, however, one I wouldn't trade for any other four-year period of my life.

John Strickland, '68. I arrived in Chapel Hill as a freshman in the Fall of 1964, one of five incoming students from Cranbrook School in my hometown of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Of the five, three of us would become Chi Psis (Alan Steinbrecher, John Neely and me). I don't

believe Cranbrook has sent a larger group to Carolina before or since, and most have joined Alpha Sigma. Among them: Fred Lavery, Andy Billesdon, Steve Early, Jim Toney.

When I entered Carolina, I became the first member of the Strickland family to bypass the University of Michigan – a great school in many ways, but one that has demonstrated in recent years the inability of its basketball team to keep track of timeouts when opposed by Carolina Blue! I came to UNC to cut my own tracks, do something new, get the advantages of a large university in the more workable setting of the Carolina campus and Chapel Hill. I knew I could get a great education, play soccer, be in student government, and join a fraternity. But having come to Carolina to “set my own sail,” the *last* thing I wanted was to join the fraternity my brother (Paul Kent Strickland, Epsilon '63) had joined at Michigan – the one called Chi Psi. Luckily, fate led me to change my mind.

We did our pledge homework, and I'll bet that even today every one of us could go down the line and recall the hometowns of each brother and pledge. (That information proved especially useful during post-college road trips!). Hometown information was a basic question asked when we were called for "upfronts" during dinner. These sessions required that the pledge class spread out across the front of the dining room and answer questions from the pledgemaster (Mel Dunlevie) or any other brother. Incorrect answers resulted in a brief work assignment – usually a shoeshine – and the chance to come to know a brother better. My big brother, Bill von Glahn, always quick to think up intricate questions for the other pledges in order to make me look good!

There were fun times, but serious times as well as we confronted the issues of society and the preservation of what we new to be a very special organization located at 321 West Cameron Avenue. The serious discussions often occurred in formal alpha meetings in time set aside to discuss a single issue – “chaos time,” as it was known.

A number of key events remain in my mind from those undergraduate years. I remember how purposefully we approached rush and the all-night evaluation meetings that followed. Everyone had his own rating system, but none more famous (infamous?) than the Stan Hofmeister “fly” lists. After one of those sessions, each brother wondered how he had ever made it through.

Since graduation, I have been continuously involved with Chi Psi and Alpha Sigma – first as a director of the alumni corporation in 1969, then as president for several years and now as Trustee of the Sigma Foundation. I have known every #1 and several brothers in each class since 1964 and enjoy frequent trips to the Lodge. This work also has allowed me also to meet most of the brothers involved in refounding Alpha Sigma (Walter Spearman, Linn Garibaldi, George Cavanaugh, Laurence Thompson, Henry Baggs, Robert Hovis, Oliver Rowe, Walter Crissman, Edwin Koonce and Harold Glascock). It also brought me into direct contact with the alumni who took leadership roles in the corporation before me (Dan Boney, Tom Steed, Harvey and Rick Johnson, Larry Cobb, Dick Jenrette, Leonard Herring, Banks Talley, Phil Smith and Bill Pugh); as well as such omnipresent personalities as Dick Lewisohn and Dick Goldman.

Many strong classes and brothers have emerged known in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s to strengthen the traditionally vigorous alumni leadership corps of Alpha Sigma: Joe Hodges, Tom Oxholm, Tom Terrell, Donald Beeson, John Mitterling, Shawn Poole, Brent Lister, Jeff Koeze, Charlie Madison and Matthew Cheek, among others. I also have served on the national

executive council of the fraternity and have come to appreciate, ever more deeply, Chi Psi's unique position among fraternities in the United States and Alpha Sigma's special place within Chi Psi.

Joseph M. Jenrette III, '73. As every Sigma pledge quickly learned, the grounds of the Lodge constitute the highest land point in Chapel Hill. Whether the US Geological Service has ever verified this point of Chi Psi hubris is irrelevant. What is certain is that the grounds of Alpha Sigma constitute one of the loveliest properties in Chapel Hill. In an era of suburban sprawl and postage stamp yards, the grounds of Alpha Sigma are clearly magnificent. Perhaps not the feature that attracted many to pledge Chi Psi, in many ways it signifies the aspect of the Lodge that ties us together. The grounds of Chi Psi are imposing with their stately oaks and old brick walls. The Lodge itself is well situated to present itself in a manner much more inviting than a typical fraternity. The grounds are rugged as well, enduring the inevitable pounding from rugby, soccer and basketball.

In the early 1970s, Chi Psi had its own British invasion of sorts when Andrew Eddy and Adrian Scott followed by Nick Jones and Richard Wilmot-Smith pledged Chi Psi. This led to a croquet fad, which swept through the Lodge. We were all given titles of sorts, mine being Official Keeper of the Greens, a position that I took very seriously. Major discussions focused on whether to mow the lawn with an American-style rotary blade or the more traditional British push mower. There was much concern among the croquet-lovers about indelicately whacking the grass rather than precisely clipping the blades.

My chief worry as Keeper of the Greens was that there were no fit lawns, much less greens. Therefore, like an actor looking for a playwright, I went down to the FCX Feed and Seed Store in Carrboro to learn all about lawns. I returned with 100 pounds of Kentucky #31 fescue grass seed and two tons of fertilizer. Once the seeds sprouted, I had to man the hose system to daily water the lawn, not an easy task with only two water outlets. It soon became apparent that the lawns would have to be cordoned off to prevent the brothers from walking across the tiny green shoots. Because the lawn eventually became so successful, Clarence Merritt, who mowed the lawn, needed a riding mower (thus ending the mower debate). A number of us went to Raleigh to select John Deere's finest industrial-strength mower. For the first few weeks, I never saw so many brothers take such an interest in mowing the lawn on Clarence's new mower. Unfortunately, the enthusiasm for yard work was not long lived.

The grounds have meant much to each of us. Whether it was a group of Fall pledges raking the leaves together for the first time, the final destination point for the annual Chi Psi Valentine's Day Parade or a group of seniors having a farewell soiree, the grounds have provided a setting for memories and friendships. A diverse group of individuals from a variety of backgrounds and interests has protected, maintained and preserved this important aspect of life at the Lodge for more than 60 years.

William G. Pappas, '74. In the Spring of 1971, 33 freshmen pledged Chi Psi in one of the largest pledge classes in Sigma's history. The profile of that class was similar to many that preceded it – Southerners, Northerners, Morehead Scholars, members of Phi Eta Sigma, residents of small towns and large cities, international students and public and private high school graduates. The rush chairmen that year were Britt Nicholson and George Butler, and the pledgemaster was Randy

Jones. There was very little training that this group of pledges would either abide by or respond to, but Randy handled the task with patience and good humor.

The early '70s was an era of anti-establishment and anti-institutional attitudes among college students, and this pledge class was no exception. Most of us were drawn to the Lodge because of its sense of being "something different" (certainly not your typical UNC fraternity) as well as a place to continue to build friendships among people with similar values and goals.

Chi Psi, particularly on the academic strength of the class of '74, led all fraternities on the UNC campus with a GPA just below 3.0. Many members of the class were Phi Eta Sigma, Dean's List, Phi Beta Kappa and graduated with honors and highest honors in their respective majors. The library on the third floor of the Lodge was the focal point for serious study as well as the occasional game of "brary ball".

Walt Spearman was an advisor, friend, role model and truly one of the brothers. Walt always had a positive word, a smile, and the perfect suggestion for the troubling issues that many of us faced. Some of those issues were quite personal, others were reflections of the times.

Although football weekends were frequently an excuse (not needing much of one) for a variety of social activities, basketball continued to be a dominant interest – both intramurally and in Carmichael Auditorium. There are memories of sitting in line for hours (days) waiting for basketball tickets to see the Tar Heels play. In 1972, UNC went to NCAA Final Four, but 1973 and 1974 saw the arrival of David Thompson at NC State and several second-place finishes for the Heels. Closer to home, many of us spent hours in the backyard playing basketball, particularly after we put in the cement basketball court. (Not an insignificant project for a group of college kids, most of whom had never been near wet cement in their lives.)

