CHAPTER 4

1936 to 1947

Historians: Hattie Kelly Thomas, A; Louise Neely Stewart, YY



Hattie Virginia Kelly Thomas, A

Dear Pearl:

The 1936 convention began unofficially when Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, *national editor; Dorothy Williamson Crook,* NN, *registrar; and Louise Stewart,* YY, *chaplain; met in front of the famous Zephyr in Chicago's Union Station. But the fourth member of this group, Evelyn G. Bell,* ΠΠ, *vice president, was nowhere in sight.*

It began to appear as though the train would be well into Wisconsin before Miss Bell could change from the Michigan Avenue station to the Union — in 20 minutes. But miracles do happen. The renowned Zephyr, never late and always leaving on the dot, was actually held 10 minutes to accommodate the "tall blonde" whom the Burlington representative ascertained had arrived somewhere in Chicago at least.

In Minneapolis the women were greeted by a Northern Pacific official, who transferred them to the Greyhound Bus Line. The bus was waiting and had been waiting until the less-renowned passengers were definitely in the comment-making stage. It was expected that Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, *president; Elizabeth Bird Small,* ΠΠ, *finance chairman; and Polly Smelser Schlosser,* BB, *treasurer, would already be there.*

The bus continued to wait in its hot shed while frantic telephone calls were made in the Twin Cities. The absentees were located finally at the St. Paul station and arrangements were made to meet them at a gas station in Minneapolis. The bus started — to the relief of the cross and hot passengers — and reached the gas station. Just as the weary driver was pulling away from the station, into view came the promised taxi.

Amid cheers, the three, with their luggage, were stowed away in the crowded bus where the seven Alpha Sigma Alphas took turns using the seats available for them during the three-hour trip to Pequot. With their three or four bags each, plus the usual typewriters, the hungry, disheveled group eventually reached the hotel where the first arrival, Leona Wilcox, Π, *secretary, welcomed them.*

Fondly,

Hattie Kelly Thomas, A

Historian, 1932-1938

1936 to 1937

Sorority heads "up north"

A special car from Chicago and all other known means of conveyance transported the Alpha Sigma Alphas to Pequot, Minn., for the 1936 national convention. Five miles from there, at Breezy Point Lodge on Big Pelican Lake, they spent Aug. 17 to 21.

As the delegates arrived for breakfast on Monday morning, it was reported that:

ALMOST EVERYONE
Had wrinkles in her clothes.
Had knees that shook.
Wanted a swim.
Looked like someone you knew.
Knew one song.
Wanted a new piece of jewelry.

and that:
WE ALL;
Had huge appetites.
Envied Kappa Kappa's report.
Had at least one beauty queen.
Liked our convention headquarters.
Envied Mrs. Sharp for her poise.

Small pelicans were the symbols on the 1936 convention badges, made in the same style as those of the two preceding conventions. Programs were bright red, tied in white, with a white ribbon run beneath the coat-of-arms on the cover.

Although business sessions continued for five days, there were ample opportunities between them for delegates and visitors to meet and get to know one another.

Included among the many special events were the sectional dinner and program the first evening; the alphabet luncheon where members sat with those of their own last initial; the sports dinner, songfest and minstrel show of the following day; Wednesday's national officer luncheon; the sports carnival; the college night dinner; conventions past dinner and Alpha Sigma Alpha's Pageant of Progress on Thursday; and the installation of officers tea on the lawn and formal banquet of the final day, Friday.

At the Wednesday luncheon a convention custom was begun of having councilors act as hostesses to delegates who held or had held the chapter offices they supervised. Decorations appropriate to each office were found on each table.

At the conventions past dinner, guests were seated at tables according to the number of conventions they had attended. Programs bore block prints of designs reminiscent of the first conventions attended by the delegates. The pageant after it was written and directed by Thelma Stortz, KK, and showed episodes in the sorority's history.

"I worked on the paper."

At the 1936 convention, ΑΣΑ Antics came forth as a three-column paper, still mimeographed, but legibly and neatly, and with printed headings. Under the leadership of Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, national editor, the staff worked into the wee hours for each issue. In fact, on returning to Chicago, when one of its staff was asked why she looked as if she

National council 1936-1938

President
Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ

Vice president
Dorothy Williamson Crook, NN

Secretary
Esther Bucher, HH

Treasurer
Polly Smelser Schlosser, BB

Registrar
Mary Mae Paul, TT

Chaplain
Louise Neely Stewart, YY

Finance chairman
Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ

Extension officer
S. June Smith, KK

Phoenix editor
Genevieve Steele Leib, XX

needed two vacations, she had only to reply, "I worked on the paper."

All the knitters had finished their dresses in time to roll into the convention luggage, so it was recorded in the Antics that there were "Plenty of Knits, and plenty of Wits — But no Nitwits — (we hope)." Another episode recorded by this famous sheet was the way to eliminate an adviser from one's harassing moments.

Leontine Rylko, Mu Mu delegate, who had the opening prayer one morning, absent-mindedly locked Miss Musolf in her room before leaving for the meeting. By the time the hotel answered that lady's S.O.S., the prayer was over.

Significant legislation of the 1936 convention may be summarized as follows:

1. Since the opinions of two different lawyers on incorporation conflicted, it was voted that the sorority rescind its original motion of 1934 to incorporate and table the matter until it should be decided to reconsider it.
2. It was decided that the time was not appropriate for a national philanthropic project, and that chapters should be encouraged to work through local projects.
3. The ritual used in the memorial service at the 1936 convention was adopted as the national ritual for that service.
4. Slight changes were made in the arrangements for sorority examinations, the most notable being the elimination of the second- and third-year examinations in favor of a program of sorority study outlined by the national chairman.

Attendance at the Breezy Point convention was officially listed as national council: nine; national committee chairmen: three; collegiate chapter advisers: five; collegiate chapter delegates: 24; alumnae chapter delegates: 15; visiting members: 42; for a total of 98.

The special Pullman was waiting on the Pequot siding that Friday evening, or rather Saturday morning — Pequot was one of those middle-of-the-night stops — for the tired but still noisy Alpha Sigma Alphas. In assorted costumes ranging from formals to pajamas, they piled themselves into uppers, lowers and aisles.

One little delegate had to enter via the milk car, with the cans of the Minnesota farmers, because by the time she said that last farewell to the nice college boy bellhop, the train had moved so that another train hindered the usual means of passenger entrance.

The last picture that came to the weary councilors who stood on the station platform was that of the transportation manager, Carol Pierce, ΓΓ, being scooped up by the strong arms of an obliging brakeman. The train left a half-second sooner than Travel Bureau Carol had anticipated.

Tribute to the founders

Shortly after the 1936 convention, Alpha Sigma Alphas from coast to coast joined in spirit to pay tribute to the five founders of the sorority Nov. 14. To commemorate the 35th anniversary of the sorority's founding, a lovely marble bench and birdbath were unveiled on the campus of the Farmville, Va., State Teachers College.

On the platform adjacent to the memorial were two of the founders, Louise Cox Carper and Juliette Hundley Gilliam; Dr. Joseph Jarman, president of the college; Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, national president; and Susan Lane, president of Alpha Chapter.

It was impressive indeed to see the entire membership of Alpha Chapter, dressed in white, group themselves as a unit to the left of the memorial and sing the opening song, "Faith of Our Founders." Susan Lane then introduced Evelyn Bell, who outlined the responsibilities and possibilities vested in Alpha Sigma Alpha.

"It is with feelings of deep humility and reverence that I share in the commemoration of the memorial to the five founders of the Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority," said Evelyn Bell.

"On this 35th anniversary of the founding of our sorority on the Farmville campus, we see the past in retrospect, we are more keenly conscious of the present, and we look toward the future with its even greater opportunities for service. ...

