

# 25-Year Reunion for '16

By SIGFRID FLOREN

This Year It's the Classes Ending in One or Six That Will Have Spring Reunions



"It must have been the Class Reunion notice he's been waiting for"

WITH spring in the air and the time for class reunions only two months away, alumni are beginning to think again about their college days. Such thoughts may bring back memorable picnics or hayrides with a gang of friends, a date that led to romance, or the final impressive graduation day ceremony.

This year, classes that will have specially planned five-year reunions are those of 1901, 1906, 1911, 1916, 1921, 1926, 1931, and 1936. While arrangements are still in the formative stage, a general invitation is being issued to members of those eight graduating classes to return to the campus at reunion time on Sunday, June 8.

Center of reunion plans will be the Class of '16, holding its Silver Anniversary Reunion. The gathering on the campus again of members of that class is likely to re-create—in their minds, at least—the University as it was twenty-five years ago when they were senior students.

Youth, energy and growth are three words that most aptly characterized the institution twenty-five years ago. The class of '16 was the largest graduating class turned out up to that time and the 1915-16 enrollment of 2090 exceeded any previous figure. Degrees conferred by President Stratton D. Brooks at commencement exercises June 8, 1916, numbered 218.

Physical plant of the University saw two great additions during the campus days of the '16ers. They were on hand for the dedication of Monnet Hall in 1913 and saw DeBarr Hall draw near completion in 1916.

Expansion and growth notwithstanding, O.U. was still small. Even with the two new buildings the total came only to eight. Where the Armory and Owen Field are today the flat Oklahoma prairie in 1916 was marked off into handball courts and football fields. The frame structure now standing immediately south of the Union housed

the University gymnasium then. Men's physical education classes were held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; women used the gym on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The engineering unit consisted of the building occupied now by Engineering Laboratories.

A residential section was growing up around the campus. At the time, however, Elm Street was the western "frontier." Only a few homes had been built that far out. The Reed family's home was the structure now occupied by the Oklahoma School of Religion. The large old stone house in the next block north was the home of the Johnson brothers, one of whom married Florence Wagner of the Class of '16. She is now Mrs. Neil Johnson, Norman.

There was a varsity corner then. It was Ye Varsity Shoppe, opened in 1912 by Morris T. "Wissie" Myers, '11ba, '12ma. And alumni of twenty-five years ago won't forget Mrs. Scruggs who served them sodas and phosphates there during most of the time they were on the campus, and continued for a number of years afterward.

There were five nationally affiliated sororities on the campus, Kappa Alpha Theta, Delta Delta Delta, Pi Beta Phi, Kappa Kappa Gamma, and Alpha Chi Omega; and six chapters of national fraternities, Kappa Alpha, Beta Theta Pi, Kappa Sigma, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Nu, and Sigma Chi. And, at that time, membership in the chapters averaged about thirty-five in the fraternities, twenty-five in sororities.

Organization of houses didn't approach the stage of business efficiency reached today. There were no housemothers, as such. A student in each of the girls' houses was designated as counselor by the University administration. It was her duty to carry out specified regulations. When she dismissed her date at 10:30 or 12 o'clock, that was the signal for all gentlemen to take their leave.

Curfew for women was extended to 12:30 for dances—of which there were many. Of course neither the Union Ballroom or University Club dance hall of today had become even a gleam in an architect's eye by that time. The dance hall was the second floor of a downtown Main Street business building and it was known as Davis Hall. University students had dancing clubs that kept the hall's calendar full. Tabasco, interfraternity dancing club, made up of "the best six dancers from each fraternity," and Enchiladas, a similar intersorority organization, were consistently active until the World War period.

Not all of college life was simple, however. Even getting to and from dances provided something of a problem, especially prior to the time of the paving of University Boulevard and Asp Avenue. The '16ers had about two years of the dirt roads from the campus to town. Yes, there were brick or board sidewalks; they were but slight improvement over the road itself. The students were all aware of the state of the road and walks, because practically all of their getting about was done afoot.

It was something of a revolution when the jitney came in with five-cent rides. Though far short of the bus system of 1941, it provided transportation to and from town at the rate of four or five persons per trip, the jitney being a small, open model Ford. Its route was south on Boulevard and return to town on Asp Avenue.

Another development in the same "revolution" appeared with establishment of the Toberman cab service. This firm also had just one vehicle. It was a help, although on a bad night it took him an hour to get enough couples downtown to the dancehall for the dance to begin. Those were the days!

Football season in the fall of 1915 left the students talking about it for the rest of the

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school year. Coach Bennie Owen turned out the second all-victorious team in five years, but not without the narrow escapes from defeat that made the season one of the most thrilling the University had seen. The big game with the Texas Longhorns ended 14-13. Another 14-13 score left Sooners tense after Kendall College failed to convert a field goal with the ball within 15 yards of Sooner goalposts during the last minute of play.

