



NEWSLETTER

## SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF GREEK HOUSING

*Volume 4, Summer, 2000*



### **Irwin Family Foundation's \$1.75 Million Gift Creates Academic Center for Student Athletes at U of I**

The former Sigma Pi chapter house which has also at times been home to Sigma Kappa, Delta Kappa Epsilon and lastly Kappa Alpha Psi at 402 E. Armory, Champaign, has become the new state of the art Irwin Academic Center. It is the first time academic resources for student-athletes have been in one place and centered on campus close to where students live and go to class.

The building, originally constructed as the Sigma Pi chapter house, in the 1920s has been extensively remodeled to house the academic center. The house was designed in 1920 by Joseph William Royer, who graduated from the University of Illinois in 1895 with a degree in architectural engineering and was the Urbana city engineer from 1898 to 1906. Royer was noted locally for his

Tudor Revival buildings three of which are or have been Greek chapter houses on this campus and one of which is presently Jumer's Hotel in Urbana, IL.

In the fall of 1999 the Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County gave the renovated Irwin Center an award for excellence in renovation. SPGH would like to add its kudos to the Irwin Center for saving an important part of the university's Greek heritage in a sensitive manner, thusly breathing new life into an historic structure and improving the fabric of the campus visual scene.

### **Documenting Delta Tau Delta: U of I's Oldest Fraternity**

In 1909, Iowa native Fred E. Berger entered the university of Illinois to study architecture. Shortly thereafter, he joined the Delta Tau Delta fraternity and, over the course of his student days, recorded his experiences in a scrapbook filled with mementos, photographs, dance programs, and news clippings concerning his fraternity activities. Berger's collection offers an invaluable glimpse into Uof I student life in the early twentieth century, but only a "snapshot" of Delta Tau Delta's 128-year history at Illinois.

In 1872, five years after the founding of the Illinois Industrial University (renamed Uof I in 1885), the Beta Upsilon chapter of Delta Tau Delta was organized in secret as the first fraternity on campus. In fact, the national fraternity, established in 1858, had pioneered the Greek system on a number of campuses, including Penn State (1872), Michigan State (1872), and Iowa State (1875). By 1876, the Delts' presence at the Uof I was discovered by suspicious administrators who forced the chapter to withdraw its charter and go "underground." From 1881-91, the university administration required students to sign a "Iron Clad Pledge" in which they promised not to join any secret society.

Three years after the ban on "secret" societies was lifted, the Delta Tau Delta chapter openly reinstated its charter.

Despite its significance, Delta Tau Delta's history is not well documented in the University Archives. In addition to

the Berger scrapbook, the Archives holds limited copies of the chapter newsletter, *Beta Upsilon Booster*, (1911-43, 1966). Additional information must be gleaned from University faculty and administrative papers, student newspapers, UI histories, I-Books, Illios and student directories. In many instances, these sources fall short in documenting the contributions of fraternity and sorority chapters.

To provide a more comprehensive historical record, the *Society for the Preservation of Greek Housing (SPGH)* is sponsoring a **fraternity and sorority chapter history project**. Beginning this summer, the project will fund a graduate research assistant to write chapter histories for all Uof I social fraternities and sororities, past and present. SPGH member's histories will take first priority. These histories will be deposited in the Archives as well as with the chapter.

## THE BABES OF BETA UPSILON



Jordan Miller Kelso Purcell Bullock Berger Lonnsbury Chambers

HERE'S THE STORY OF THEIR LIVES

**Please assist us** in locating and identifying historical records from your chapter which may not already be in the Archives. In working with us, it is our strong hope that your chapter will deposit their inactive archives with the Uof I Archives, but we are willing to return items after making a copy to update the current holdings of the Archives. SPGH and the University Archives' Student Life and Culture Program look forward to working with you to ensure that your chapter's accomplishments are long remembered. For more information, please contact: Ellen Swain, Archivist for Student Life/Culture, Archives Research Center, 1707 S. Orchard, Urbana, IL 61801, (phone 217/333-7841, or e-mail [eswain@uiuc.edu](mailto:eswain@uiuc.edu) ).

#### **CHI OMEGA Remodel-Your Gain?**

This summer Chi Omega is remodeling their kitchen. This is the equipment they are selling. Perhaps your kitchen could use something from theirs.

1. Hobart Q-series 3-door refrigerator-\$800.
2. Hobart Q-series 2-door freezer-\$500
3. Prep counter/sink stainless steel 10'x28"- \$250
4. Sink with drainboard, two compartment, stainless 6'x28"- \$200
5. Prep counter, stainless 9'x44"- \$200
6. Blodgett full-size gas convection oven-\$500
7. Prep counter, stainless, open under, 36"x72"- \$150
8. Exhaust canopy, galvanized, 42"x10"- \$500
9. Dish table, L-shaped soiled with scrap sink, 8'x30"- \$500
10. Hobart AM9T2 door-type dishwasher-\$600
11. Dish table, clean side 5'x30"- \$250

Interested people can contact Rona Maroney at 217/356-2977 or e-mail [rimaroney@earthlink.net](mailto:rimaroney@earthlink.net).



#### **DELTS COME BACK FROM ACROSS CAMPUS TO JOHN STREET IN CHAMPAIGN!**

The Beta Upsilon chapter will be moving back to within a block of their original chapter house site this Fall when the renovation of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house at 401 East John Street in Champaign will become the U of I Delts newest home. The Delts at Illinois have had several "temporary" homes in other parts of the U of I campus since their original chapter house was destroyed by fire in the '60s. A grand opening is anticipated sometime near the end of September. SPGH has taken several pictures of the boarded up exterior of the Phi Gam house and we anticipate showing you the "before" in this newsletter and the "after" in a

following one. The University of Illinois is confirming it's support of the entire Greek system at Illinois by selling the Phi Gamma Delta chapter house to another fraternity. We all owe them our thank you. And we look forward to the Beta Upsilon chapter's continued rich history at the University of Illinois in their new home on John Street.

### **A NEW GREEK DEAN AT ILLINOIS**

This spring Craig Jackson, Assistant Dean , Greek Affairs, retired to take another position at the university. A search committee has been interviewing candidates and hopes to have someone in the position as I write. Good luck to the search committee.



### **NEW POST BOX NUMBER**

The post office where SPGH has it's box is moving July 10, 2000 to a new facility on Green Street so, of course, our box number will have to change. The new post box number is **2764**. Please take note. Thank you.

## **SPGH**

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