

## Class of 1912

# Fifty Years After



This old yearbook shot brought back a flood of memories for the reunited Sooner Class of 1912.

**T**HE year was 1912—Oklahoma had been a state just five years; the University of Oklahoma was celebrating its twentieth birthday and the graduation of 135 lively seniors destined to cut quite a swath in the world beyond the Norman campus.

The campus stood alone at the far south end of Norman. Administration Hall, now known as Evans Hall, had just been completed; the engineering lab had been built in 1910, and the Carnegie Building and science hall dated back to 1904. Down the rutted, tree-lined dirt roads and across the acres of grassland bordering the University, coeds of the day walked to morning chapel in their long skirts, crisp white waists and high button shoes.

A local merchant urged students to visit their friends who had electrically lighted rooms to compare the quality of such light with the messy, flickering oil or gas lamps.

Campus organizations were multiplying rapidly with seven new clubs formed in 1912 as well as the establishment of the O.U. chapter of Sigma Chi fraternity. The Ben Franklin Club, predecessor of O.U.'s Sigma Delta Chi journalism chapter, included in its membership such 1912 alumni as Earl Foster, 1911-12 editor of *The Umpire*, twice weekly student newspaper; Ray Homer Haun, who after graduation became a member of the *Daily Oklahoman* advertising department, and Ed Minter, who first joined the reporting staff of the old *Oklahoma News* and later became a publisher in New Mexico. But the literary societies were the most popular clubs.

Even beyond the campus community times were good. Wilson was campaigning for his first term as president; countries across the oceans were still remote; World

War I—the war to end all wars—was six years away.

Fifty years after, in 1962, more than half of the 75 living members of the Class of 1912 returned to O.U. to celebrate their Golden Anniversary during commencement weekend. The campus to which they returned bears little resemblance to the infant institution of the early 1900's. When progressive thinkers in 1912 began planning for an expanding campus, they envisioned a program styled on the old quadrangle plan, and, had it actually been effected, the campus would have been bounded by Jenkins on the east, College on the West, Brooks on the South and Boyd on the north—less than half the present campus area. As the campus is today, University facilities in the Norman area are spread from the North Base to the South Base with ever increasing demands for more and more space. The corn fields that once grew between the houses on fraternity and sorority row have been cleared for University buildings. And the Greek houses themselves are being moved away from the main campus area into a section of their own.

Discussions of all these changes and endless reminiscences dominated the reunion festivities for the Class of 1912, held in the Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education—the sparkling new addition to the campus that in itself is larger than the entire O.U. campus 50 years ago.

Those attending the reunion events included Lora Rinehart Barr, Long Beach, California; Dr. Clarence K. Jones, Chicago, Illinois; Pearl Teaster White, Newton, Iowa; Charles W. Hamilton, Upper Montclair, New Jersey; Edwin D. Minter, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Ray Homer Haun, New Rochelle, New York; P. D.

Erwin, Chandler; Arthur C. Schultz, Chickasha; Homer Lee Johnson, Duncan; Emmett D. Graham, Lexington; Victor E. Monnett and Lewis S. Salter (reunion co-chairman), Ina Johnson Kidd and Mr. and Mrs. Paul A. Walker, all of Norman; Beatrice von Keller Bretsch, Merle Newby Buttram, Earl Foster, Mabel Thacker Hobson, Bertha Oliver Holt, Eva Lee, H. D. Canfield, Jerry E. Newby, Charles L. Orr, Floyd E. Proffitt, Lena Trout Sapper, Earl Welch and Floyd Wheeler, all of Oklahoma City; Thurman S. Hurst, Pawnee; Roy Lee Wilkinson, Sapulpa; J. Morgan Bush, Tonkawa; Elva McFerron Gittinger, Nannie Lee Miller and Henry Grady Ross, all of Tulsa; Eva May Clifton Woods, Verden; Col. Reuben G. Lewis, Dallas, Texas; Lucile Kathryn Bell, Gainesville, Texas; Robert Earl Baker, Houston, Texas; Harry M. Bennett, San Antonio, Texas, and Lawrence E. Trout, Wichita Falls, Texas. Also present at the reunion was Mrs. Julian C. Monnet, 1912 class mother.

**A**LTHOUGH the honor alumni enjoyed dwelling on the past at their reunion meetings, they also gave serious thought to the University's future. As their contribution to its advancement, they presented two proposals to the University. The first was a suggestion that O.U. investigate the advisability of adopting a trimester system to better utilize existing University facilities and help stem rising costs of college education. The second proposal was designed to help students meet those rising costs. In commemoration of 1962 as their Golden Anniversary year, the members of the Class of 1912 pledged to raise \$6,200 as a scholarship or fellowship fund to be administered by the Alumni Development Fund as a class memorial.