Of the team the *Sooner Yearbook* said, "It was declared to be the most wonderful aerial style aggregation in the country. Yet when occasion demanded, it could discard the forward pass and feel equally at home in the old style plunging game."

Forest Park "Spot" Geyer, captain of the team, ranked first in the United States in the number of points scored after touchdowns with a season total of 50; his total number of points scored, 138, was third in the nation. He went into the oil business upon leaving the University. His death occurred in 1932.

Class of '16 men carried much of the burden of the line as well as of the backfield. George Anderson, who became the first World War casualty among University graduates or students, played right tackle. At center was Curry Bell, '16ba, '16bs, now Dr. Bell of St. Paul, Minnesota, and chairman of the St. Paul Advisory Council of the University of Oklahoma Association. He was Sigma Nu representative on the Interfraternity Council and was on the Athletic Council and Student Council while he was on the campus.

Rayburn Foster, '16law, made an unusual but successful combination of his halfback football position with law study. He was vice president of his junior law class and president of his senior law class. He is now a practicing attorney at Bartlesville.

Another man, now governor of Oklahoma, played guard. He received his law degree in 1916. Known best then as "Red," Leon C. Phillips saw activity in athletics, in publications, in the Y.M.C.A. and in half a dozen other organizations. The *Yearbook* set these words beneath his picture:

"Learned, mighty, modest he,  
"Plain as his own hair to see."

Scholar and athlete, Howard McCasland, '16ba, was declared "without doubt the most versatile player Bennie Owen has developed in recent years." His position was halfback. His versatility extended into basketball; he was center and captain of the '16 squad. As a student Mr. McCasland served on the Student Council and Athletic Council. He was again named to the Athletic Council in 1939 as alumni representative. He is a life member of the University of Oklahoma Association.

A successful basketball season highlighted the year—at least successful in terms of today's student body. The Sooners won

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all four games they played during the season with Oklahoma A. and M. College.

Class sports were popular with all the students. Class rivalry was still in a vigorous stage. There was more loyalty to class than to college or school as it is today. The annual freshman-sophomore fights at the beginning of the fall term had been officially condemned in 1914, but the spirit of competition remained alive in baseball, basketball, football, and handball.

Strongest tendency to separate according to schools or vocational fields was noticed among the medics. At that time the first two years of medical school were on the campus. The anatomy building—more commonly known as the “stiff house”—was the long frame structure standing in the southwest part of the present University campus. It is now used for an elementary school building.

Dr. Felix Gastineau, '16med, now staff physician at Ellison Infirmary at the University, the Lowry brothers, Dr. Tom Lowry, '16ba, and Dr. Dick Lowry, '16med—half of a long remembered quartet of men singers on the campus—now Oklahoma City surgeons, and Dr. Wann Langston, '16med, Oklahoma City physician and formerly associate professor of clinical microscopy at the University Medical School, were a few of the medics of twenty-five years ago.

Student publications were as much the life of the campus then as they are today. The *University Oklahoman* was the student newspaper published Tuesdays and Fridays during the school year under the direction of the Publication Board. Willard H. Campbell, '20ba, was the paper's editor. Of the class of '16, Roy Baines, '16ba, Hennessey, was managing editor. Jack Boatman, '16law, Okmulgee attorney was the newspaper's business manager. Chester Westfall, '16ba, handled the sports editorship. He is now in business in Tulsa and is a life member of the University of Oklahoma Association. Mrs. James J. Hill (Katherine Barr, '16ba), Norman, now active in alumni affairs, was society editor.

In connection with the *University Oklahoman* no story would be complete without mention of the honorary journalism organizations: Sigma Delta Chi for boys and Theta Sigma Phi for the girls. One of the most outstanding events of the year was the banquet of Sigma Delta Chi. In the spring of 1916, as during a number of years before and many more afterward, the late Professor Theodore H. Brewer acted as toastmaster. Even today persons who were at that affair twenty-five years ago recall his delightful style of humor.

Strictly extra-curricular were annual editions of the scandal sheet—literally yellow in color—circulated by Sigma Delta Chi. Theta Sigma Phi began a green one in 1916. Of them the *Sooner* comments: “Those horrid boys have been making life miserable for the boneheads and the flirts and the profs for three years, and now the sob sisters think that what is sauce for the gander is

mince pie for the goose and the *Magpie* serves it up spicily seasoned.” *Sooner Mollycoddle* was the name of the Sigma Delta Chi sheet. It boasted such mottos as “We do our muckracking with a steam shovel. Apply for rates,” and “So long as human frailties continue, the *Mollycoddle* will appear.”

The *University Magazine*, erstwhile literary effort, appeared each month under the editorship in 1916 of Mrs. W. N. Farley (Dorys Hollenbeck, '19ba), now editor and part owner of the *West Plains Journal*, West Plains, Missouri. Chet Westfall also held the position of “special editor” on the publication.