"We, of Alpha Sigma Alpha, can pay no greater tribute to the founders of our sorority than our tribute to 35 years of memorable history, which they made possible. They founded Alpha Sigma Alpha on the ideals which were inspiring; they founded Alpha Sigma Alpha on standards which were timeless; they founded Alpha Sigma Alpha with a purpose which was challenging — and years, 35 years, have proved the strength of that foundation. ...

"Today as we meet here to honor the five girls who were responsible for the founding of Alpha Sigma Alpha, we would also pay tribute to the alma mater of our Alpha Chapter for whom we have a deep and abiding affection.

"It is significant that Farmville, officially known as the mother of the teachers college, should also be the birthplace of four national sororities. ... So on behalf of Alpha Sigma Alpha, we dedicate this memorial to the founders of our sorority, to Virginia Lee Boyd, Juliette Jefferson Hundley, Mary Williamson Hundley, Louise Burks Cox and Calva Hamlet Watson.

"We would also rededicate ourselves to carry forward in the spirit of our founders that Alpha Sigma Alpha may continue to live and grow in meaning and in service to its members and to society as a whole. We present this memorial to Dr. [Joseph] Jarman, president of the Farmville State Teachers College, with the hope that it may symbolize Alpha Sigma Alpha's ever present desire to keep faith with her founders as well as with the place of her founding."

Nancy Burgwyn, A — daughter of the late Louise Baskerville Burgwyn Morris, an early Alpha — unveiled the memorial and revealed the bench that bears this inscription:

ALPHA SIGMA ALPHA
founded
November 15, 1901
State Normal School
Farmville, Virginia
Erected 1936

FOUNDERS
Virginia Lee Boyd
Juliette J. Hundley
Mary W. Hundley
Louise Burks Cox
Calva Hamlet Watson



To commemorate the 35th anniversary of the sorority's founding, a marble birdbath and bench were presented to Longwood College Nov. 14, 1936.

And in the world ...

Dec. 21, 1937
Disney releases "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," the first animated feature film.

Kraft macaroni and cheese is available at supermarkets. That same year the supermarket shopping cart makes its debut. Coincidence?

In accepting the memorial on behalf of the college, Dr. Jarman mentioned that he had been installed as president only three months after Alpha Sigma Alpha had been organized.

After Dr. Jarman's talk, the program was concluded with the Alpha Sigma Alpha Creed and the song first chosen by the founders as theirs: "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

A tea and a banquet completed the celebration. Also at the ceremony were Margaret Patterson Martz; Edna Elcan Jones, first grand president, and her two daughters of Alpha, Mary and Pauline, Mildred Booker Dillard, Alice Baskerville, Mary Berkley Nelson, Ruth Ford, Dorothy Legare, Mary Elizabeth Alexander, Cornelia Quarles, Susie Webb, Martha Wells Catlin, Mattie Smith Sydnor, Katherine Watkins, Jancy Dodd Smith, Dorothy Justis, Sallie Perrow and Katherine Young.

Chi Chi reinstalled

On Dec. 12, 1936, installation services were held in Muncie, Ind., for the new Chi Chi Chapter, which had been pledged the preceding May. Installing officers were Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, president, and Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, national editor.

1937 to 1938

Council convenes in Chicago

Aug. 14-17, 1937, the national council met at the Drake Hotel, Chicago. Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, president, reporting on the general condition of the sorority, described it as "Not good and yet not bad. ... Our alumnae membership is responding to stimulation ... we may indeed be proud of the gradual growth of our alumnae organization. ...

"For many years Alpha Sigma Alpha has been desirous of having an active interest in a philanthropic project. This year ... in cooperation with the Assistance League, Alpha Sigma Alpha is sponsoring a camp for underprivileged girls. The national sorority has contributed $300 to this undertaking and members of Xi Xi Chapter are acting as volunteer counselors. ..."

Evelyn Bell also reported that for the first time since the reorganization, the national editor has had the assistance of a national alumnae chairman.

Continuing the policy of encouraging alumnae attendance at national conventions by financial aid, national council decided that any alumnae chapter chartered in the interim between conventions would be eligible to hotel expenses for one accredited delegate if it had paid at least $10 in life membership fees during that period.

Naming chapters

Other significant business during the national council meeting that August included how future chapters should be named. Since the entire Greek alphabet had been used for chapter names using the double-letter system, and the Miami convention had ruled that only the reorganization chapters should bear the letter Alpha, the council decreed that the next

chapter should be christened Beta Gamma, and each subsequent chapter bear the letter Beta followed by the Greek letter next after that received by the last chapter installed.

AES, NPC meet

Two meetings held that fall were of great significance for Alpha Sigma Alpha. The Association of Education Sororities and the National Panhellenic Congress both met Oct. 14-16.

From NPC came the statement: "The Committee on Eligibility and Nationalization of Social Groups agree not to enter fields already occupied by the Association of Education Sororities, and agree to consider as the field of the Association of Education Sororities the institutions accredited by the American Association of Teachers Colleges."

Further, "The Committee on Eligibility and Nationalization of Social Groups recommends that NPC go on record as approving a cooperative, nongoverning affiliation with the Women's Professional Panhellenic Association, the Association of Education Sororities, and similar National Associations in the collegiate field. It is recommended that the objective of such an affiliation be to further the welfare of fraternity women by giving greater emphasis and more widespread recognition to fraternity standards, and safeguard and point the direction of future fraternity life in the education system.

"It is further recommended that the Committee on Eligibility and Nationalization of Social Groups be authorized to complete details of such an organization and report same to the next Panhellenic Congress."

Beta Gamma, Beta Delta installed

The fall of 1937 also marked the installation, on Nov. 20, of Beta Gamma Chapter, Northeastern State Teachers College at Tahlequah, Okla. Polly Smelser Schlosser, BB, treasurer, and Esther Bucher, HH, secretary, were in charge of the ceremonies.

Another chapter joined Beta Gamma on the Alpha Sigma Alpha roll May 21, 1938, when Sigma Beta Sorority of Mississippi Southern College in Hattiesburg became Beta Delta Chapter. Polly Schlosser was the installing officer.

1938 to 1939


Louise Neely Stewart, YY

Dear Pearl:

The 15th national convention was held "in the Western way" in Yellowstone National Park Aug. 22-26, 1938. In spite of headquarters being at the Lake Hotel, before the week ended, Canyon and Old Faithful hotels had also been used. Easterners, arriving at Cody, Wyo., had luncheon at the inn there, and after experiencing the splendor of the Cody Road Shoshone Canyon, reached the Lake Hotel in time for dinner.

The arrival was definitely in the grand manner, for only those who have seen Alpha Sigmas arrive en masse know the deluge that suddenly descends upon the bellboys, elevator operators and hotel clerks. The various impediments having been sought, claimed and stowed away, everyone was more than ready for the sectional dinner supervised by Tau Tau.

Fondly,
Louise N. Stewart, YY
Historian, 1938-1958

Sectional dinner kicks off convention

Alpha Sigma Alphas descended on Yellowstone National Park for convention Aug. 22-26, 1938. Everyone gathered that first evening for the sectional dinner.

The Eastern Seaboard, South, East Central, South Central, Midwest and Western Divisions vied with each other in their attractive decorations appropriate to the section. The Southerners had a plantation and cotton; the Westerners, a Mexican atmosphere. The South Central group featured Indians and wild West shows, while the East Central contingent reminded everyone of the 150th anniversary celebration of the founding of the Northwest Territory a la covered wagons.

The Indianapolis speedway lured the central states' inhabitants; and the Easterners portrayed a factory evidently the communal seat of Boston Beans, Pittsburgh Steel and Plate Glass, and Philadelphia Textile.

A quick change to correct garb, and all were ready for Denver's Ranch Round-up where guests were divided for dances by the signs of various ranches.

Galloping in the halls

In spite of such a strenuous opening day, nearly everyone was up for the early morning pledge service. It will be remembered, however, that Paul Revere had nothing on the Alpha Sigma Alphas. Mary Margaret Schroer, MM, and Margaret Houston, ΠΠ, galloped down the halls and awakened everyone. Betty Jo Coulter was repledged to Eta Eta Chapter, making this ceremony more than a model service.

