

# LETTERS

## Profs of Distinction . . .

I was delighted to see the feature on OU's distinguished professors (*Sooner Magazine*, Volume 12, Number 1, Fall 1991). It brought back many fond recollections. Looking back as an alumnus, it was men and women like those portrayed in Margaret French's article that made my experiences at OU truly exceptional.

Lex Holmes' lectures on economics were not to be missed. His engaging yet disarming style enlivened even the most timid and confused student. His illustrations of time-honored principles made economics relevant and, alas, caused many of us to pursue careers in the field. His excitement for economics and learning in general was quite contagious. Thankfully, there was no antidote for Lex Holmes.

When people reflect on their experiences at the University of Oklahoma, they focus on the unique and extraordinary people they met there. I am certain that the men and women featured in "Hallmark of Excellence" have provided many pleasant reminiscences, indeed.

*Thomas W. Gilligan, '79 B.A.  
Associate Professor of Finance and  
Economics  
University of Southern California  
Los Angeles, California*

## . . . And Memorable, Too

I was a student at OU in 1943-44 under the Army's A.S.T.P program. I survived the full nine months the program existed, after which I was transferred to the 103rd Infantry Division at Camp Howze, Texas, and hence to Europe (southern France).

During my stay at OU, I sent home some 20 photo postcards of OU buildings. They include the library, arts and fine arts buildings, business and administration buildings, geology, law, engineers, entrance to campus, and several of the student union, Owen Field, sunken garden, Tri Delta house, Phi Kappa Psi house and Hester Hall. The last two provided my shelter during my stay. I also have one of University Cleaners for some reason.

Since I have never been back to Norman, I do not know if these buildings are still there, except for the library, which has been shown on TV. Would the University be interested in having these cards? I'm a bit worn around the edges, and my children would have no use for them. I would hate to see them destroyed if someone else could put them to use or has a lasting interest in them.

I do have one request. A Miss McFarland or McFarlane, first name Dora if I remember, taught math and

was a favorite with us since she bragged about her Army boys to her Navy ROTC students. Her letters to us in Europe made many a day for us.

To shorten the story, I retrieved from a pro-Nazi doctor's house in southern France a model showing various solid analytical geometry forms constructed of colored string suspended from a top and bottom of plywood with explanations in French or German on the top. I remembered Dora saying that she didn't have any models to show us while we were there. Thus, it was mailed to her in a partly burnt "K" ration box. A return letter assured me that she was the envy of the entire math department and that it would be used, but she would return it anytime I might want it. I do not want its return but have often wondered if it did help others, if it still exists, or if anyone even remembers it. Any information would be appreciated.

I will never forget or regret my stay at Norman.

*Lawrence Drennen, '43-'44  
Warren, Ohio*

*Editor's Note: The University of Oklahoma Archives was pleased to accept the Drennen postcards. Dr. McFarland, one of OU's best-loved faculty members, died in 1987 at the age of 92. According to her niece, Jane Patten of Norman, she kept Drennen's war souvenir model in her bookcase after her retirement from the classroom in 1965, and it is still part of the family's "Aunt Dora" memorabilia.*

## The Centennial Sooner

The special commemorative issue of *Sooner Magazine* is the most beautiful journal I have ever seen. I was simply stunned as I turned the pages. With the University's emphasis on "Excellence," this is an absolutely outstanding example.

I have never seen anything anywhere to equal the photography.

The articles are extremely interesting and very well written.

The choice of articles and photos surely couldn't be nicer.

The coverage of the year's events was so vivid.

I appreciated this issue especially because I am now disabled and was



*In this undated photograph from OU News Services files, Dr. McFarland shows Lawrence Drennen's war souvenir model to students Janie Jones, center, and Marilyn Oldham.*

unable to be on campus during this thrilling year. As a student during the poverty years and the struggles of the so-dedicated professors and dear Dr. Bizzell, it is awesome for me to see what really GREAT and inspiring leaders today are setting future directions.

Please pass along my deepest compliments to all who made this magazine possible.

It is "simply the Best!"

*Helen Kirkbride Canfield, '38 B.S.  
Norman, Oklahoma*

The special commemorative issue of *Sooner* is superb, something to be treasured along with the Centennial book. Congratulations on a work of art.

I was pleased that you put the John Masefield piece on the back cover. I have it on the wall in my office and consider it one of the most beautiful (wonderfully idealistic) encomiums to grace the university.