Published by the class of '17, the 1916 *Sooner Yearbook* carried on the tradition of a comprehensive annual. It was dedicated “To the man whose clean sportsmanship and high sense of honor has put Oklahoma in the athletic map; to our beloved Bennie Owen.” Walter L. Ditzler, '14ba, '17law, was editor-in-chief. He is now in the insurance business in Tulsa. Marie Mauk, '16ba, was senior editor.

By 1916 Pe-et, men's senior honor society, had become well established. It was organized in 1910 and consistently maintained for its membership qualifications, high standards of leadership, scholarship and service. Men chosen from the class of '16 were Howard McCasland, Chester Westfall, Harvey Collins, '16ba, now with radio station KFSD, San Diego, California, Roy Baines, and Clarence Karcher, '16bs.

Mr. Karcher ranks among the most outstanding men of all O.U. alumni in the fields of geology and physics. He is given much credit for the development of modern geophysics as a method of discovering oil. His widespread oil interests in the southwest and the Coronado Corporation, of which he is president, keep him busy now.

Murel Carpenter, '16bs, geologist of Oklahoma City who has also made a name in petroleum, figured in a number of campus activities of 1916 O.U.

To other vocational fields the class of '16 has made its contributions. Frank Small, '16ba, was formerly a high school principal, but now is in business in Bartlesville. Dr. F. Lyman Tibbitts, '16ba, '19ma, is special instructor in extension education for the University.

Besides Leon Phillips, first O.U. alumnus governor, public office has called William J. Armstrong, '14ba, '16law, debater and orator during his college days. He was elected to the State Corporation Commission in 1940. Roy W. Cox, '14ba, '16law, active as a student in the University Republican Club, is now Republican member of the State Board of Affairs.

Another member of the Class of '16, Finley McLaury, attorney and former city official at Snyder, is just completing a three-year term as a member of the Executive Board of the Alumni Association.

The Class of '16 has contributed fifteen life members to the Alumni Association. They are Mrs. Florence Wagner Johnson,

Mrs. Zue Mac Bronaugh Sheldon, L. W. Kitchens, David M. Logan, H. S. Oderman, Chester H. Westfall, J. C. Karcher, L. W. Kibler, Mrs. Lola Harris Kibler, Finley McLaury, E. V. Woolsey, Leon C. Phillips, T. H. McCasland, Dr. Lee Roy Wilhite and Crofford W. Norman.

A. N. “Jack” Boatman, '16law, is an attorney at Okmulgee, member of the Stadium-Union Board of Trustees and active in numerous alumni affairs. And there's also John Jacobs, '16ba, the O.U. track coach for many years; W. C. Kite, '16ba, Oklahoma City geologist and former member of the Board of Regents of State Colleges; Lowrey H. Harrell, '16law, Ada attorney, former member of the University Board of Regents and former president of the Alumni Association; and Dr. Ray Balyeat, '16ma, Oklahoma City physician and nationally known authority on hay fever treatment.



## Board Nominations Made

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ording to word received from Carl Taylor, '28ba, '29ma, secretary.

Changes in Advisory Council memberships have been announced as follows by Alumni Executive Secretary Ted Beaird:

Hubert A. Paton, '23eng, has been appointed chairman of the council at Seattle, Washington, succeeding Charles Ittner, '30 eng.

R. R. Rush, '32, and Virgil O. Harris, '30 eng, have been appointed to the council at Gladewater, Texas.

Three new members of the council at Kansas City, Kansas, are Miss Ruth Killebrew, '36lib.sc, Miss Marion Frances Weber, '31h.ec, and Knowlton Carson, '32ba.

Three new members of the Austin, Texas, council are Charles E. Green, '25, Dr. Thomas W. Currie, '03, and Dr. Fred M. Bullard, '21geol, '27ms.

Howard P. Hinde, '40ms, has been appointed chairman of the New Haven, Connecticut, Advisory Council. Marjorie Harriett Hays, '25ba, has resigned as chairman at New Haven, but will continue a member of the council.

Jack I. Laudermilk, '34ba, '38eng, is now chairman of the Advisory Council at Austin, Texas.

Dr. Joseph Henke, Jr., '37med, of Hydro, has resigned as a member of the Caddo County Council.

Harold L. Springer, '37bus, '39law, of Sulphur, is now chairman of the Murray County Council, succeeding Ewing Sadler, '38ba, '38law, who has moved to Washington, D.C.

A new member of the Murray County Council is Miss Betty Coe Armstrong, '39 drama, of Sulphur.

Mrs. R. W. Kimbro, (Ann Ragsdale, '34 bus), has been appointed to the council at Cleburn, Texas.

Dr. Richard D. Roys, '39med, formerly chairman of the council at Seattle, Washington, has moved to Tacoma, Washington.