Continuing the special events was the special Western luncheon at Lake Lodge. Place cards were pieces of bark and guests were seated alphabetically.

Preceding the dance that evening was the "rush party dinner" at which Eta Eta, Alpha Beta, Pi Pi, Alpha Gamma, Gamma Gamma, Kappa Kappa and Chi Chi chapters "rushed" the remainder of the convention. Unique table decorations were of types that might later be used for campus rush parties. The entertainment pooled by the rushing groups also was fertile with ideas for the future.

Continuing the custom begun at the 1936 convention, at the next day's luncheon each national councilor was hostess to her present or former understudies at a specially decorated table.

The memorial service, a college night dinner in the football style and model initiation were other events on Wednesday. For the first time in many years, no pledges found it possible to reach Yellowstone for their initiation. Hence, Virginia Wells, BΓ, and Ruth Martin, BΔ, delegates from the newest chapters, acted as initiates.

The following day, from breakfast until the formal banquet, conventioneers explored the park. They lunched at the Grand Canyon Hotel and arrived at the Old Faithful Inn just in time for the eruption of the famous geyser. Irons were at a premium as formals were hurriedly unpacked and everyone dashed for the last "big" event. "Without constancy there is neither love nor friendship," read the toast program, whose theme was "faithfulness."

The farewell event was a "boots and saddle luncheon," where place cards were hand-painted cowboys with trousers of real fur. Members of the national council for 1938-1941 were installed at the service immediately afterward.

With bags bulging with convention souvenirs — including copies of ΑΣΑ Antics, the convention newspaper — the various delegates then doffed their badges and set out for their usual worlds via park buses and the evening train.

Badges for this convention, though no more attractive than previously, were a bit more sophisticated. The white name card on a red back bore a printed Alpha Sigma Alpha pin, while ribbons of the delegate's symbolic color had printed in gold "15th Biennial Convention, Alpha Sigma Alpha," and "Yellowstone National Park, Aug. 22-26, 1938."

And most conspicuous in the souvenir loot was the official program, covered with shiny red paper bearing a small coat-of-arms stamped in gold and tied with white cord.

Triennial conventions

Though fellowship is always an important objective of any convention, there is always important business to be transacted, and 1938 had its share. The most significant convention action was the decision to change to a three-year plan, embracing a triennial national convention with inspections and province conventions at three-year intervals in the interim.

A step for which the sorority had long waited and now could take financially was that of

National council 1938-1941

President
Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ

Vice president
Esther Bucher, HH

Secretary
Thelma Stortz Moyer, KK

Treasurer
Polly Smelser Schlosser, BB

Registrar
Mary May Paul, TT

Education director
Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ

Phoenix editor
Genevieve Steele Leib, XX

And in the world ...

June 25, 1938
The first minimum wage is set at 25 cents per hour. It mandates a 44-hour work week.

And in the world ...

Oct. 25, 1939
Nylon stockings are sold in the United States.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt moves Thanksgiving from the last Thursday in November to the third Thursday in an attempt to boost sales during the Christmas retail season. In 1941, Congress changes the date to the fourth Thursday.

making one member of the national council a full-time, paid officer.

It was decided that she should be known as the education director, with duties "to promote chapter development, supervise college inspections and alumnae chapter visits, act as extension officer, supervise the college chapter officers of collegiate representative and chaplain, investigate and recommend the philanthropic activities of the sorority, act as AES representative, and represent the sorority at other fraternal and educational conferences." Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, was the sorority's first education director.

Alumnae committee work was divided between an alumnae editor, charged with collecting alumnae news, and an alumnae organizer to work with the vice president and education director to promote the general alumnae welfare. Changes necessary to care for these innovations were made in the national constitution and bylaws.

Beta Epsilon installed

The next year, 1939, featured Alpha Sigma Alpha events in varied sections of the United States. On April 23, Psi Psi Chapter dedicated its new lodge at Natchitoches, La. On May 13, attention focused on Harrisonburg, Va., where Beta Epsilon Sorority was installed as Beta Epsilon Chapter. National officers present were Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, president, and Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, education director.

A few days later, May 20, the local sorority Delta Phi at Ypsilanti, Mich., merged with Mu Mu Chapter. Evelyn Bell was in charge of the ceremonies at which 41 alumnae and 10 collegiate members of Delta Phi were initiated into Alpha Sigma Alpha.



In 1939, Minnie M. Shockley, ΓΓ, celebrated 30 years as a teacher at Northwestern State College in Alva, Okla. She served nationally as ritualist, 1917-1922; vice president, 1922-1930; and AES representative, 1930-1932.

1939 to 1940

Gamma Gamma honors Minnie Shockley

While all campuses were busy with thoughts of football and homecomings, warm congratulations went from many Alpha Sigma Alphas to Northwestern State College at Alva, Okla. On Nov. 18, Gamma Gamma Chapter honored its own Minnie M. Shockley on her 30th anniversary as a teacher at Northwestern. Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, education director, represented the national council.

A letter dated April 5, 1940, announced to the sorority's membership the affiliation of Alpha Sigma Alpha with the Women's Professional Panhellenic Association. This in no way altered the classification of Alpha Sigma Alpha. The national council took the action with the expectation that another avenue for growth and service might be furnished.

Regionals a reality

The five long-planned for, long-awaited regional meetings also highlighted 1940. Nearly 100 Westerners opened the series with an enthusiastic gathering at Denver's Cosmopolitan Hotel April 6-7. Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, Mary Mae Paul, TT, Polly Smelser Schlosser, BB, and Marie Brunsman Berry, AB, represented the national councilors and committee chairmen.

The Los Angeles delegation, which drove 2,600 miles to attend, demonstrated that it required more than Colorado mountain snows to keep real Alpha Sigma Alphas from such events.

The following weekend, April 13-14, 110 enthusiastic members gathered at the Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. This region was honored by the attendance of Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, president, and a carload of Indianapolis alumnae, including Genevieve Steele Lieb, XX, national editor, and Marie Rauh Kingdon, XX, Cleveland regional director.

National council met the week of July 15 at Lake Wawasee, Ind. Like true disciples of "progressive education," the council termed this conference a "workshop" in which plans for the new sorority year were formulated. Included among these was the magazine subscription service.

And in the world ...

1940
The first xerographic (copy) machine is designed.

The Rh factor in human blood is discovered.

1940 to 1941

Members meet at regionals

On a beautiful fall weekend, 105 Alpha Sigma Alphas convened Oct. 5-6 at the Hotel Muehlebach, Kansas City, Mo. Region III claimed the presence of two national councilors — Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, and Esther Bucher, HH — and two national chairmen — Nell Martindale Kuchs, ΦΦ, and Helen Block Bradley, ΠΠ.

Minnie Shockley, ΓΓ, Ethel Hook, AB, and advisers of the college chapters in the region were special guests. Deans of Women from Alpha Sigma Alpha colleges in the region joined the sorority at the formal banquet.

The next weekend members from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois trekked to the Hotel Cleveland in Ohio. Although "things" did not officially begin until noon on Saturday, many decided to make it a real weekend and began arriving soon after dinner Friday evening. Apparently remembering the old proverb about a "bird in the hand," Grace Fultz Haworth, ΔΔ, formerly national treasurer, promptly registered them.

Ruth Duffey, AA, formerly national treasurer and national chaplain, also was present. You might recall that as a charter member of Alpha Alpha, Miss Duffey had been a delegate to the historic Miami convention. Hence, her experiences made her admirably qualified to speak that afternoon on "Reminiscences of ΑΣΑ."

Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, and Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, represented the national council, while Sally Baxter Horter, NN, alumnae editor, and Louise Neely Stewart, YY, historian, represented the national chairmen. Several visitors, in their excitement at renewing friendships, overlooked the registration desk, but more than 100 had some contact with this regional meeting.

