

# LETTERS

## "Back to Boyd House"

June and I thoroughly enjoyed your article on the Boyd House in the current *Sooner Magazine*. Like many others, I have special memories of the house and particularly the Carriage House or garage.

In August 1945, when I arrived at the University for an interview for an assistant professorship in the history department, the University put me up in the spare room over the garage. The next day, Dr. Cross, the then resident of the Boyd House, strolled into my interview. Since the interview had already begun, we were not introduced. I assumed he was probably a junior member of the history department who sat quietly smoking his pipe and sizing up this 27-year-old potential professor. Afterward I was much surprised that the president of the University was the person in question and soon to be my new "boss." This was the beginning of 26 happy years at OU and numerous enjoyable events in the grand old Boyd House.

Gilbert C. Fite  
Professor Emeritus  
Bella Vista, Arkansas

The Fall 1994 issue of the *Sooner Magazine* was one I really enjoyed. Being a resident here in Norman since 1935, I have seen a lot happen at the University of Oklahoma.

The article about the Boyd House was very meaningful to me as Dr. Bizzell was living there when we moved here and was president of OU my first three years as a student in the OU School of Pharmacy (1938-42). I can remember seeing Mrs. Bizzell driving their big Packard automobile in the driveway at the back of the home.

Prof. Joe Smay lived next door east of our house at 301 East Boyd. A great neighbor and friend. He was architect of the Business Administration and Zoology buildings, which were being built at that time. The University had a small brick building near the Santa Fe railroad tracks east of our house that they used to receive rolls of paper from the railroad siding for the OU college newspaper. This building is where sculptor Julius Sturpeck, a

red-haired young man, a student of Joe Taylor, sculpted the statues that are on either side of the entrance of the Business Administration building.

I also saw the tower added to the Student Union, and I stood in the opening before the clock was placed there (being rather short in height for my age—16—since the opening is 5-feet 3-inches in diameter).

I was a paper boy for *The Norman Transcript* while in Norman High School. My first customer was Dr. Oscar Jacobson, and I had many University faculty on my route, like Dean William Carson, Dean Arthur Adams, Dean Edgar Meacham, Rupel Jones, Loyd Harris, to name a few.

I graduated from OU in 1942 in pharmacy; Dr. Joseph Brandt was president that year, his first full year as president. After graduating from Baylor University College of Dentistry in 1945 (and the U.S. Navy), I returned to Norman and opened my dental practice. I was honored to have many University faculty as patients, some had been my teachers at OU. The University has had some great educators.

Henry C. Easterling, '42 B.S.  
Norman, Oklahoma

## A Crowning Achievement

Re: "Owen Field: Where the Grass is Getting Greener," *Sooner Magazine*, Fall, 1994. This most enjoyable and well-written article contains a bit of misinformation that I wish to point out. The author states, "The crown on the field had been nearly three feet high, a necessary evil of the artificial surface to promote runoff when the autumn rains hit Norman."

In reality, the lofty crown was in existence long before the initial synthetic turf was installed in 1970. And, it served a dual purpose. First, such a crown indeed helped to facilitate the drainage of rain. In pre-turf years, Owen Field was covered with thick Bermuda grass that could withstand downpours because of the drainage characteristics of the high crown. Hence, players experience better footing in wet game conditions. In fact, because of this expeditious draining mechanism (and the lush

Bermuda), Owen Field acquired a reputation as one of the most player-friendly surfaces in the country.

Secondly, the elevated crown was an offensive football weapon. OU ball carriers could generate a great deal of momentum running a few degrees laterally downhill! This created a distinct advantage for runners who knew how to make use of the slope, whether it was grass or synthetic.

Sadly, the recent proliferation of artificial sports surfaces has served to debilitate the health of athletes. Injuries resulting from physically strenuous competition on such dangerous surfaces have postponed or ended many an athletic career.

Let's hope that every college, university and professional team using artificial turf will rip it out and install natural grass. They would do well to follow the educational, humanitarian and timely lead of the University of Oklahoma.

Ronald Ross King, '71 B.S., '76 M.A.  
Norman, Oklahoma

## Sooners Remembered

I am writing so that we may recognize a former Sooner great, Dr. Fred M. Bullard. I had the opportunity to interview Dr. Bullard this past summer at his home in Austin, Texas.

As the OU Alumni Band president, I located Dr. Bullard while preparing for this year's Homecoming festivities. I called him and asked to interview him regarding his days as a member of the Pride of Oklahoma marching band. He was delighted to do the interview. I marveled at all the things he remembered about the band, including the time he had lunch with John Philip Sousa while Sousa was visiting the University. A lot of things he couldn't remember, but the memories he had thrilled him.

I remember asking him if "Boomer Sooner" was the fight song when he was in band in 1919. He promptly sat upright in his chair and replied, "Well, I'm a Sooner born, and a Sooner bred, and when I die I'll be a Sooner dead!" He was truly charming and delightful to talk to.

