



Governor-elect David Walters toasts his alma mater on Centennial Weekend.

THE CENTENNIAL WEEKEND

The weekend of festivities marking Homecoming 1990, November 9 and 10, was almost more than the several thousand returning Sooners could absorb—but everyone made a gallant try. Sandwiched among gala entertainment, banquets, outdoor barbecue and football was a heavy schedule of reunions for sorority and fraternity members, student leaders, honor students, clubs and just old friends. Motel accommodations and meeting rooms were at a premium, while Norman residents reported a bumper crop of house guests.

The influx of alumni and friends began Friday morning with the OU Family Reunion Luncheon, followed by the final gathering of members of the Centennial Commission, a recognition dinner in the Union Ballroom. Three years of planning and a year of remarkably successful Centennial events behind them, the commissioners voiced their

satisfaction and the conviction that the marathon effort had strengthened the commitment of alumni and friends to the future of the institution.

Commissioner Allece Garrard, in toasting the University on behalf of her colleagues, recalled a volunteer guide giving a tour of the National Cathedral in Washington. When asked what made that cathedral different from those in Europe, the guide replied, "This one is mine."

"Like the lady and her cathedral," Garrard concluded, "each of us feels that this one—this university—is mine."

Such pride of ownership was evident later in the evening at the showpiece of the Homecoming Weekend, the Centennial Gala, a two-hour Lloyd Noble Center celebration of Sooner talent—student, faculty and alumni. The featured alumni performers were professionals, folksinger and songwriter Tom Paxton



ABOVE LEFT: OU's new vice president for University Affairs, Fred Bennett, left, greets Commissioner Allece Garrard and guest Carrie Jean Loftis.



ABOVE RIGHT: OU Foundation director Ron Burton, left, visits with OU regents Sam Noble and G. T. Blankenship.

RIGHT: Guest star of the Centennial Gala was the folksinger and songwriter Tom Paxton.

BELOW: Lunch on the Lawn was a Centennial event threatening to become a Sooner tradition.



and singer-actress Carol McAlester. The master of ceremonies was Rich Taylor, manager of talent resources for Walt Disney World.

Some of the biggest ovations of the evening were reserved for in-house talent—Baritone Thomas Carey, OU's own Jazz Band, Steel Drum Band, Chorus, Orchestra, the Pride of Oklahoma, Oklahoma Festival Ballet and the cast of the hit musical "Nunsense." Joining the live celebrators were taped birthday messages from such Sooner personalities as actors James Garner and Larry Drake, U.S. Senator David Boren, former Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, athletes Billy Sims and Dewey and Lucious Selmon, Admiral William J. Crowe Jr., comedian Argus Hamilton and campus visitors such as actor Mike Farrell, OSU coach Pat Jones and Dr. Joyce Brothers.

Homecoming visitors were out early on Saturday for a day patterned after the very successful 1989 Centennial Countdown—only more so. Even the weather was a carbon copy of that earlier ideal fall day. Historical walking tours were

followed by a repeat of "Lunch on the Lawn," which threatens to become an annual event.

During halftime of the OU-Kansas State game (OU 34, KSU 7), newly elected Oklahoma governor and OU alumnus David Walters helped crown the Homecoming King and Queen. Then the governor-elect joined his President's Leadership Class of 1969 for one of the many reunions in the Oklahoma Memorial Union. Following the reunion were a buffet dinner and dancing in the Ballroom.

While the alumni were celebrating their affiliations with the University, a special reception and dinner was being held in the Fred Jones Jr. Fine Arts Center for current and former OU regents and presidents and their families. The feature of the latter event was the unveiling of two massive Centennial plaques destined for the executive suite in Evans Hall, one bearing the names and likenesses of presidents from Boyd to Van Horn and the other, names of 100 years of regential board members.



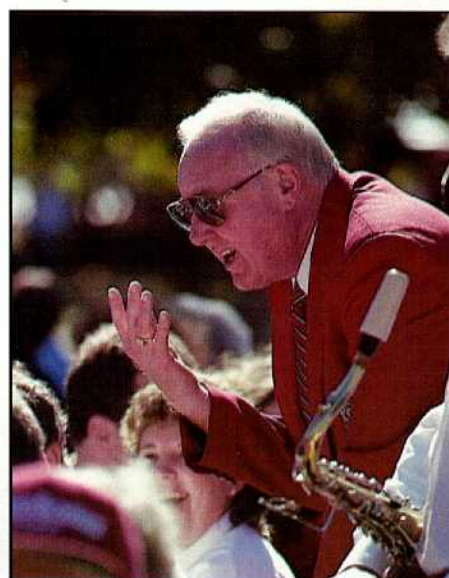
ABOVE: Nearly four years of Centennial responsibilities drawing to a close, Commission Chairman Howell can take time to enjoy Lunch on the Lawn with several hundred of his closest friends.
LEFT: Homecoming visitors stop at the OU Alumni Association's south oval information tent.



ABOVE: The Pride of Oklahoma Marching Band turns up the volume on "Boomer Sooner" for the Homecoming lunch crowd.

LEFT: Tom Burkett of Bartlesville, who with his wife, the former Mary Francisco, last donned Pride uniforms in the early 1970s, never misses an opportunity to rejoin the Alumni Band for another Homecoming halftime appearance.

RIGHT: Director of bands Gene "Coach" Thrailkill issues instructions to the Sooner Alumni Band, whose members may have forgotten a thing or two about the order of march to the stadium.



RIGHT: Being elected by fellow students as the Homecoming King and Queen had added meaning for the Centennial royalty, seniors Mo Goff, left, Rogers, Arkansas, and Shane Hainzinger, Bartlesville.



ABOVE LEFT: The closing event on the Centennial Weekend calendar was a buffet dinner and dancing in the Union Ballroom.

ABOVE RIGHT: Senior Drum Major Russell Smith, Dallas, marshals the Pride of Oklahoma band for the march to the stadium.



RIGHT: The Homecoming Parade was one of only two rain casualties of the Centennial year. Nevertheless, the following day the floats joined the celebration by circling the south oval for pregame alumni viewing.