Perhaps more than any other regional, the Cleveland meeting emphasized the strength and interest of Alpha Sigma Alpha's alumnae. Only four active chapters — Chi Chi, Mu Mu, Alpha Gamma and Pi Pi — were in this district, yet alumnae were present not only from these chapters but also from the five inactive or closed Ohio chapters.

National council 1941-1946

President
Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ

Vice president
Polly Smelser Schlosser, BB

Secretary
Esther Bucher, HH (1941-1943);
Thelma Stortz Moyer, KK (1943-1944);
Helen Corey, KK (1944-1946)

Treasurer
Katherine M. Hale, ΘΘ (1941-1942);
Grace Gowen Cogswell, ΘΘ (1942-1943);
Esther Bucher, HH (1943-1946)

Registrar
Marie Brunsman Berry, AB

Alumnae director
Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ

Phoenix editor
Genevieve Steele Leib, XX

In many respects (at least from the alumnae viewpoint) it was an alumnae gathering. When, at midnight, the Oxford, Canton and Columbus alumnae chapters held an open house pajama party in the suite of the Cleveland alumnae, it was the alumnae who especially enjoyed this collegiate activity.

Beta Zeta, Beta Eta installed

Four regions had convened with the theme "Forward, Alpha Sigma Alpha," but region IV, meeting at the Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans Nov. 2-3, actually "went forward" with the addition of a new chapter. Thirty-nine actives and alumnae of Zeta Delta Phi were initiated and installed as Beta Zeta Chapter at Southwestern Louisiana Institute in Lafayette.

Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, and Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, represented the national council in the installation ceremonies, which formed the major part of the program of this regional. Manette Swett, ΨΨ, directed the meeting.

In February 1941 both Beta Beta and Gamma Gamma celebrated their silver anniversaries with appropriate ceremonies.

On May 17, 1941, Beta Eta Chapter — the first Alpha Sigma Alpha chapter in the Dakotas — was installed at State Teachers College, Dickinson, N.D. Mrs. Sharp, Mrs. Leib and Polly Smelser Schlosser, BB, were present.

Then, as a last-minute thrill before the 40th anniversary convention of that summer, came the pledging on June 15 of Beta Theta Chapter at Central Michigan College of Education in Mount Pleasant. The president of this group, Nora Sheehy, was initiated at the convention in August, as were Ruth Werner, AΓ, Ada Joan Schendoah, BΓ, and Barbara Huffman, HH.

1941 to 1942

At 40, war is in the air

The 1941 convention Aug. 4-8 was memorable for many reasons. First, it commemorated the 40th birthday of the sorority, and the delegates were greatly honored to have with them founder Louise Cox Carper. A Chicago studio recorded Mrs. Carper telling the story of Alpha Sigma Alpha's early days to new initiate Nora Sheehy, BΘ, so that members might always hear of those days from the lips of one who was there.

Second, August 1941 was but a few months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. War was in the air, and the conclave was designated as the "All-American Convention." In the national president's call to convention, she said, "It will amalgamate the standards of Alpha Sigma Alpha with the American Way of the pursuit of happiness." The delegate's theme song was "An All American:"

"You may have an All American gal,
Who'll excel in anything she might endeavor
But I'll take an 'Alpha Sig' for a pal,
And I know I have a loyal friend forever.

We may talk all night long of the merits of the two
And it's Alpha Sig for me,
All American for you.
There's no reason why we should argue again,
Ev'ry Alpha Sig's an All American."

Finally, there were to be no more national or regional gatherings of Alpha Sigma Alpha until Adolf Hitler and the Japanese could be vanquished and a righteous, happy peace again established. Clever place cards, bridge and lavish banquets were soon to give way to war bond displays, surgical dressing tables and rationed food.



Members of the 1941-1946 council are, front from left: Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, Phoenix editor; Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, president; and Marie Brunsman Berry, AB, registrar. Middle, from left: Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, alumnae director, and Katherine M. Hale, ΘΘ, treasurer. Back, from left: Polly Smelser Schlosser, BB, vice president, and Esther Bucher, HH, secretary.

Perhaps it was the tension in the air that made everyone try so hard to make those days so enjoyable for everyone else. Surely The Edgewater Beach Hotel, Chicago, provided an ideal setting for any program that might be desired.

"The Chicago Gang," alias the Chicago alumnae, officially welcomed the delegates at a luncheon well decorated with Uncle Sam hats, information on the use of the flag and the national colors.

Other special events included the traditional regional dinner; a stunt show with the sophisticated title "Alpha Sigma Theatre Guild Presents"; a "night owl's spree"; the Panhellenic luncheon where members of other sororities were guests; the sports program and the ΑΣΑ Play Day Dinner (nearly 20 found sightseeing at Marshall Field's their favorite sport); and a "seeing Chicago" bus ride in the usual tourist manner.

Up late with the soldiers

The outstanding events, however, were a visit to a broadcast of the Breakfast Club of the Air at the National Broadcasting Co. studios in the Merchandise Mart and the influx of the Army from Fort Sheridan. Delegates were willing to arise extra early (almost with the sun) to visit the former and to stay up extra late with the soldiers.

Fortunately, however, the soldiers came on Tuesday night, and the Breakfast Club was not until Thursday morning. Yet sleepiness is cumulative at Alpha Sigma Alpha conventions. Nevertheless, when Sidney Gremillion, ΨΨ, spoke over the air for the group, one could never have guessed the length of time the convention had been in session. All college girls and most alumnae were still going strong.

Typical of the thought of that year was the address on Tuesday afternoon by Lee Fairchild Bacon, dean of women at Marshall College. Dean Bacon told of the plans then in action at Marshall to care for the demands already created by the international situation. She stressed the need psychologically for college girls to feel that they were "doing something."

Although the visit of a selected group of trainees in the preparedness program that evening had social reasons, the presence of men in uniform intensified the feeling that soon American girls, too, would experience war.

"Our Democratic Heritage" was the theme of the formal banquet on Thursday evening, during which Mrs. Carper cut a huge birthday cake. There were 40 red candles — one for each table. Four red candles stood on star holders at the four points of the shield. The year "40" was marked with red letters on each candle.

The programs were white with printing and cord in red, white and blue. The coat-of-arms, printed in blue in the upper left corner, was outlined with a frame of red. For the toasts, the cornerstones of democracy were featured: opportunity, persistence, loyalty and unity. The group closed the 40th birthday banquet by singing "The Star Spangled Banner."

President full time, paid

At the 1941 convention, for the first time, each delegate and officer was given a bound copy of the convention reports to which could later be added the mimeographed proceedings of the convention. From this file we read that the following important decisions were made:

1. The national president was made a full-time, paid officer, and to her duties were added those of directing collegiate and alumnae chapter inspections, acting as extension officer, representing the sorority at AES and other fraternal and educational conferences, and supervising the work of chapter chaplains.
2. Supervision of sorority examinations was given to the national registrar.
3. A director of alumnae activities was created to have charge of all alumnae chapter presidents, supervising the work of the alumnae organizer, alumnae editor and loyalty committees and cooperating with the national vice president in carrying out a national philanthropic project.
4. Minor changes were made in the work of the fellowship chairman in that she was authorized to hold all notes and to collect all monies due the fund.
5. The office of education director was eliminated.
6. A national paraphernalia chairman and a national magazine subscription chairman were created.
7. Minor changes were made in financial policies with respect to installation dues and the method of obtaining money for the fellowship fund.
8. The Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumnae award was created, its nucleus being the $150 remaining after the liquidation of Lambda Lambda Chapter. The Columbus Alumnae Chapter had tried to give the money to Mrs. Sharp, ZZ, in recognition of her outstanding service to Lambda Lambda during its final year. Mrs. Sharp asked that the money be used to establish the award instead. Mary Gaal, ΛΛ, moved that the award be named in honor of Mrs. Sharp.
9. The policy of the sorority with respect to national defense was stated:

"In cooperation with the policy adopted by the Association of Education Sororities, be it resolved that Alpha Sigma Alpha reaffirm its belief and support in the democratic principles of American education, and that it keep a clear conception of the basic function and effective vehicle for service which membership in the field of education affords;

"Be it further resolved that Alpha Sigma Alpha summon college and alumnae chapters for efficient cooperation with their college and community organizations for service in the National Defense Program."