Sadly, three days after our inter-

view, Dr. Bullard passed away at his home in Austin. You can see from his obituary that this former Sooner was a world-renowned geologist and a very popular professor at the University of Texas. Even though he lived his last years in Austin, he spoke of Oklahoma very fondly and of the Pride of Oklahoma very proudly. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from Dr. Bullard and listen to him reminisce about the Pride of Oklahoma. May we all leave this University with such great memories!

*Terri L. Cooter, '82 B.S., '87 M.Ed.  
President  
OU Alumni Band Association  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

*Editor's Note: Dr. Bullard, '21 B.S., '22 M.S., an eminent geologist and*

*volcanologist, died July 29, 1994, at 93, spending his last day working in his office at UT, where his teaching and research career spanned 70 years.*

I was surprised and saddened in reading in the Chicago newspapers of the untimely death of the (journalism) school's former director, Elizabeth Yamashita.

We met on only two occasions, both times when she was in the Chicago area, and they were warm and lovely events. It must have been only a few months after she became head of the school that I organized a reception of school alumni in the Chicago area. On that day an untimely snow storm blanketed the area, but we went ahead and maybe a dozen people came despite the weather. She made everyone feel

welcome and a bit closer to their school.

On another occasion my wife and I had dinner with her in Evanston. Each time she was a most gracious person and an interesting conversationalist. And rightly so, given her most interesting career, but she never seemed to flaunt her achievements.

*Ronald E. Keener, '67 M.A.  
Glen Ellyn, Illinois*

*Editor's Note: A native of Australia, professor at Northwestern University and head of the journalism school at Michigan State University, Dr. Yamashita chaired OU's H. H. Herbert School of Journalism from 1982-88, retiring in 1992. She was living in Honolulu, Hawaii, with her husband, Donald, at the time of her death in July at the age of 67.*

## A Classic Run for OU Fine Arts

I wanted to bring to the attention of your readers the first OU Arts Classic Run on April 8, 1995. Sponsored by the University of Oklahoma and the College of Fine Arts, this new arts benefit will consist of three events: a 10-K (6.2 mile) run and a 2-mile run and a 2-mile "fun walk." The race course will begin just west of the stadium on Asp Street, passing virtually all of the fraternity and sorority houses, as well as many of the student dormitories, and will finish on the 50-yard line of Owen Field!

The purpose of the race is four-fold: to benefit the University and the College of Fine Arts and to broaden community involvement; to focus on physical fitness, targeting runners/walkers and other sports enthusiasts; to involve senior citizens and children in the 2-mile walk; and to reach OU students. The OU Health Sciences Center will sponsor a Fitness Expo in conjunction with the races to emphasize nutrition, exercise and other aspects of personal health, which are important in maintaining the fitness and mental acuity to handle the rigors not only of college life but also of life itself.

The OU Arts Classic Run will be presented by KOCO-TV Channel 5 and Sonic Industries and has the support of 20 additional sponsors: American Airlines, Bank of Oklahoma, C. L. Frates & Co., C R Anthony Co., Coca-Cola, Dean A. McGee Eye Institute, Fred Jones Companies, Harold's, Hyde Drug Inc., Marsh & McClennan Inc., McAfee & Taft, Merrill Lynch, Mike Bryan Office Products, OU Athletic Department, Oklahoma Publishing Company (OPUBCO), OU Health Sciences Center, Oral & Maxillofacial Associates, The Runner, The Santa Fe Club and Wilshire Running Club.

Entertainment will be provided on the course and on Owen Field by the College of Fine Arts and will include both band and symphonic music as well as the University of Oklahoma Cabaret Dancers.

The award ceremony will be held on Owen Field, with winners receiving medallions designed by the College of Fine Arts. Each participant will receive a beautiful T-shirt designed by the OU School of Art.

Mom's Day at OU is also on the day of the race, and many parents are expected to participate with their sons or daughters. Also on this same day, OU plays Kansas State in baseball, the Medieval Fair will be held at Brandt Park, and the Sooner Scandals will be staged at Holmberg Hall. What a great way to spend a day at OU!

The races will provide a wonderful opportunity to showcase the beautiful OU campus and the outstanding students and faculty members in the College of Fine Arts. It is hoped that many OU alumni will take this opportunity to come back and visit the campus and participate in this event. It will be a "CLASSIC."

Additional race information and registration forms can be obtained by contacting: OU College of Fine Arts, 540 Parrington Oval, Norman, OK 73019-0560 or by calling (405) 325-3893 or (405) 235-9621. Registration forms can also be obtained from The Runner in Oklahoma City, Ada and Edmond and from any Sonic Drive-In.

Hope to see you at the races!

*Dudley Hyde, '66 B.A.  
Race Director  
1995 OU Arts Classic Run  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*