*J.R. Morris, '56 M.S., '60 Ph.D.  
Regents' Professor  
Psychology/Educational Leadership  
Norman, Oklahoma*

*Editor's Note: A letter from former provost Morris not only is good for the editorial ego but also for the vocabulary. Encomium, we're told, means "warm or glowing praise."*

I'm writing to thank you and your staff for the handsome *Sooner Magazine* commemorative issue. It makes all of us Sooners very proud.

I was not able to attend the reunion, but my sister did so and is mentioned in this special issue.

*Adelaide Paxton McCrimmon,  
'24 B.A.  
San Antonio, Texas*

*Editor's Note: Mrs. McCrimmon's sister, Josephine Paxton Larson, '29 B.A., '32 B.A., also of San Antonio, represented the family of early-day OU professor Joseph F. Paxton and Fantine Samuels Paxton, OU's first woman graduate, at the Centennial's OU Family Reunion Luncheon.*

I have just had the wonderful pleasure of looking through your Centennial issue of *Sooner Magazine*. It is so

beautifully composed, and I am anxious to get home and read it from cover to cover. It concludes the Centennial Celebration on the strongest note. I would think that for the alumni who could not attend the events, it gave them a great sense of the occasions and pride in the events that filled the year.

The Centennial book that you wrote and edited is one I treasure, and I have been pleased to be able to send copies to other trustees who are involved in planning their university celebrations, such as the University of Chicago.

*Sarah Hogan  
President  
OU Board of Regents  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

I'm writing about an item in the (Centennial) *Sooner Magazine*, on page 43, a picture of Tom Burkett wearing the OU band overseas cap. If he was last there in '73, he couldn't have had one. They were last used in 1928. I know; I was there. The new West Point-type uniforms came in that year.

I donated my cap to the band museum two years ago and wonder if that may be what he is wearing?

*Dr. Jim M. Taylor, '28-'31  
Oklahoma City, OK*

*Editor's Note: Dr. Taylor's cap is a valued part of the band memorabilia collection; the cap Burkett wears annually to alumni band reunions originally was worn by his late uncle, J. Tom Devanney, '25 B.S.*

While flipping through the Special Commemorative Issue of *Sooner Magazine*, I found on page 25 a photo of our daughter, Martina G. Sittler, receiving her diploma.

We have a roll of photos of other young ladies whom one or the other of us *thought* was our daughter, but none that actually were. A laugh on us!

You can guess our surprise and delight when we saw your photo.

*Pat Sittler  
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

I've read your Centennial *Sooner Magazine* from cover to cover and feel as if I'd swallowed stars! Sweet celebration stars bursting over OU towers. It's that good!

The story is beautifully thought out, beautifully composed, all of a piece. The understated dignity of emphasis on departmental excellence struck me profoundly. Respect for accuracy, tradition, quality was evident on every page. Participants, name after name quietly placed, for the most part unadorned, each a professional best. Seminar subjects a prediction of tomorrow; as were the faces of student leaders. Centennial focus on the venerable literary quarterly *World Literature Today*—in the beginning the modest *Books Abroad* of magnificent concept—sets the scholarly priority of a University solidly on its way to eminence.

Speed the Centennial *Sooner Magazine* on its way into 110,000 homes carrying the story of the luminous vision of Roy Temple House "to create international understanding by disseminating literary information," powerfully propelled for near quarter of a century by the gifts of editor Ivar Ivask, emigre from Estonia, with the devoted help of his Latvian wife Astrid—our two poets dearly loved.

The Ivasks "expand our lives," my husband said. In retirement may the poems they write never die. Their languages at long last have a country!

As for me, it's dangerous business to be overwhelmed at 82! You might have mowed me down from shock, you know! Instead your wonderful surprise story on *World Literature Today*, Neustadt Prize, Puterbaugh Conferences, the Ivasks, Ardeneum opening made me young again! . . . And I am 18 years younger than my school!

As for the University, from Gil Jain cover to John Masefield encomium, the University of Oklahoma lives on! And on!

*Allece Garrard, '31 B.F.A.  
McAlester, Oklahoma*

*Editor's Note: Mrs. Garrard is a charter member of the WLT advisory board and long-time OU benefactor. WLT Editor Ivask retired from OU last year after a distinguished 24-year career; he and his wife Astrid now live in Ireland. His successor is literary scholar and author Djelal Kadir, a native of Cyprus formerly on the faculty of Purdue University.*