Statistically speaking, the 1941 conclave was attended by one founder, six national councilors, six national committee chairmen, five chapter advisers, 26 collegiate chapter delegates, 20 alumnae chapter delegates, 26 collegiate visitors and 37 alumnae visitors, for a total attendance of 126.

On Nov. 15, 1941, Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, alumnae director, and Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, Phoenix editor, installed Beta Theta Chapter, the 40th birthday chapter.

Working for the "ultimate victory"

Less than a month later came Pearl Harbor. Two days after the bombing Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, president, wrote to the active chapters:

Independence, Missouri
Tuesday Night
December 9, 1941

Dear Alpha Sigma Alpha Girls:

Yesterday while our country's declaration of war came over the air waves, I sat here at my Alpha Sigma Alpha desk, listening with my ears and heart but forcing my hands to do some routine office work for our sorority.

I could do no less than turn to the thing at hand — my own tasks. For now our obligation to each other, to our country, is immeasurably increased. So long as we can, we must courageously and faithfully keep at our individual work and lives — in college, at home or distant places.

Then, if we are called upon to serve elsewhere, we will be ready. We will have had the discipline that results from a self-imposed calmness, and the personal preparedness that comes from an inner courage and stability.

Alpha Sigma Alpha college girls will be more than equal to the uncertain days ahead. You will find ways to serve and to bring security and comfort to those about you. Will your chapter president and vice president confer immediately with your Dean of Women? For do you not want her to know that Alpha Sigma Alpha is ready to initiate or support any college program for the mutual good of the student body and our country?

In addition to assisting with a specific program, there is so much that each of you can

And in the world ...

Dec. 7, 1941
The United States officially enters World War II.

do as a morale-builder. Alpha Sigma Alpha calls every member to strive more seriously and yet more buoyantly "to know the peace and serenity of a Divine Faith." For now with war an actuality we must and we can have peace in our own hearts. It will be the peace that comes from loyalty to ideals, from holding fast to standards, from the knowledge that we are doing whatever we can do at our level-best, sanely and gladly.

As I write this, many and vivid memories of college chapter contacts come to me. They are so especially dear to me tonight for love reaches out with stronger bonds in times of anxiety and trouble. So will you heighten the spirit of sisterhood within your own chapter. You will help each other to gallantly bear the quick changes that may come. You will have an enduring courage, a worthy place in our America-at-war. And you will work to make come true "the bright dream of America marching on."

"God bless you every one" — and keep you.

Ever yours in Alpha Sigma Alpha,
Wilma Wilson Sharp
National president

Mrs. Sharp also sent a letter to the president of each college and university where Alpha Sigma Alpha had a chapter, pledging the sorority's service to the college and to the country.



Phi Phi members did their part to help the war effort in 1942 by buying a $25 bond. From left are Pauline Liggett, treasurer; Mary Frances Todd, vice president; Mary Margot Phares, president; and Miriam Wagoner, sponsor.

The war effort

The May Phoenix indicated that Alpha Sigma Alphas were earnestly taking their part in the war effort. As an example, we read that in the alumnae chapter in Alva, Okla., 11 members were taking first aid, six were in home nursing classes, seven were knitting and one sewing for the Red Cross, two were teaching Red Cross courses, 11 were in civilian defense volunteer work, five had given talks or programs on war work and four expected to grow 75 percent of the vegetables used on their tables in the coming summer.

Other alumnae chapters gave similar reports. Although in their newsletters the collegiate chapters were slower to change their pattern of emphasizing beauty queens, pledges and parties, in March The Phoenix carried a photograph showing three members of Phi Phi Chapter and their sponsor, Miriam Waggoner, purchasing a $25 Defense Bond with money originally intended for their all-college Easter tea. This group was the first on the Maryville, Mo., campus to buy a bond.

Beta Iota installed

On May 9, 1942, Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, Phoenix editor, Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, president, and Eleanor Smith Thomas, KK, fellowship chairman, installed Gamma Zeta of

State Teachers College, Radford, Va., as Beta Iota Chapter. This installation increased the number of active chapters in Virginia to three.

During war: no more conventions

The national council, meeting in Chicago June 19-24, formulated plans for carrying forward the program as planned by the 1941 national convention in accordance with wartime regulations imposed by the government.

It was decided that the sorority would hold no national or regional conventions for the duration of the war, and that all plans and programs for both collegiate and alumnae chapters would center around the paramount objective: "Alpha Sigma Alphas work for the Ultimate Victory."

President Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, elaborated this policy as follows:

"This is a time for application not elaboration of principles. The long familiar and proudly affirmed purposes of our sorority stand evermore true and undimmed in the darkness of war. They are an answer to your question, 'What can I do?' Indeed, this year what better thing can you do than to work with all your might that your individual development may prepare you for service.

"Keep physically fit — you know how — and so generate a young strength equal to every strain. Grow intellectually for today's hard demands, yes — but more that you may have your rightful vital part in that future day when Victory shall herald Peace throughout the world.

"Develop socially. We cannot plan for a better world social order unless we practice its principles in our daily relationships. We cannot look to a brighter day if we fail now to uphold high standards of social conduct.

"Progress spiritually. 'Above all take the Shield of Faith.' A faith in God and Goodness is unassailable even in death. Shall our fighting men hold to this precious truth more confidently than American women to whom they look for its exemplification?

"Our sorority experiences in loyalty, honor and self-sacrifice shall lead us proudly on to wider areas. The friendships we give and gain in the intimate bonds of sisterhood will lift our spirits and heighten our courage.

"So I call you to enthusiastic support of Alpha Sigma Alpha in this momentous college year. There have been, there will be rapid changes. There is a test in meeting changes courageously. There is glory in gallantly carrying on under handicap."

Elizabeth Bird Small dies

Also at the 1942 meeting, the national council created the Elizabeth Bird Small Undergraduate award in memory of Miss Small, ΠΠ, whose death had occurred in California on Jan. 29, 1942. For more on Elizabeth Small, see p. 332.

As a member of the national council from 1930 to 1936, she served the sorority in a measure that could not be adequately described in words. Soon after her death, it was written of

her, "Her eyes were trained to see the good in everyone and everything, but she constantly reminded her girls that being good wasn't enough when they were capable of living up to their best. The high standards of Alpha Sigma Alpha were a challenge to Miss Small, and in all her sorority work she could not brook the slightest deviation from standards of such worth ....



Elizabeth Bird Small, ΠΠ, died Jan. 29, 1942. National council established the Elizabeth Bird Small award that year in her honor.

"The newest pledge soon learned that just to be in her presence was a rich experience. She was a delightful companion with an incomparable sense of humor. Her mind was as keen as her heart was kind, while she had that rare gift of wisdom that comes from understanding. Those who sought her advice never got it directly. Rather they were unconsciously guided to see clearly, think honestly and finally act with surety.

"It was impossible to forget Miss Small even after one left her presence — what she was, what she had said, what she stood for were a constant source of inspiration. Her death leaves a void which none may fill — and yet, hers was such a generous life that she left us a bit of herself. In the years to come, Alpha Sigma Alphas will be conscious of her presence through those whose thoughts and lives she influenced. In Miss Small we had a member who truly knew how to 'give in full measure' and

'Such souls forever live
In boundless measure of the love they give.'"



In 1943, Doris Fox David, KK, was the first "Alpha Girl," also known as the winner of the Elizabeth Bird Small award. Among other things, she was elected president of her class at Temple University in her sophomore, junior and senior years.