There were also enjoyable Fall and Spring pledge formals in which the excessive use of champagne caused some of the brothers to undergo temporary personality changes, not to mention the fate of some of our hapless dates. Trader Vic's made a monumental return to the scene (harking back to the "olden days" of the '50s and '60s), complete with flooded front porch and waterfalls from second-story windows. More than one brother and his date frolicked in the pool into the early morning in various states of undress.

The Spring always brought "lawn" activities and allowed us to use the Lodge's magnificent grounds for personal time. Croquet matches continued around the clock and many an unfortunate soul was "sent to Franklin Street" by one of the more aggressive players.

A number of nicknames and references bring a smile when recalled in the context of those vibrant days: Peaches, Big Al and Little Tomato, Chipsi ("Greg Ward, six two!"), Robin the Girl Wonder, Backyard Kudzu, Clarence's (aka Pop's), Calavander Gardens, and PB&J at midnight.

But the Lodge would never have been the Lodge unless the class of '74 participated in those campus activities and institutions in which Chi Psis traditionally excelled. Most of us became involved and took leadership positions as we became juniors and seniors. These included the Campus Y, Carolina Forum, Carolina Symposium (the "Mind of the South" in 1972 and "Far East" in 1974), the Student Union, the Student Attorney General's office, *The Daily Tar Heel*

and student government. Ford Runge became student body president and later a Rhodes Scholar.

Many of the brothers were inducted into a variety of honor societies including the Golden Fleece, Grail, Order of the Old Well and others for their work on campus. Several brothers received grants from the Chi Psi Educational Trust to fund various “independent studies” – the most famous of which was the “gyrocopter project” undertaken by Jay Bennett and others. (Bennett wound up with the gyrocopter in Atlanta until Susie, our friend and his long-suffering wife, had him scrap it).

Of the 33 original pledges and the three or four other brothers who graduated with our class, 10 went to law school, five to medical school and at least 12 went into other types of graduate programs (MBA, MA, PhD, etc.).

None of the individual honors achieved by members of the class of '74 approached the level of personal maturation and friendships that we developed at the Lodge. Many of those friendships continue to this day, and our university experience would not have been the same without the refuge, collegiality and high principles that were defining parts of our lives as Chi Psis.

Joseph H. Hodges III, '75. As with every other class, the Lodge that the class of 1975 knew was the product of heredity and environment. Our predecessors had drawn a blueprint for excellence, and we followed it in our fashion. During rush, we continued to seek good students and campus leaders, but not exclusively. The Morehead program remained a steady source of pledges. The Faculty Cocktail Party continued to be one of the social events of the year, and Coffee Houses highlighted Fall and Spring rush. Individual members of the class of 1975 contributed to the strong scholastic and campus-leader profile that Alpha Sigma developed before our arrival and maintains still.

We were, however, products of our times. We voted to abolish the Lodge composite and the position of Lodge Sweetheart. All but the ROTC students (plus Bill Walker and Dixon Brown) wore shoulder-length hair. Hard rock replaced beach music. And we were not as exclusionary as earlier generations of Alpha Sigma brothers may have been. The Lodge rushed and pledged its first black brothers during our time. We adopted a bylaw requiring three negative votes, rather than the traditional one, to reject a rushee.

In the final analysis, we were exactly what we wanted to be – a fraternity committed to excellence in scholarship and extracurricular involvement, but at the same time a fraternity for the '70s – for those who didn't want to join a “frat.” The realization that we were unique among campus fraternities at that time may have caused us to turn inward. Our failure to reach out to alumni and other alphas cost us recognition on the national level. Alpha Sigma won the Thayer Trophy just before we entered Carolina and again just after we graduated, but never while we were there. Nevertheless, no one could have convinced us that we were deficient in any area that mattered to us – we just had other priorities. Some of these priorities were identical to those of every Alpha Sigma generation since the early '60s, but the differences were the result of, and were magnified by, the effects of our early-'70s environment.

What we mostly remember from our days at the Lodge are the small, random events. Peter LaRoche and Sherman Golden as Mighty Casey at a Coffee House. Tom Oxholm being the heart,

soul and conscience – and chief comedian – of the Lodge. Albert Wilson shinnying up the tree in front of the Lodge in about 10 seconds. Weldon Huske's ability to discourse on any subject and shag to any music, including *Purple Haze*. Dixon Brown rappelling down the front of the Lodge. Alain Gowing playing *Lola* over and over. [Editor's Note: In my day, it was Joe Proctor playing *Don't Cry, Joe*. There must be something about that particular corner of the Lodge.] Mel Dodd throwing a boomerang from the front patio that lodged in a second-floor window pane, followed by Mel's retrieving the boomerang, returning to the patio and throwing it again, only to watch it hit the exact same pane of glass again. The secret treasure of the Lodge – our British Moreheads: Nick Jones by sheer force of will leading us into the intramural soccer finals; the gentlemanly country squire Richard Wilmot-Smith shocking us by screaming invective down the stairwell at a US Congressman from New York, who was leaving after having crashed at the Lodge for a few days as if he were a visiting Chi Psi undergraduate from another alpha. Hank Neely and others playing cards in the living room, when in walked Harry Chapin, who asked, "Is this the Chi Psi Lodge?" and then disappeared. John Basto's continual good spirits, which always made him welcome wherever he went.

Some of us also recall seeing John Lochridge send a croquet ball through the lamp at the front of the walkway. Steve Shepherd sending a croquet ball into the headlight of Martha Bowles' BMW. Pouring the cement for the Outdoor Omni under the direction of Randy Jones. Playing U-trou basketball at the end of Spring exams, followed by (fully clothed) serenading of several empty sorority houses. The incredible variety of Harvey Gilbert's on-court basketball persona. Jeff Case streaking the first nationally televised lacrosse game at a leisurely pace on a bicycle. Walter Daniels, the politico extraordinaire, always finding time to mix politics, school and brotherhood. Don Kanak's own well-oiled political machine was rumored to have propped up an illusory candidate as its puppet for student body president, but the murky details of this campaign may remain shrouded in mystery for all time. A mixer with the Chi Omegas at, appropriately enough, an ice skating rink. Alex Wilson's homemade brew, for which he earned some sort of class credit. And Jim Wylie's "News of the Bizarre" reports at dinner. These recollections only scratch the surface, and their mention evokes hundreds of others. These are the essential elements that marked our time together, and that will remain with us always, regardless of the number of times we return to Chapel Hill.

Tom Oxholm '76. My first visit to the Lodge was as a guest at dinner. John Locher walked with me from Cameron Avenue to the front patio where, on a typical warm September day, the brothers were awaiting the dinner bell. Some were smoking cigarettes; some were smoking marijuana. In 1973, that was not at all unusual.

The Vietnam War had ended for Americans in 1972, but the damage to the country and the changes it brought were still lingering. During rush it was clear that Chi Psi was different from the usual fraternity — the personalities were diverse and there was a high level of intelligence. Yet, there also were attributes common to the rest of the student body: a lack of respect for authority (especially the Chi Psi central office), a willingness to experiment with drugs, a desire to discover how far one could push and challenge the professors. It was a time of great personal freedom. That Fall UNC students set the world record for group streaking on a very cool evening. It was common for students to take off a semester or year to "find themselves."

Alpha Sigma was well recognized as the gem of Chi Psi. The Sixties had seen a rebirth of campus and academic leadership at the Lodge, the reputation for which had spread throughout

the fraternity. By 1973, Sigmas knew they were better than the rest of the fraternity chapters. There was no need to comply with all the rules; we would bend them to meet our desires. That was very evident during initiation ceremonies and Alpha meetings. There was no interest in winning national Chi Psi awards. . .been there, done that. We knew we were the best and the brightest. No validation was required.

