

# Sooner Scene

## "OPERATION MOONSHOOTER" IS AN AMBITIOUS EXPERIMENT GROWN UP INTO A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT IN KEEPING AMERICA'S ALUMNI INFORMED

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WHAT is the University of Oklahoma like to-day? How has it changed in recent years? How does it compare with other universities throughout the country? Will my children be admitted when they are ready for a college education? What effect does the University of Oklahoma really have on the economic and cultural development of the Southwest?

These questions are asked daily by university graduates. Alumni are a great source of strength to colleges and universities in America because of the interest reflected by such questions. One obvious conclusion, therefore, is that the Alumni Association, itself, has as a most important responsibility the dissemination of accurate and up-to-date information about higher education.

A great deal of time, effort and money are spent in perfecting our means of communicating with alumni. Through the *Sooner Magazine*, *Sooner News-Makers* and other special publications, we believe that we do a reasonably good job. However, there is always room for improvement and with this in mind, the *Sooner Magazine*, under the editorship of David A. Burr, attained a standard of excellence unexcelled in the alumni publishing field. High quality continues to be our goal.

For several years the editors of alumni publications discussed the possibility of overcoming the handicap of meager budgets by combining their talents to produce a major article on higher education and to make it available as a supplement to all alumni magazines. It was believed that such articles, well-written, would be of equal interest to alumni of all colleges.

In January of 1957, 14 editors met in New York to initiate such a program. It was to be a voluntary co-operative project. David Burr attended this meeting as did alumni editors from the Universities of Chicago, Harvard, Emory, Johns Hopkins,

New Hampshire, Brown, Dartmouth, Pennsylvania, California, Phillips Academy, Andover, Ohio State, Columbia and the American Alumni Council. These editors represented a circulation of 250,000.

They agreed at this initial meeting to work together in producing a special report on American Higher Education. This report, broad in scope, was to present the challenges and opportunities of higher education in America. To save money the supplement was to be printed in one place and copies furnished to participating schools for inclusion in their regular magazines.

The editorial effort was further identified by the editors by calling it "Operation Moonshooter." The article was so successful that in April, 1958, it appeared in 153 alumni magazines representing a circulation of 1,350,000 individuals. The following year a special report was prepared by the *Moonshooter* volunteer editors on the "College Teacher." The teacher article really put the *Moonshooter* in orbit. Two hundred fifty colleges with a circulation of 2,250,000 alumni used the 1959 report.

The third report, which appears in this issue of the *Sooner Magazine* will be carried by 350 schools representing a circulation of more than 3,000,000 copies. The membership of the editorial group has changed from time to time but the main objective remains the same.

With the increase in circulation and in the number of schools participating, it became apparent that a formal organization should be created and a competent full-time editor employed. Therefore, during the past year the editors formed the Editorial Projects for Education, Inc. The editorial board employed Corbin Gwaltney, a prominent editor among the original group, to be full-time editor and executive director. Mr. Gwaltney resigned his position as editor of the Johns Hopkins Univer-

sity magazine to assume these duties.

The present members of the EPE are representative of the great diversity of interests among colleges and universities of America. The institutions represented are Arkansas, Baylor, Brown, California, Columbia, Dartmouth, Emory, Harvard Business School, Lehigh, New Hampshire, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Phillips Academy, St. John's New York, Stanford, Washington University. The president and president-elect of the American Alumni Council are also members.

Officers and members of the executive council of EPE are David A. Burr, University of Oklahoma, president; Robert L. Payton, Washington University, vice-president; Charles E. Widmayer, Dartmouth College, secretary and treasurer; Jean D. Linehan, American Alumni Council, and Verne Stadtman, University of California.

Better-organized with a full-time staff, the EPE has been able to broaden its interests. Under the able leadership of Reba Wilcoxon, editor of the fine *Arkansas Alumnus* magazine, a series of articles by writers of international prominence have been prepared and made available to alumni magazine editors for use in their regular publications. The first of the series, written by Bertrand Russell, appeared in the March issue of the *Sooner Magazine*. This will be followed by an article by Margaret Mead, the anthropologist, and an article by Edward Stone, the architect who designed the United States pavilion at the Brussels' World Fair, the Tulsa Civic Center, the Huntington Hartford Museum in New York City and many other architectural achievements. The articles are copyrighted; they are reserved for use by alumni magazines and are being written for an alumni audience exclusively. The EPE activities are supported by sales of the magazine supplements and by a grant received from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The Moonshooter idea will continue to make a valuable contribution to the alumni publications for as long as there continues to be a free exchange of ideas and generous participation in the project by the leading editors. In this way it truly represents the interests of the institutions and the alumni groups which it serves.

I believe this issue is a good product. Carol Robinson has done an excellent job in supplementing the *Moonshooter* material with statements which bring the points home to Oklahoma alumni. I hope every graduate of the University of Oklahoma will have an opportunity to read this magazine from cover to cover.