And so, the Elizabeth Bird Small award was created as the highest honor that Alpha Sigma Alpha bestows on an undergraduate member. It was decided that each year one girl should be selected from each chapter and her name presented as a nominee, the national winner to be chosen from the list of chapter winners. The criteria for selection were to be the qualities of leadership, personality and scholarship, with the rating to be scholarship, 50 percent, and character and personality, each 25 percent.

It was decided that an award committee within the council should make the final selection from nominations received not later than March 1 of the year in which the award was made.

In the May 1943 Phoenix, the first "Alpha Girls," those who had been nominated by their chapters for the Elizabeth Bird Small award, were pictured, and each girl's qualifications listed. In November, the magazine announced that the first winner of the award was Doris Fox David, KK.

Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumnae award

At the 1942 council meeting plans were also made for the Wilma Wilson Sharp Alumna award. Mary Turner Gallagher, XX, of Green Bay, Wis., was the first recipient. The first award was one in keeping with the times — a defense bond.

1942 to 1943

August 26, 1942

My dear Mrs. Wootton:

It was not until last winter when I was reading very carefully The Phoenixes of the 1914-20 period that I discovered why, as long as Mrs. Ida Shaw Martin was president, the membership "lost" its founders. Nor did our present National Council know until this summer when I produced the printed evidence that she had stricken from the record all those who refused to be initiated by the 1914 ritual.



Louise Neely Stewart, YY

However, you know how very hard Wilma Wilson Sharp worked for the two years after Mrs. Martin's expulsion to find out about our founders and early members, and how happy the entire membership has been in discovering what a splendid heritage we have in the years and members previous to 1914.

It was not easy for the 1930 Council to take over affairs, for some of us had no records and no equipment — they were all in Boston. So we began at the beginning to build up our own.

As you perhaps know, for several years we have planned a printed history of Alpha Sigma Alpha. Hattie Kelly Thomas began work on it, but when illness forced her to resign, the job fell to me. My initiation was in 1928, so you can see I am handicapped in recording the early period.

From the material which has been loaned me and from talking to Mrs. Carper, I have managed to draft the earlier history, but I feel that there are many gaps, which should be filled in. Thus, I am sending pleas to the founders and early members to help.

I feel sure that you have many interesting and pleasant memories of your college and alumnae days in Alpha Sigma Alpha. Would you be willing to jot down some of them: what you remember of the founding of the group, the early meetings, the girls who belonged, any of the funny or sad little incidents, anything that will make the written history accurate and interesting? If you have any records which you would be willing to loan, I should appreciate having them for a short time.

We should also like to include biographies of our founders. May I have yours? And do you have a recent picture we could use?

I do hate to make so many requests, especially when you are probably busy with war work like everyone else. However, you can't imagine how much I shall appreciate whatever you can find to send me

Yours in Alpha Sigma Alpha,
Louise N. Stewart, YY
Historian, 1938-1958

Alpha Sigs "join up"

In the summer of 1942, the U.S. Congress passed legislation creating the Waacs, Waves, Spars and the Women Marines. Alpha Sigma Alphas were among those enlisting in all parts of the country — including Katharine M. Hale, ΘΘ, who resigned her office of national treasurer for a commission in the Waves. One of Col. Oveta Culp Hobby's staff of five to direct activities of all the Waacs (later Wacs) was Frances Holbrook, ΠΠ.

In fact, each month The Phoenix carried additional names of those who had "joined up" and were wearing the uniform of some branch of the service. Wafs, Red Cross, Nursing Corps, Foreign Service and USO also claimed Alpha Sigma Alphas.

Some became defense workers, while many remembered that teaching children, though less glamorous, had always been classified as an essential occupation, and so stayed by their blackboards, while others shifted housekeeping to the leisure-time classification and returned to the schoolroom.

Still others continued their volunteer defense activities or increased the number of hours spent in bond booths, in Red Cross workrooms and on the unlimited needs of their communities. Alumnae officers became increasingly busy as alumnae moved about the country, sometimes as a result of a new position created by the war and often because a husband was transferred, transferred and then transferred again.

The March 1943 issue of The Phoenix was, in part, a songbook, featuring especially the newer songs of the sorority with their original music.

1943 to 1944

Beta Kappa, Beta Lambda installed

Oct. 23-24, 1943, Alpha Sigma Alpha entered an Illinois college for the first time. That weekend the sorority installed Beta Kappa Chapter at Western Illinois State Teachers College in Macomb. President Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, was in charge of the services.

There was another "first" for Alpha Sigma Alpha the weekend of March 3-5, 1944, when Beta Lambda Chapter was installed at Arkansas State Teachers College in Conway. It was the first Alpha Sigma Alpha chapter in that state. Mrs. Sharp and Esther Bucher, HH, treasurer, were installing officers.

Because regional and national conventions had been made impossible by the war, the Macomb and Conway installations were used as subregional gatherings at which members of the nearest chapters might meet each other and the national officers.

Kansas and Missouri chapters sent representatives to Macomb, while Natchitoches, La., Tahlequah, Okla., and Pittsburg, Kan., sent representatives to Conway. Sixteen advisers and college girls — and a Pi Pi alumna — may not have been a regional, but judging from their account of the days and nights spent at Conway, these Alpha Sigma Alphas managed to give a very good imitation of at least a miniature regional.

Though the gathering was a wartime substitute for the real thing, there was nothing ersatz about the fellowship, inspiration and fun existing for those who could be there.

1944 to 1945

Essential business only

The year 1944 should have been a national convention year. Because wartime restrictions made this impossible, the national council met July 1-4 at The Edgewater Beach Hotel, Chicago, to transact essential sorority business. The national committee chairmen joined them July 5-8.

Even in so small a group, the anxieties and problems of the war were evident. Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, Phoenix editor, watched the mails for word from her air corps son in England, and Ruth Martin Stone, BΔ, scholarship chairman, daily wrote long letters to her captain husband in the South Pacific.

Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ, alumnae director, had gone immediately from her winter teaching to a government position in Maryland and was unable to attend the conference, while Helen Block Bradley, ΠΠ, alumnae organizer, was likewise busy with a defense job that was so demanding she felt it necessary to resign her Alpha Sigma Alpha work.

Thelma Stortz Moyer, KK, secretary, had her reservation cancelled at the last minute and did not attempt the long journey from Laurel, Del. Virginia Carpenter, OO, alumnae editor, a member of the Women's Marine Corps, was likewise unable to attend. The presence of many Japanese employees in the hotel, as part of an "alien relocation project," also was a reminder of the war.

During the meeting, the council made the following decision pertaining to Alpha Sigma Alpha's interfraternity relations: "That Alpha Sigma Alpha withdraw its membership from the Professional Panhellenic Association and that withdrawal be in the form of a statement of the decision of the National Councils of Sigma Sigma Sigma and Theta Sigma Upsilon."

This conclusion resulted from the PPA's accepting a more limiting definition of the term "professional." The three AES sororities holding membership in the PPA supported this action because they wished to cooperate in the general fraternity effort to clarify the classification of various Greek-letter organizations.

The council also approved the plan that each college chapter should have an alumna visitor during the 1944-1945 school year. The purpose of the visit from the chapter's own alumna was to extend the ΑΣΑ leadership program to include recent graduates, to coordinate college and alumnae activities and to promote college loyalty on the part of alumnae. Frances Morrell Werre, BH, was the first alumna to officially visit her chapter soon after uniform plans were set up.

In November 1944 the sorority issued a new publication: "Leadership in Alpha Sigma Alpha," a manual written by Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, national president, for collegiate chapter presidents.

A letter from Wakefield Mattison

The worries of war were certainly not limited to members of national council that fall. Below is a letter Louise Neely Stewart, YY, historian, received from Lina Wakefield Mattison Mahon, Γ, national president from 1908 to 1912.

Nov. 15, 1944

Dear Miss Stewart,

I'm sure you will forgive me for seeming so negligent and uninterested in your Alpha Sigma Alpha history when I tell you that my son came home from thirty three months in the Southwest Pacific for a 21-day leave just when I should have been helping you with more information.