And perhaps we were intellectually. Sigma was strong in academics. The GPA was always over 3.0 and usually around 3.2. Many brothers had 4.0s, and one semester the average was nearly 3.5 for the whole Alpha! The influence of some 40 Morehead scholars was evident. Sigmas also excelled athletically. Although we did not have many varsity athletes, we had several including our own Jim Stewart in lacrosse and Kevin Ledwith in soccer. But we always contended for the top in fraternity intramurals — a fact that confounded the other campus fraternities.

Our goal was always to be #1 academically and #1 in intramurals. We achieved that goal and came close numerous times with great pride. However, our focus became so intent on those goals that we were appropriately not known as the best party fraternity. Other than the classic faculty cocktail party (the faculty's favorite every year because they were intellectually challenged) and the KKG mixers, we were not the choice of the hot sororities for good times. It was not unusual for us to get less than 50% turnout for mixers and social events other than the pledge formals.

Rush fed the fraternity with a continuous stream of fascinating people; all kinds of people from all kinds of backgrounds. We looked for diversity in all flavors: The comment most often looked for in rush was that a rushee “had sparks coming out of his ass.” That just about secured him a bid. The class of 1976 was the first to graduate an African-American brother, Sherman Golden who was the first black pledge in Chi Psi in 1973.

Another African-American, Reggie Burns, also graduated that year from a later pledge class. That tradition of nondiscrimination has continued. It displeased the national fraternity, other Alphas and many Sigma alumni. But it was just Sigma moving ahead of the rest because it was what we wanted to do. . .and they had sparks!

The Lodge physical facility was in good shape except for the showers), which always leaked down into the kitchen area. Major repairs seem to be required every few years, just temporarily fixing the problem. Living in was always popular and less expensive than other campus choices. Every room was full and brothers lived in closets, Exotica and anywhere else they could find. The sleeping porches were full. But there was a remarkable difference in the second and third floor residents. The third floor housed the Southerners and wimps — windows closed all winter. The second floor had the Yankees and real men— windows open year round. It was a mark of pride to see how cold the second floor porch could stand it.

The brothers of the class of 1976 were as diverse as the whole fraternity. There were quiet intellectuals like Reid Murchison, Steve Givens, Tom Beat, Larry Jameson, and Gabriel Casuso. Then there was The Rally Gang — a fascinating mix of individuals whose major bond initially seemed to be driving to Durham every night after dinner for an Icee! Some from the north: Jim “Stewie” Stewart (New York), Tom “Huntz” Hunter (Chicago), Kevin “Led” Ledwith (New Jersey). Some were from the new South, i.e., Atlanta: Craig “Babe” Dunlevie,

Tom “Barb” Barwick. And some were adopted locals from the class of 1977: David Singleton from K-ville, and Tom “Boog” Powell from T-ville. The well-known rallying call of the gang, Yi-Yi-Yi-Yi-Yi (exactly five, no more, no less) was not greatly appreciated by the intellectual side of the Lodge, especially late at night. Occasionally, they would allow Billy “Bong” Stephenson or Tom “Big 0” Oxholm to tag along since they were roommates of Gangers.

The Class of ‘76 had some very funny and talented brothers. When the Lodge did away with the composite, Tim Smith brought it back in caricature; a priceless piece of work! Tom West did the best imitation of Jimmy Carter although not “as kind and good as the then-campaigning governor. He also referred to himself as the judge, as in “here come de. . .” And sure enough today he is one. Now we have all been “Wested.” Dale Talbert, famed inventor of the double eat-out, was close friends with all the basketball team – a valued asset for inside hoops info. And Pat Stewart, who could never decide whether he wanted to be a singer or a preacher, ended up as a missionary — and undoubtedly a damned fine one. As a senior pledge, no one had less respect for tradition than Steve “FP” Pearson. With him as their leader, the pledges stole onto the second floor porch at 3:00 a.m., unloaded a dozen of the scuzziest chickens that ever walked the barnyard, locked all the windows and doors, and set off a bunch of firecrackers. If only we had that scene on film. Or the next morning when Miss Bertha was chasing those chickens around the yard with her carving knife.

Perhaps no one brother better exemplified the changes in the mid-1970’s as did Boog Powell. As Sigma’s first freshman pledge in the fall of 1973 (a two-time legacy), Boog arrived at the Lodge with his Harley motorcycle, his rear-end jacked-up 1969 Chevelle, hair to his shoulders, and the biggest hick accent you could ever want. When he left four years later, you would not have recognized him. Besides cleaning up his act, he trimmed his body, his hair and his overall appearance, leaving the Lodge looking like a Harvard MBA. So, too, did the Lodge come a long way back towards the center from the early years. In 1975, there was an effort to recapture the Thayer Trophy, which though foiled, did return to the Lodge along with the Goodbody and Birge, awards the next year. The times were changing, as were the campus and Lodge – headed directly for the “me” generation.

A frequent visitor to the Lodge during that time was Oliver Rowe. With all his business ventures running so well, he turned his interest back to his beloved Chi Psi, especially Sigma, which he visited often during the mid-70s. He had a vision of making Chi Psi a “fraternity of supermen”. In his mind he would replicate the Sigma ideal of academic excellence and campus leadership. Everyone who attended the Pledge Formal in the Spring of 1975 will remember that long speech at the Hillsborough Inn, where he quoted from newspapers and magazines 20 years in the future, announcing the great accomplishments of some current undergrads. He used those times as a sounding board for his subsequent leadership of the national fraternity. There was never a more dapper, distinguished or dedicated Sigma to lead the national fraternity.

Sigma was never like other alphas or other fraternities, probably still isn’t. The mix of men with different-colored sparks, accents and talents left us with a vast and rich mix of experiences and memories that we will never forget. The only regret is that for the most part we have returned to the far corners from whence we came, and reunions are so difficult to pull together.

Tom Terrell, ’79. My recollections of Alpha Sigma center on the Lodge itself. A place. A place each of us can call “mine” and collectively we call “ours.” In my time, the Lodge was the

gathering place of some of Chapel Hill's most interesting and promising students. It has been a crucible for nurturing those students and helping to mold them into better versions of themselves, better prepared to run the world in the manner that they had learned to run diverse aspects of the University.

Perhaps a series of anecdotes can help recreate the full flavor of life at the Lodge as it was when I was an undergraduate in the mid- to late-70s and provide a sense of the flavor of life at Alpha Sigma during my years of peripheral association while in law school (I lived one block away) and the many years I served on the corporation board and as corporation president.

In 1975, the campus was very different from today. Tiny Wilson Library, even without its expensive renovations and addition, was still the graduate research library. Venable Hall housed the chemistry labs that later moved to Kenan Labs. Carmichael Auditorium, with its 10,000 seats and all its intensity and magic, was home to Dean Smith's Tar Heels. Nearby was the Tin Can, essentially a mid-campus shack that hosted indoor track meets and occasional dances. Gym classes weren't the only activities in Woolen Gym. Each August, class registration and drop/add was accomplished by standing in long lines in front of tables on the basketball courts until you finally got to the person with a large box full of yellow cards with information that was added and deleted by hand.

And everywhere you went, you had a good shot at finding a place to park on campus, especially during the evenings and on non-game weekends. But each new building – Davis Library, the Wilson Library addition, the Student Union annex, the computer sciences building – was built on a parking lot, squeezing buildings and students just a bit tighter each time.

Russell Flinchum, '81. Dragged kicking and screaming to 321 West Cameron Avenue in the Spring of 1979, I found myself a pledge at a time when I felt I dwelt among giants. Certainly I was in awe of these student body presidents who seemed like, well, better than good guys, sort of amplified good guys who were as passionate about Elvis Costello as they were about the injustices perpetrated upon poor undergraduates. And then there were the advisors, who counseled on the subtleties of statecraft, and the heads of the student union, the campus YMCA, etc. These people were involved but they weren't nerds; nobody was narrow enough to be called a nerd. They cared but they also had a lightness of touch.

I had found friends blessed with some subtlety, but who weren't distant: they waxed about Dr. Thornton's latest pronouncement over the green beans and mashed potatoes. There were "brary dogs" and there were activists; there were Morehead scholars and there were "anti-Moreheads" who, just as bright and capable, couldn't have cared less about recognition of their talents. And there was remarkable tolerance among people of wildly different political and other views because they were bound together by brotherhood.

I was so proud of my fraternity brothers, because they never embarrassed me, never made me feel like an underachiever and forgave me for playing the second side of the first Pretenders album every afternoon during Spring 1981. (Okay, maybe they were less forgiving of all those Devo tracks but recognized the relevance of the question, "Are we not men?"). You could never be sure of whom you might find downstairs at two or three in the morning; you ended up connecting with everybody at one point or another. Marley's Bar or the Blue Room, it made little difference; there was always someone to talk to.

My generation of Chi Psis lost brothers before graduation and has lost many since; I grieve for those men of promise whom we will not see again. Yet they are alive for me still, and my recollections of them are mirthful. To be specific is to lose the aura of a time of unity of sentiment and shared ambition. Nonetheless, the short list might include:

- ◆ The phone booth
- ◆ Dooz's pets
- ◆ Old Lodge Ale ("*nunc est bibendum*")
- ◆ The Snowball dance
- ◆ Manly Roberts and Bob Long emceeding Coffee House
- ◆ The Carolina crew team at breakfast
- ◆ The bush
- ◆ Sparks, snaps, NYB

Scott Norberg, '82. In 1981-82, Chi Psis held a very large share of the campus leadership positions, including student body president (me), senior class president (John Goodwin, who was my roommate for one semester that year), Campus Y co-president (Ward Bondurant), various student government cabinet positions (Danny McKeithen, Donald Beeson, Sam Mitchell, Jeff Koeze, Mike Vandenberg), and editor of the yearbook (Greg Dinkins). Many other brothers were involved in the newspaper, student government, Student Union, Campus Y, etc. I can't remember for sure now, but I think Tim Terrell may have been IFC president or vice president.

In student government, the issues mainly concerned dealings with the university administration and, to a lesser extent, the town. There was almost no infighting between branches of student government or among student organizations. The times were not very ideological. We worked on race relations, student health service, food service, book prices, the town noise ordinance and Chapel Thrill, the Spring concert.

Chi Psi enjoyed an excellent reputation on campus, because of our involvement in campus activities and our leadership in fraternity GPA. Some people complained, however, that a "Chi Psi conspiracy" was responsible for all of the leadership positions we held. No such thing, of course. Members who were leaders naturally attracted new members who were interested in campus activities.

We were the only integrated fraternity on campus, although barely so. I think there were four or five African-American brothers while I was there. We were proud but not self-conscious about it.

One amusing incident I will never forget occurred at an alumni function. Tim Taylor, who is black, and I were talking to an alumnus, and the conversation turned to tennis. Tim said he played, and the alumnus (who I will not name) asked Tim whether he knew Arthur Ashe. Tim took it in stride, laughing and politely answering the inquiry.

In electing officers one year, after voting on No. 1, No. 2, etc., we elected a hairball lizard, No. 69, responsible for picking up the hairballs in the blue room (the shower).

Rand Tucker, '82. When I think of the Lodge from this distance, I think of bridge. We often played late at night, our wits sharpened by alcohol. I was not very skilled at the game, while my roommate, a nationally ranked chess player who had never played bridge, took one lesson from another brother and quickly outplayed me. His teacher was a brother who, years earlier, had given up his Morehead scholarship and dropped out of school. He was back, getting his degree and playing brilliant bridge.

It was that kind of place. We had nine brothers taken into Phi Beta Kappa at one time, which prompted a much-appreciated letter from Dick Jenrette. In four years, two Chi Psis (Bob Long and Caleb King) received Rhodes scholarships. To fill time at Coffeehouse one year, Bob Long announced that he always wanted to sing Gilbert & Sullivan for an audience and proceeded to do so. Our involvement in student government was so great that *The Daily Tar Heel* ran a story on the Chi Psi "conspiracy," thereby assuming we were smarter than we actually were.

Because campus elections are held in the Spring, I saw five student body presidents in my four years in school. Four of the five were Chi Psis. In 1981, Scott Norberg finished a distant second but close enough to force a runoff. That first night, someone in the student union put on a tape of *Just What I Needed* by the Cars, our unofficial theme song, presumably to rub our noses in Scott's loss. Too soon, as it happened. Leading up to the runoff, brothers signed up to campaign door to door. Election night was a nail-biter but with a happy, and exhilarating, ending: Scott won by 11 votes.

In the Spring of 1982, the pledges, goaded on by malicious pledge trainers, persuaded us that Governor Hunt was coming to the Lodge for a visit. We were sufficiently self-confident to find this story plausible, but the governor never appeared. Some who did were Congressman Richardson Preyor, playwright Samm-Art Williams and, most unlikely of all, feminist Betty Freidan. Ms. Freidan was on campus to debate the Equal Rights Amendment with Phyllis Schafley and was initially insulted when informed that she would be having breakfast at a fraternity house. She found us not only polite but actually supportive, and she was later quoted as saying that, based on her experience with us, she now believed that the Amendment would be passed. We were good, but not that good.

In recalling my years at the Lodge, I cannot help but think of tragedy. In Spring 1980, Kevin Ihnen, who had pledged the previous semester, was returning from class when he was struck by something projecting from a truck. He died several hours later. At the end of that Summer, Jimmy Everhart and two friends were returning from the beach when he was killed in an accident. The program at his memorial service included this entry from his personal journal: "Someone once asked me what was my most valuable possession. 'My friends,' I said."

After his death, Jimmy's parents donated the large display cabinet that sits in the TV room in the Lodge. Since then, five other brothers from my time at the Lodge have died, which, even allowing that a discomfiting amount of time has passed since we left Chapel Hill, seems an improbably high number.

When I pledged in the Fall of 1979, Ernestine was a newcomer, and we did not realize we were seeing the birth of a legend. Students who saw Dean Smith's first season probably feel the same way now, except Ernestine started winning from the first day. A few years after I graduated, another brother and I made a return visit, and she remembered us to a degree that was a little

frightening. I was horrified to learn that at some point along the way, some brothers had stuck her with the name Ernie, which I imagine she hated with an intense but silent passion.

In the Winter of 1982, the Lodge, like the rest of Chapel Hill, awaited the national basketball title that we had been denied for so long. The Tar Heels graced the cover of *Sports Illustrated's* preseason issue, and a confidence swept the campus that this was our year. And it was. A few of us elected to miss the festivities at the Lodge in favor of seeing the game for ourselves in New Orleans, where my roommate and I wore our Chi Psi caps and thereby created ill will towards the fraternity by all those within earshot. (Our notion of what constituted a foul differed somewhat from that of the officials.) The image imprinted on my memory from that long weekend is not Michael Jordan hitting the shot heard 'round the world (the photographic image of that blessed event has supplanted the real thing) but of my roommate, his arms raised in celebration, cheering as James Worthy intercepted – well, let's say, caught – a pass from Fred Brown and insured the Tar Heels' claim to the trophy. The *Sports Illustrated* cover this time: "Finally, It's Carolina."

Mark Jacobson, '83. We were heavily involved in campus leadership, and the notion that the Lodge was taking over the campus was often used in elections as an argument against candidates who were members of the Lodge. During my era (Spring 1980 - Spring 1983), JB Kelly, Scott Norberg and Mike Vandenburg were Student Body presidents, Matt Judson was president of the Carolina Athletic Association and I was chairman of the Elections Board, and there were undoubtedly others who were involved in leadership positions that I have forgotten. The Lodge also was heavily involved in leadership of the Order of the Grail and other honorary societies.