I have three sons — one in a Tank outfit with the First Army in Holland right now, one a B-17 Pilot instructing at the Army Air Base in Sioux City and the boy home from the Islands. So you see what I have on my mind and heart always. . . .

. . . When I was president of the Grand Council, we called it then, I struggled along with Mrs. Ida Shaw Martin's help to put ΑΣΑ *really on the map. Our Southern colleges were continuously putting our chapters out — and we were so hampered for lack of funds that the sorority almost died.*

Mrs. Martin was a Tri-Delta herself and when I stepped down and out I thought negotiations were about complete for ΔΔΔ *to take us over. She had great respect for our young and small organization. It really had the making of something very fine and worthwhile. . . .*

Sincerely,

Wakefield Mattison Mahon, Γ

Making history

In January 1945 members saw the first published history of Alpha Sigma Alpha. Because of the war, the material was issued as the January edition of The Phoenix rather than as a separate volume. Pictures were limited to those considered almost indispensable to illustrate the story, for both Uncle Sam and printers' costs frowned heavily on excessive and unnecessary engravings. Yet even a wartime substitute was deemed better than nothing.

That Alpha Sigma Alphas were finding the world conflict a condition with which one lived daily, hoping continually for the end, is indicated especially in the March 1945 issue. "We are called upon to fill not only our own places but also those of others who have gone to join the Armed Forces," wrote Thelma Shively, ΦΦ.

"With a condensed college curriculum now in operation, there is less time for the girls to participate in outside activities. Realizing, however, that we are fortunate to be able to

go on to school while a global war is in progress, we have tried to make our appreciation known by doing our part and a bit more. … Volunteer work for the service organizations will remain a 'must' with Alpha Sigma Alpha chapters."

From Beta Gamma came reports of five fields of activity: leadership of six Girl Scout troops, physical education teaching in two high schools, work on a citywide youth program, service in a small Sunday school and special projects such as Christmas boxes, Russian War Relief and Community Chest.

The nearby Army air base, the Army camp and the college bond booth also claimed Beta Gamma girls. Hattiesburg [Miss.] Alpha Sigma Alphas were likewise useful to the USO, while Beta Zetas found themselves collecting for the March of Dimes. In Muncie, the Alpha Sigma Alpha helped increase sales for TB stamps, collect money for the World Student Service Fund and gave blood when the Red Cross made its visits.

Moreover, each Chi Chi averaged 18 hours weekly on bandages and produced sweaters between studies. Four of them went to various schools to explain the need for elementary teachers. Psi Psi assisted in the entertainment of the 200 sailors stationed at Natchitoches, turned out as many as 2,000 bandages a day, and knit and knit.

Zeta Zeta, Xi Xi and Beta Kappa also kept up morale through the USO. Nu Nu diversified its activities with bonds, USO, work at Valley Forge Hospital and donations to the blood bank. Theta Theta's work was done in the hometowns of the girls — one of the activities was making clothing for Dutch War Relief.

To the activities already mentioned, the Beta Theta girls added Nurses' Aide work. Beta Eta members helped the Navy Mothers make sandwiches and pack lunches for the service men passing through the local railroad depot.

Besides knitting during sorority meetings, the Radford girls volunteered to clean Norwood Senior Hall regularly because of the maid shortage. Pi Pi members kept birthday cards in the mail for their college service men and assisted at childcare centers and settlement houses. Alpha Beta sent a large collection of books to the Merchant Marine Service in New York. This chapter also supported a small British girl, sending her money and packages regularly.

The Alpha Gamma girls assembled and mailed the college newsletter to former student service men. This was especially interesting because if the girl knew the man, she was permitted to write a personal note in the letter. Maryville housewives looked forward to the "work day" in February when Phi Phi girls spent 240 hours cleaning house, laundering or doing other domestic jobs for hire (and the treasury).

Rescued in the Philippines

The alumnae kept pace with the actives in service projects. In New York, the officers' parties at Pi Pi alumna Emma Coleman Frost's Park School of Cookery were worthy of mention. The Christmas party included Wave officers and a Canadian nurse.

Down in Richmond, Va., alumnae had charge of the service center in the Hotel William

Byrd. This hotel, across the street from Broad Street Station, was an excellent spot for giving information of all types, especially lists of possible rooms, to the service men arriving in the city. Richmond alumnae likewise helped in the Military Shoppers' Guide Service directed by two large department stores on the four Saturdays preceding Christmas.

The Kansas City Times of Feb. 19, 1945, brought the happy news of the rescue from Santo Tomas, a Japanese interment camp, of Beth Harkness, TT. Serving the Episcopal Church in the Philippines, Beth had been captured in Sagada, in the mountains of Luzon, in February 1942. Soon after her release, she wrote, "Looking back — one has time to do so in a Prison Camp — I am so glad for happy ΑΣΑ memories and realize those experiences were the kind which help tide one over difficult times."

The service roll lengthened during 1945 as Alpha Sigma Alphas became Wacs, Waves, Spars, Marines, Wafs or members of the Army Nurse Corps, Red Cross Field Service or USO. The Heck family of Baltimore added three members to the Wacs: Hildreth and Reba, both Radford Alpha Sigma Alphas, and their mother, Blanche D. Heck.

The Transfer Bureau, listing moves of the alumnae from one city to another, became an important section of The Phoenix as wives followed their husbands from camp to camp or families were transferred from one business location to another.

Alumnae officers, both local and national, must have acquired gray hairs in the constant effort to keep up with the trail of addresses as well as the name changes. Marriage announcements were sprinkled with military rank. The sad lines of the "In Memoriam" section now included mention of husbands or brothers killed in action — in raids over Germany, North Africa, France and Okinawa.

Also rescued in the Philippines were LaVerne Shockley Fertig, BB, her husband, Maj. Claude E. Fertig, and 13-month-old Susan. Like his brother, Col. Wendell W. Fertig, Maj. Fertig was a Colorado mining engineer who joined MacArthur's forces in 1941.

Unknown to each other, the brothers escaped capture on Bataan and joined the Philippine guerrillas. Susan, born in the high mountains of Panay at the height of a determined Japanese search for her parents, was delivered by a native doctor who had never seen a white woman before. At two months, she was carried by her mother in a hike over several mountain ranges to the coast, where a submarine took the pair to Australia before the Leyte invasion.

May 8, 1945, became a Red Letter Day even though it meant only a step toward the end. No doubt many members of Alpha Sigma Alpha, singly or in groups, prayed in thanksgiving that V-E Day had dawned and that the war had ended in at least one area.

Accompanied by Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, national president, the entire Radford active chapter paused during inspection activities to attend the special services at the Methodist Church.

1945 to 1946

V-J Day

Then at length came V-J Day, on Aug. 14, 1945. In "Thoughts for Founders' Day" 1945, Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ, wrote: "Our forty-fourth Founders' Day is dearly significant because it can be observed in peace and attended by plans to do our share in building a better world. ...

"During all the days of our war, our members in the armed services and at home were worthy of our pronouncement: 'Alpha Sigma Alphas work for Ultimate Victory'. Now when peace has come, we must continue to work with constancy and courage that victory will be indeed ultimate and lasting."

As a portion of its philanthropic work of the year, the sorority decided that each member should give one penny for each year of the organization's age, 44, the pennies to be used for the Francis Hanson Cary Memorial Library. Bessie Ferguson Cary, A, in memory of her son who gave his life in the war, was establishing this library for disabled, hospitalized veterans.

Winner of the Wilma Wilson Sharp award for 1945 was Emma Coleman Frost, ΠΠ. For more on Emma Frost, see p. 319. Beta Gamma presented the Alpha Girl of the year [Elizabeth Bird Small award] to Henrietta Stolper, known to her sorority sisters as "Penny."