We were split about 50-50 between North Carolina residents and nonresidents, and I would guess that 40% of the brothers were Morehead Scholars. We were also (with the exception of St. Anthony's Lodge, which was a kind of counter-culture, coed fraternity) the only fraternity on campus with both black & white members. We were perceived as brainier, more serious and perhaps less fun (although I don't think that was true) than other fraternities.

Parties were frequent and raucous but generally confined to Thursday nights and the weekends. One of the parties that set us apart was the annual faculty cocktail, a formal cocktail party and sit-down dinner to which we invited selected faculty members. Ernestine, our amazing cook, always created a tremendous meal, and an invitation was something of a status symbol among faculty.

Another party that set us apart was the annual, late Spring Trader Vic's party, where we flooded the front porch of the Lodge, spanned it with a swinging bridge, created fountains flowing out of second story windows, adorned the place with bamboo and larger-than-life *paiper mache* Tiki gods, donned shorts and Hawaiian shirts, and mixed exotic drinks in garbage cans. One year we incorporated a hot tub, which unfortunately generated a rash known as either "hottubbleitis" or "Lodginaire's Disease."

Ernestine was the stabilizing force, cooking breakfast to order, assembling top-notch lunches and preparing great Southern dinners for 40 or 50 each day by herself. She also seemed to know everything, and many a bleary-eyed brother was greeted by Ernestine the morning after a big party with very specific questions about his conduct the night before. Clarence, also known

as The Big C, took care of the place and occasionally, on cleanup days, allowed us to drive his 4000-year-old pickup to the dump. When our furnace was out for about a month in the dead of Winter one year, Clarence greeted us first thing in the morning with a blazing fireplace full of huge logs. Imagine our surprise when we discovered that he started those fires without paper or kindling. He just threw a little gas on the logs and tossed a match!

John Rossitch, '83. The Summer of 1979 passed quickly. During those hot days in early August, I remembered the family trek to Chapel Hill the previous two years when my brothers Eugene (Sigma '81) and Alex (Sigma '82) were entering freshmen at UNC. As the little brother, I knew the routine well: Help unload boxes, walk around campus, eat lunch with the family on Franklin Street and watch my parents say “goodbye” and “good luck.” It was now my turn.

My parents were out of the country during orientation week, so I rode to Chapel Hill with my brother Gene the day before freshmen orientation. My first night in Chapel Hill was spent at the Lodge. This was an omen. The next day Gene helped me carry my belongings to 24 Old West. Ironically, this had been Gene's room for the previous two years. What were the chances? I spent my first day with my two new two roommates were interested in rush and so was my brother Alex, but fraternity life was far from my thoughts as a first-semester freshman. What's a guy to do? The rush chairman that Fall at the Lodge was Gene. The cards had been dealt. I pledged along with my two roommates and my brother Alex. It was one of the best decisions I ever made.

Now there were three Rossitch brothers in the brotherhood. By the next year there would be three Rossitch brothers living in the Lodge. At a time in life when many siblings are miles apart and have very different groups of friends, I had quite the opposite experience. Gene, Alex and I had our own interests and were involved in different campus activities. However, thanks to the Lodge, we often ate meals together, socialized together and became much better friends.

I did not realize the most important aspect of being “brothers in the brotherhood” until several years following our departure from Chapel Hill. Gene, Alex and I often visited with and talked about many of our mutual friends, our Chi Psi brothers. We had many conversations reminiscing about our days at the Lodge. In November of 1994, Gene was taken from us in a tragic accident. He drowned while saving the life of his son off the coast of Florida. The support of Chi Psi brothers at that time of great loss was very comforting. Brothers came from around the country to share in our grief.

Gene, Alex and I have been blessed with many close mutual friends from our days at the Lodge. However, I will always remember the Lodge as a place where I spent some of my best years with my brother Gene. For this I am eternally grateful.

John Mitterling, '86. Chi Psi at Carolina was definitely the fraternity for me, though it was not at all the picture of a fraternity that I had before rush. The Lodge was unique in that it attracted all different types of students, but mostly those who excelled at something. Academics, jocks, extremely talented musicians, and outgoing student leaders were in abundance, and I was not particularly any of those. I had an extreme desire to be a Chi Psi and to be a strong member of the brotherhood, and, by good fortune, I was given the opportunity to become that, and the following are among my fondest memories.

Ernestine, our friend, mother and closest thing to a Brother, fixing our every meal and greeting us all by name. Ernie asked me each morning what I wanted for breakfast, even if it was not what she had already fixed. She wanted to be a mother to all of us; she was and is. She was the constant at the Lodge amidst much change.

Bobby Vogler, the one I wanted so much to be my big brother, called me at 11:59 pm on the last night of rush to tell me I had a bid. Just under the deadline, but good enough for me! It was one of the happiest moments of my college career.

John Kennedy was my roommate at the Lodge. Brothers were afraid it was going to be too much energy in one room! His banjo pickin', his triathlon training, his student government work and his "guys, guys" were great additions to my day and made him one of our most accomplished brothers.

Todd Hart was the best student leader I saw in my years at Carolina. I was amazed at how many different types of brothers really liked and respected him. I did for many reasons, most importantly because he always made you feel important; when he talked to you, he talked to you solely. Even if he was in a rush to go somewhere, he made you feel important and looked you in the eye. In addition to his academic excellence and his athletic abilities, he was so genuinely a good person and a great leader for all of us. I truly miss his company; it was great having him around all the time. Definitely the kind of guy you'd want to have as a best friend.

Lodge social life was great. Kappas and Tri Delts were the sororities of choice. Tri Delts never showed up until after 11 pm, which was great, because we could stay in the library until 11 studying, then start the party. Most Chi Psis felt that Kappa was the closest thing that women could pledge if they couldn't be Chi Psis.

Sigma was not exactly a model alpha in my years. We continued to excel and do great things without following the path that the Central Office would prescribe. It continues to amaze me that Sigma has done so well for so long without precisely following the Central Office guidelines.

Chi Psi was thought of as "the Lodge", that fraternity with all the student leaders and the studious types. When I invited my future wife to a party at the Lodge, one of her fellow law students said, "You're going to a party at the Lodge? What are you gonna do, study?" I loved that image (although false) that people had of the Lodge, and so did everyone else. We perpetuated that image in every way we could!

We had pretty good relationships with some of the other Greek houses, mostly because there were always active Chi Psis on the Interfraternity Council. We marched to a different beat, but we had pretty good relations, except with those on small fraternity court. They didn't think too highly of us and ended up burning and gassing the English ivy on the front of the Lodge.

Our favorite social event was the Faculty Cocktail Party. My professors looked forward to attending each year and hoped that they would get an invitation. So did priests, ministers, career counselors, deans and others. Everyone knew it was a great party, and it was an honor to be invited. It was a great evening with great people, the kind of party that fraternities used to be

known for. And it defined the kind of fraternity that we were. We were not a beer house. We were a fraternity of brothers who cared about Carolina, about learning, about decorum, about tradition.

Walter Spearman was a great guiding force for the Lodge. His visits with us during pledge semester were wonderful. I loved the way he would say “Chi Psi” with a Southern lilt in his voice that almost sounded like “Chi Shy”, with lots of emphasis on the “shy” that sort of lasted several syllables. He taught us all so much, and he was greatly revered and loved. I sat at his bedside one night right before he died, giving Jean, his wife, and Bob, his son, time to go down and get some dinner. It was an honor to do so, and I’m grateful that I had the opportunity. I shall never forget him.

Robert Hinton was a great housekeeper and Brother. He always made me feel welcome when I came home at the end of the day. He would bring us a pig from his farm each Spring for the Trader Vic’s party, and we’d sit out all night on the side lawn sipping whisky and cooking the pig. Those were wonderful times that I shall never forget.

Willis Brooks was a great faculty advisor. He made each brother feel that he was an important part of the Lodge, and he represented us to the rest of the campus so well. You could tell he was proud of us when he talked about us. He was what every fraternity would want in an advisor.

“Big C” was a great person, too. He was quiet most of the time, except when a brother would occasionally take advantage of a good thing by leaving trash around the Lodge. He helped many people remember that their mothers did not live at the Lodge and, thank God, that helped sometimes!

Reggie Henderson, '87. As pledge class president in the Fall of 1986, I was determined to do something that would catch the brotherhood completely off guard. To do this, my pledge brothers and I decided to do two pranks back to back so that the brothers would not be expecting the second prank. The first one was rather mild. We met back at the basketball court around midnight and, with screwdrivers in hand, we switched all of the license plates around. The next day people chuckled a bit, but felt as if this was a bit of a lame prank since we had waited so late in the semester to pull it. We sucked it in and remain composed and then met again at about midnight on the basketball court. This time we were ready to spring a surprise on an unsuspecting Lodge.

At that time, the Lodge still had the old doors and many of them did not have doorknobs, but simply hasp locks. During the day, the locks were in place, but at night each brother locked his room from the inside. The afternoon before that fateful evening, I collected money and a few of us went out to buy our own padlocks. That night we stealthfully moved through the Lodge and locked every brother in his room. Everything went well, and we all met down in the parking lot to giggle and chuckle, when all of a sudden Chris Ruth came hauling ass out of the Lodge. Seeing him so terrified, we all took off running as well. After we stopped and composed ourselves we found out that the last room Chris had was the room of Mike Mezei. Apparently, Mike had been having a dream about being locked in a room at about the time that his door started to close shut. In a dreamlike haze, Mike staggered to the door and reached for the

handle. At the moment he reached, poor Chris was closing the door the final inch and preparing to snap his lock. Mike freaked when he felt the door moving. Not wanting to be caught, Chris gasped and pulled the door shut, lockg Mike in. Mike start to rant and Chris took off.

Little did we know, but Mike was a wee bit claustrophobic. Needless to say, he lost it. As he went nuts, other brothers were climbing through the transom doors over their main door or coming in from the sleeping porch. Soon a crowd gathered to cheer Mike on as he began to destroy his door in an effort to get free. Once he broke the lock off, everyone was cheering, until they noticed that Betsy, Mike's girlfriend had decided to spend the night and was standing there before the brotherhood in her classic pink nightie!

The next day everyone was talking about the prank and about Mike. Needless to say, I got an earful from Mike about embarrassing his girl in front of the brothers, but deep down he loved it and we all got a big kick out of it.

Todd Hart, '88. I pledged Chi Psi my freshman year and lived at the Lodge for three and half years. I sat down many times only to feel overwhelmed at the task of describing that very intense and wonderful experience in all its glory, complexity and detail – a time and place where a lot of very interesting people lived together and grew up together.

Dinner time was a time to catch up with people whom you did not otherwise see during the day, hear about what was going on and try to get it all in before the announcements started. One after another, clanging a fork on a table leg, presidents of this or that organization that we all know (#1, Student Body President, *The Daily Tar Heel*, Carolina Athletic Association, Campus Y) and some that were new during my time (Student Television and Carolina Students' Credit Union) talked about their activities. This was a high-energy Lodge with a diverse range of interests, reflecting the brotherhood itself, and it was very attractive to a freshman who believed he was joining a different kind of fraternity, one that balanced life between brotherhood and the larger community.

One of the icons of this fraternity was Walter Spearman. He regularly spoke to pledge classes and brothers about Lodge values, participating in the community and, like Oliver Rowe, striving for excellence. Moreover, Walt holds a prominent role in this greater Lodge history. He passed away in 1986, and his passing hit me hard, not only with the sadness of losing a great man, but also the loss of the Lodge's powerful connections with the larger university community. He was so deeply associated with the University and with us. The Lodge hosted a memorial reception for the Spearman family that was attended by so many faculty and alumni that I began to realize that place belongs to a lot more people than its current residents.

As my time in the Lodge neared an end, there was the beginning of a much-needed renovation campaign. Led by Dick Jenrette, Joe Hodges and countless other generous brothers, the campaign made many overdue repairs. Who remembers the Blue Room leaking into the kitchen or the dip in the floor we all hit and contributed to by jumping down the last flight of stairs? This program, successfully executed, kept the Lodge itself as part of the attraction for the next generation of brothers to live and grow there.

I have struggled with how to catalogue other random memories of the hundreds of brothers I knew during my four years. The best I can do is to say the Lodge had a rhythm that defined life

– Big I (really unlike everyday life), faculty cocktail receptions (where many of us learned the hard way not to mix scotch with tonic water), coffee houses (where even alumni would perform), pledge formals and pranks (my class bricked in the front door, a decidedly bad idea), sorority mixers (during my years we moved from one of the fraternities that mixed least to one that mixed most – both a good and a bad thing), cold sleeping porches (I can still see my breath), still no grass in the side yard (I don't believe there ever was any).

Some stayed nine years; some less than a semester. Some studied for the bar; some at the bar. Some fell out of windows; some became Rhodes Scholars. Regardless, those four years were memorable in a place where very different people lived together, grew up together and generally knew and respected the balance between being brothers and making the connections with the other communities we lived in and most importantly were part of a vibrant life that is the Lodge.

Andrew V. McNally, '90. “In 1987, the brothers undertook a major capital campaign to raise funds to renovate the Lodge. The fundraising occurred over the next few years, and the major structural work and renovations were started in May 1989. Joe Hodges, Tom Terrell and other alumni led the charge as they worked hard to raise funds from alumni of all ages, negotiate with contractors and develop the architectural designs alongside architect Bruce Johnson, '71.

The undergraduates were also called upon to play several roles throughout the project. During the preconstruction fundraising efforts, the brothers made an extra effort to reach out to alumni who dropped by the Lodge. An attempt was made to help the alumni understand the current strength of the undergraduates in the Lodge and the significant needs of the physical structure that housed this group. In May, prior to the start of construction, the brothers participated in several workdays to empty all belongings and furniture from the Lodge. Two tractor-trailers were placed on the side lawn to serve as storage for the summer. In addition, several brothers gained summer employment with Yarnell-Hoffer, the general contractor for the project. James Greenhill labored throughout the summer in a variety of roles – from digging dirt out of the crawl space under the first floor to replacing windows throughout the Lodge. Brothers who were in Chapel Hill over the summer had to find housing elsewhere and undoubtedly greatly missed Ernestine's cooking.

The brotherhood also pulled together when they returned to school at the end of August expecting to see the construction projected completed, only to learn that the project would take at least another month to complete. It ultimately was not completed until November, but the brothers made the best of the situation. The social chairmen used the situation to their advantage and developed themes for the sorority mixers that reflected the situation. Prior to the hanging of the wallpaper on the first floor, large plastic sheets were placed on the walls and a spray paint mixer was held. The construction crews had also left Ernestine's kitchen in a state of disarray, and the brothers spent many hours cleaning the kitchen to allow Ernie to resume her dedicated service to the brothers.

Rush was very successful that fall despite the ongoing construction. Prospective members were seeing Chapel Hill's greatest Greek house being renovated, and everyone waited for the completion with much anticipation.

Throughout my years there, Robert Hinton and Ernestine Roberts continued to provide the Lodge with help as caretaker and cook, respectively. Ernestine cooked three meals a day Monday through Friday for the active brothers, and her Saturday morning 'buffa' was always a hit before football games. Robert played an integral role in Lodge activities. He oversaw the general upkeep of the Lodge and became a fixture at many social functions. In the fall of 1987, Robert was initiated as a brother, bringing him even closer to many of the actives. Robert subsequently played a major role in later initiation ceremonies. His devotion and time to the brotherhood outside of his regular duties touched everyone.

Scholastically, Alpha Sigma continued to maintain one of the highest GPAs on campus with the average GPA remaining just over 3.0. During this period, the Lodge placed several members into the academic honorary societies, such as Phi Beta Kappa, and had a large number of Morehead Scholars and two Rhodes Scholars (Bryan Hassel & Ryan Balott).

The Lodge remained a social center throughout the late 1980s. Popular events such as Cave Party, Trader Vic's, Pledge Formal and Faculty Cocktail always brought the brotherhood together for memorable moments. Cave Party was thrown annually in February by the outgoing #1, who raised all the money for the party through donations and T-shirt sales. Trader Vic's was a year-end party on the last day of classes. It usually had a tropical theme with a reggae band. The front porch of the Lodge was turned into a pond with a waterfall and bridge over the pond for this event. The Kappa Kappa Gammas and Pi Phis continued to be the Lodge's big social partners.

The brotherhood during this period was extremely diverse. The brothers came from many different socioeconomic backgrounds. At least half were from out of state. Many were on scholarship of some sort or another. Individuality was encouraged.

Almost everyone felt that a large, diverse brotherhood had many advantages over the smaller fraternities on campus. The diversity provided for interesting conversation, fresh ideas and creativity. A larger brotherhood also provided added input and assistance for running the day to day activities of the Lodge and helped cover ever-increasing costs.

Robert A. McNeas, '94 I'd like to comment on the shooting that occurred in the Lodge in 1994. At the time of the shooting, there was a very large party going on downstairs. The two visitors from Appalachian State were not at the party; they had been out with the friend they were visiting all day and had gone up to his room upon returning to the Lodge. I was in my room with my girlfriend at the time, almost directly below the shooting. The music from downstairs was so loud that I never heard the gun go off. I left my room to get a drink and overheard a few of the guests talking about "some guy with glasses and red hair" that had gone racing up the stairs with a few guys behind him. They were describing Garth Fort (Σ '95). Their conversation and the way they were joking about it made it sound like he was being chased, so I grabbed Mike Armstrong (Σ '94), a pledge brother of mine, and followed up the stairs.

At the top of the stairs, we rounded the corner into the hallway and saw Garth kneeling in the doorway of one of the rooms. You could already see blood on Garth, the floor and the doorway. We could tell that he was administering CPR. He turned and saw us, then yelled that

the ambulance would be here soon and to clear a path for them. Mike and I ran down the stairs, collecting brothers and explaining that we had to move people out.

Together we almost instantly moved the huge crowd of people into the room adjoining the front hallway, leaving space for the paramedics when they arrived. It still amazes me that we managed to corral those people so quickly. It was a perfect example of brothers working together. Not everyone had been upstairs and seen that a boy had been shot. It was enough that we grabbed them and told them, in all seriousness, that there had been an accident and the people had to be moved now. After closing off the rooms, we ran outside and helped the paramedics carry equipment from the ambulance. I remember carrying the board they would later carry the boy out on.

In describing what happened that night, it's important to remember that a boy lost his life. If there is any meaning to what happened, it should be taken from that. To this day I feel sick in my stomach upon seeing a handgun. Still, I felt so close to my brothers that night as we worked together to make room for the paramedics, as people dropped what they were doing without even asking for an explanation because they saw in our faces that something was terribly wrong. Afterward, none of us knew what to do. The Lodge was in disarray from the party. Most of us spent the rest of the night cleaning. Some of us didn't sleep until days later.

Craig Snyder, '95. During my term as #1 of the Lodge, an Appalachian student accidentally shot and killed himself in the Lodge in the winter of 1994. This was a very big deal. I'm sure Don Beeson has the names of those involved. I could probably look them up, but it is harder to get to stuff from England.

Jim Copeland was the SBP during my term as #1. I won the Marshall Scholarship in Fall '94, and Tim Perkins won it in Fall '95. Harrison Tuttle headed the Honor Court, and four or five brothers were EMTs. Also Tommy Koonce was head of the Student Union in '95-'96. There probably is loads of other stuff I don't remember.

Calvin Cunningham '96. I would hope that others have contributed something on behalf of those of us who pledged in the '90s (I was in the Fall '93 pledge class). It is an important part of the history of the '90s that Sigma maintained significant representation in top student positions during that decade. I served as student body president in '95-'96 and Chief of the Student Supreme Court in '97-'99. Sigma had, over that period, the senior class president and vice president twice, student body president three times, Student Attorney General and Union President twice (since '95) as well as leadership in the IFC, Student Congress and other student organizations. All in all, an enviable record.

FIVE WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

A fraternity is not simply the sum of its brothers but of all its parts. For more than half a century, at least, a major element – and a thread of continuity – in the life of Alpha Sigma has been such marvelous individual as Miss Etta, Miss Bertha, Ernie, Clarence and Robert. Etta Merritt, Bertha Marsh and Ernestine Edwards distinguished themselves in the kitchen (and, often, as dispensers of sage personal advice to the brothers), while Clarence Merritt and Robert Hinton between them have looked after the physical aspects of the Lodge from the postwar years to the present.

Bertha, Etta and Ernie were pure Southern cooks who unfailingly filled the dining tables with solid, always-flavorful food. Although the brothers of the '40s, '50s and '60s were unaware of it at the time, much of the Chi Psi fare of that period could be classed as what we know today as “soul food.” Joe Jenrette recalls seeing Miss Bertha gathering ingredients for one of her soul food dishes. “One day,” he relates, I spotted Miss Bertha gathering a basket of weeds near the Lodge driveway. They were ‘poke weeds,’ she informed me, which she said made excellent greens.” She was right! Although most Southern brothers thought they were collards and most Northern brothers thought they were inedible, Bertha’s poke weeds found their way unobtrusively into the Chi Psi food chain.

Bill Pappas feels the Lodge would not have been the same without the “steady adult influences” that quickly became part of our daily lives. He calls Miss Bertha “a true mother-figure – quiet, self-effacing, a prodigious worker and dependable to a fault.” Brother Pappas notes that Miss Bertha “had a number of physical ailments and family problems, but she always had a smile for us, never complained and was as positive an influence as anyone could imagine.” He points out that the culinary delights prepared for such events as the Faculty Cocktail Party, formal pledge dinners and football brunches “were legendary not only among the brothers and alumni but throughout the campus.”

Pappas views Clarence Merritt (Etta’s son) as an equally dependable and hardworking caretaker. He certainly had his hands full, not only day in and day out, but after many festive social events that extended from dusk to near-sunrise. On one Sunday morning, for example, Clarence was busily vacuuming the living room following a Saturday night soiree when Bob (Goo Goo) Gantt walked in. Brother Gantt was a flashy wingback in Carl Snavely’s single-wing offense of the early 1950s – a dedicated trainer in season and a party animal otherwise. “Have you seen my toof?” Brother Gantt inquired. Clarence was puzzled but said he hadn’t encountered any teeth so far. “Well keep looking and take it easy on the vacuum,” Goo Goo said. “I had that toof in my mouf when I came in last night, and it was gone when I woke up this morning. It’s got to be here somewhere.” It was. Clarence found the artificial tooth under a sofa cushion and returned it intact to the delighted – and now grinning – brother.

Todd Hart well remembers Ernie for many things, food being perhaps the least essential of all. “Until her recent retirement, Ernestine Edwards was among the first and strongest constants at the Lodge for many years. She influenced us well beyond the three times-a-day when we would enjoy the pleasures of “chicken cod on blue,” football brunches that would leave you ready for a siesta and ice cream for breakfast after a particularly *social* night before. Ernestine’s personal qualities and commanding presence provided a check (*everyone* respected Ernestine) and a balance (Ernestine was *always* concerned about the welfare of the brothers) to our lives.

Brother Hart, in common with all who knew him, was fond of Clarence as well. He recalls Clarence's passing and the advent of Robert in these words:

“The passing of Clarence Merritt was a blow to all of us. Among my memories of him, two stand out. First, on more than one occasion, brothers – myself included – would be finishing up a late social evening when in would walk Big C – at the ripe hour of 4:30 am. He would patiently and quietly go about his labors, restoring order to the chaos created by the brothers. Second, as is often the case with strong, quiet people, the degree of impact Clarence had on his community only became obvious after his death. Big C's funeral took place at the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Carrboro, and the brothers were invited. The whole day was quite an event. I remember vividly the two communities coming together to celebrate Big C's life, Chris Kline – #1 at the time – delivering half of the powerful eulogy, a many-miles-long cortege and finally a reception for everyone hosted at the Lodge.”

Following the loss of Clarence, Robert Hinton joined the Lodge as manager. As Brother Hart puts it, “Always upbeat and friendly, Robert quickly established himself as a key member of Lodge life, making the decision to initiate him an easy one for us. I was never sure Robert knew exactly what he was getting into, however – especially when he was launched into the MR, blindfolded, after the three-knock sequence, with a rowdy crew of brothers awaiting his arrival. Robert survived that experience, however, and continued to grow and contribute as part of the Lodge community.”

As this manuscript works its way from PC to printer to publication, the Sigma actives and alumni are preparing for a retirement banquet for Robert Hinton. It's likely to be a somber day with Robert's retirement and the nationally ranked University of Virginia visiting Kenan Stadium to face the nationally unranked Tar Heels in the opening game of what is likely to be a long football season.

These five have woven a thread of continuity over decades of time and generations of Sigma brothers. None of us can thank them enough. Ever.

HISTORY OF THE SIGMA PROPERTY

Recollections of Basil Jones at age 90 (approximately)

Some years ago, Alpha Sigma was fortunate to get the views of Basil Jones, a long-time resident of Chapel Hill, regarding the history of the property now occupied by the Lodge. Jones' recollections extend back as far as 1850. They were recorded in 1934 and passed along by Linn Garibaldi.

The Lodge rests on land that was part of the McCauley property and originally part of the sprawling Lindsay plantation, which consisted of some 2,000 acres prior to the War Between the States. Here are the lightly edited recollections of Basil Jones:

“This property was first owned by Dr. John Jones [who] sold it to Paul Cameron who sold it to Solomon Pool. Pool sold it to Mr. McCauley. When Pool owned it, there were four acres in the property. . . . A lot of this property has been sold at different times. Charles Lindsay (possibly a member of the same family that owned the original plantation) married McCauley's daughter, and he sold it to the Chi Psi fraternity.

“This building we are in now [*Editor's Note:* The old “Avery Memorial,” which the brothers used as an office after the fire of 1929 and until construction of the present Lodge later in 1934. Interestingly, the building was constructed a century earlier as an office for the Lindsay plantation.] was a schoolhouse at the time of the war – The Maria Spears School. The boxwoods were not here then [*Editor's Note:* This suggests that the boxwoods, which have been variously dated from 1800 to 1900 must have been planted sometime around the time of the war – perhaps as much as 150 years ago.], but the large oak trees were here.

“Mr. Pool built the [stone] fence [along Ransom Street] that is here now. That red house across the street, that used to be a real big lot. Mr. Pendergraft used to own it. It is not nearly as old as this place is. . . . When the railroad back here was built, Charles Lindsay was living here.

“The three small houses here – one was the smokehouse, another was the ice house. This land here was all a yard. In the back was only a garden. In front, where the boxwoods are now, was a lot of vines. The road out here in front [Cameron Avenue] was here then.

“When the war started, I was about 10 years old. I don't know exactly how old I am. I was driving for Dr. Jones. Dr. Jones had two horses. I drove for him, tended to the horses, did work in the house. I didn't do anything for the property.

“I was not a slave. . . . was always free. My father was a slave. He belonged to Dr. Jones. I was here when Paul Cameron lived here. Mr. Cameron was from Hillsboro. I was here when Mr. McCauley was here. I didn't work for Mr. Pool and Mr. Cameron.

“A Yankee soldier named Col. Anderson [*Editor’s Note:* Probably Robert Anderson of Fort Sumter fame] stayed in a room on this property. Col. Anderson was in charge of the {Union} army here. The Yankees stayed here for four or five months. They stayed right here on this property and blew the bugle every morning. They drilled right here. There was no fighting in Chapel Hill. They [the Union troops] did not do any damage to this property. They did some damage at Hillsboro though.

“[Lt. Gen. Joseph] Wheeler’s [Confederate] cavalry was camped here for awhile. They left when the Yankees got here. The college buildings were used to camp in during the war. Col. Wallace came through here with his army. [*Editor’s Note:* Possibly Lew Wallace, later a major general, governor of the Territory of New Mexico, ambassador to Turkey and author of, among others, *Ben Hur*.] They say Stonewall Jackson came through here, but I don’t remember him.

“All the boys around here went to the war. Dr. Jones had a son killed in the war. . . .He did not like Yankees a bit. Lots of the Chapel Hill boys were killed in the war. [*Editor’s Note:* All the brothers of Alpha Sigma – 50 in all – joined the Confederate army. Nine were reported killed, and one was unaccounted for.] Governor Swain surrendered this town to the Yankees at the end of the war. During the war, Governor Swain lives where [Frank Porter] Graham lives now. Chapel Hill was a big social center back then. Possum Quarter and Ashland were out towards Hillsboro.

“The white people did not care who ran the town after the war. Will Scarwell, an ex-slave, was mayor of Chapel Hill. My brother Henry was a town councilman. Some of the carpetbaggers came through here after the war but didn’t stay long.

“Dr. Jones was one of the biggest doctors we ever had in this town. He had two other sons besides the one killed in the war. They studied to be doctors, and one son, John Jones, went to Asheville.

“Dr. Jones and all the others kept whiskey. It was no more than water then. Some of it was made right around here. . . .Dr. Jones killed all his meat. He killed 100 hogs at one time. We got ice from the creeks when they froze over. When the creeks didn’t freeze, we didn’t have any ice.

“Dr. Jones treated his slaves right. He offered to set my father free, but my father told him he would rather belong to him than be free. My mother was free, and the child took the condition of the mother, so I was free. If the slaves wanted to go to school, Dr. Jones would teach them to read and write. Some of the slaves belonging to other masters had it mighty tough. Dr. Jones would allow his slaves to go out and work for other people. Some of his slaves stayed on after the war. Some ran away, but Dr. Jones would just let them go. Right after the war, I went to farming. My mother bought her a place to live in. Dick Ashe [not a Chi Psi] took my brother Henry to war. Henry built the tower at the penitentiary.

“Mr. Cameron owned 500 slaves. He did not stay her all the time. [The property] was just rented out. Part of the time it was closed up.

“None of the men [who owned this property] are buried here. All of them are buried in Pittsboro except Dr. Jones; he is buried in Charlotte. Solomon Pool was president of the university [1869-71]. The came President Battle. [*Editor’s Note:* Kemp Plummer Battle was instrumental in the reopening of the university after the early years of Reconstruction, earning the title “father of the new university,” which he served as president from 1876 to 1891.] I used to travel a lot with ‘Little’ Graham. The president of the university was called ‘Little’ because he was the littlest Graham we ever saw. I knew all the Grahams.

[*Editor’s Note:* Frank Porter Graham served as president of UNC from 1930 to 1932 and – following the consolidation of UNC, NC State and the Woman’s College of UNC – as president the Consolidated University of North Carolina from 1932 until 1949 when he was appointed to the US Senate. Edward Kidder Graham was president of the university from 1913 until his death in a flu epidemic in 1918.]

“Bill McDade and Green McDade and myself are the only three people living here now [1934] that were here during the war. I used to drink a little but have not used any for 50 years, I reckon. There were about four or five hundred students in this college back then. The boys in them days were so much bigger and stronger than the ones now.”