At the national officers workshop in June, members decided to continue the alumna visitor ("older daughter") plan for the coming year so that alumnae and college activities might be better coordinated. The group also approved a postwar rehabilitation program to be centered in a government hospital in each of the five regions as the national social service project.

The revised pledge manual and a rushing pamphlet, "Rushing Never Ends," both were published in 1946.

"Reconversion and Rehabilitation"

In January came the announcement of the first postwar convention to be held at the Stanley Hotel, Estes Park, Colo. As plans materialized for this important event, it was reported that the affair would be "educational and inspirational, vacational and sensational."

With printing difficulties lessening, it was possible to announce a new printing, in more colorful form, of the Alpha Sigma Alpha Creed — and that framed copies were also available.

Under the theme "Reconversion and Rehabilitation," the various active chapters attempted to picture life in those months immediately after V-J Day. Beta Epsilon members of the Madison Spanish Club collected books to be sent to Filipino students.

Other Alpha Sigma Alphas on that campus collected clothing to be sent overseas. Kappa Kappas had a cake sale to raise money for the book projector their region was sending to a veterans' hospital. Tahlequah, Okla., girls were continuing many of the preceding year's

And in the world ...

Aug. 15, 1945
World War II ends.

projects in the community.

Pi Pi, in addition to helping on the national philanthropic project, reported its awareness of a "recognizable male student body" at Buffalo State. Theta Theta reported that its dances were becoming much more successful for the same reason. Also looking toward normalcy was the report of a banquet at which $400,000 was received toward the new campus on the Charles River in Boston.

Beta Beta mentioned that steak fries, nylons and conventions were now in members' thoughts, as was their work for the Camp Carson Convalescent Hospital in Colorado Springs and local rehabilitation projects. Zeta Zeta was busy moving into its wing of Yeater Hall recently vacated by the Navy V-12. Members boasted that they were not losing all the service men, because a permanent air base would be only 10 miles away at Sedalia.

A Peace Welfare Drive and visits to the veterans' hospital at Camp Pickett, 30 miles away, were reported by Alpha. Beta Iota mentioned the merger of Radford with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and increasing enrollment. Beta Lambda reported a member who was a chairman of the committee to introduce a form of student government to its campus. Though the student building jukebox was playing constantly at Drexel, Nu Nu girls were busy with innumerable organized rehabilitation projects.

Sigma Sigmas at Western State, Gunnison, Colo., reported an increase of more than 100 percent in enrollment that year, and men were no longer a rarity. Down in Louisiana, Beta Zetas were collecting for the March of Dimes. Trailers and barracks were making their appearance on the Ball State campus in Muncie, Ind.; a midwinter term was opened to accommodate returning service men; and fraternities were being reorganized.

Beta Theta reported giving up a dormitory to returning service men. Beta Kappas were helping the veterans become acquainted via matinee dances each Wednesday in the student lounge. From an alumna in Alaska, Lt. Commander Billy Ball, ΓΓ, came a letter reporting that some of the Spars there were already making their civilian wardrobes but that the quiet, peaceful, strikeless life of Alaska was good.

Four new chapters

New chapters had been quadruplets that year, or rather, two sets of "identical twins." On May 4, Beta Mu was installed at Henderson State Teachers College, Arkadelphia, Ark., and Gamma Clio at State Teachers College, Cortland, N.Y.

On May 18, Beta Nu at Murray State Teachers College, Murray, Ky., and Beta Xi at State Teachers College, Oneonta, N.Y., were added to the roll. The New York chapters had been the Beta and Gamma chapters of Clio [the Clionian Society], the New York state sorority of which Pi Pi had been a part.

1946 to 1947

Preparing for convention

During the summer of 1946, convention was uppermost in sorority members' minds. Those fortunate enough to be going studied the pictures of fellow delegates in the May Phoenix so that when they actually reached Colorado, everyone knew everyone else — theoretically, at least.

A polio scare decreased the potential convention registration when parents began reading of the increasing numbers of cases in the Denver area. Swimming pools in that portion of Colorado were closed, but the very muddy "swimmin' hole" that appears at the bottom of the convention picture was no attraction to any aquatic-minded Alpha Sigma Alpha, regardless of its forbidding sign. The rocks and mountains were far more alluring with gorgeous scenery and trails for hiking and riding.

If altitude did make some of the "Old Girls" "go easy" and the younger ones from low altitude long for the conventions at sea level, nevertheless, everyone had a wonderful time at this "family reunion."

Old friends greeted and took notice of what the war years had done to the other, alumnae found mutual professional and home interests and everyone had fun learning to know everyone else.

Honeymoon at convention

The "auxiliary roll" even included one husband-to-be. Roberta Taylor, Gamma Gamma president and delegate, and Les Van Pelt, a veteran, not having time for both a wedding and convention, had their honeymoon at convention while Roberta carried out her sorority duties, and then went home for a wedding in Wichita, Kan., on Aug. 31. Needless to relate, Les was a fully indoctrinated "auxiliary" after four days with ΑΣΑ husbands.

Dates of the "reunion convention" were Aug. 22-26, 1946. Badges were circles rimmed in red, with a coy coed winking on the left and saying, "Hi, I'm from … at … " Colored stars indicated the classification of the delegates. The Colorado luncheon opened festivities with introductions of national officers and chapter advisers.

The traditional hanging of the shields ceremony was held at the first business session that afternoon. Next came a dinner in honor of new chapters and the general assembly with Dr. A. Evelyn Newman, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, speaking on "World Women Face Today's Problems."

More introductions were possible at the informal reception that closed the evening. A sunrise hike the following morning — many made it a canter — preceded breakfast on the mountainside. The alumnae luncheon was a delightful break in the day of discussion groups and business. Alumnae vied with actives in blowing bubbles, well-protected by paper bibs

National council 1946-1949

President, NPC delegate
Wilma Wilson Sharp, ZZ

Vice president
Virginia Carpenter, OO

Secretary
Helen Corey, KK

Treasurer
Esther Bucher, HH

Registrar
Marion Powell, NN

Alumnae director
Evelyn G. Bell, ΠΠ

Phoenix editor
Genevieve Steele Leib, XX

and baby caps. The regional dinner was clever, with table decorations and stunts typical of the areas.

Family reunion night with Harriet B. Johnston, BE, and her "Reunion One Nighters" dealt with sorority history and followed the formal initiation service. Saturday was a real Western day with the "boots and saddle luncheon," a trip to Bear Lake and horseback riding in the afternoon, and a chuck wagon dinner at the Chalets.

Though rain eliminated the promised moonlight antics, these managed to be held back home at the Stanley. Sunday morning, convention-goers sat at breakfast by church affiliation, tables being marked by cards bearing topics and titles significant to the religious doctrines of the group. However, in practice, many of members "got in the wrong pew," finding their appetites greater than their zeal in finding the correct fold.

A lovely family worship service held on the mountainside after breakfast had as guest speaker Dr. George Arthur Frantz, pastor of the Presbyterian Church attended by Genevieve Steele Leib, XX, in Indianapolis. At the Sunday luncheon, members of the national council and national committee chairmen were table hostesses. Delegates were seated by signs showing the way to streets labeled according to the officers' titles. Installation of officers was held late Sunday afternoon, followed by a vesper memorial service; 20 names were listed.

Although Nell Martindale Kuchs, ΦΦ, was physically unable to be present, she sent the materials for the banquet floral setting, complete even to the fire extinguishers. The Stanley may have wondered why the tubs were so very dirty in one suite the night of the banquet, but it was really the fault of the Spanish moss and not of the inhabitants. Boxes and boxes of sparklers stuck in very damp moss furnished the starlight at the banquet.

Borne in by the ΑΣΑ men at the close of the program, they produced a dramatic climax to an inspirational evening. Favors were small red leather-bound address books, wrapped in red and secured with a glittering silver star. An embossed coat-of-arms made the tiny book a treasured ΑΣΑ souvenir.

The "take off" is usually a sleepy, hyper-tense, befogged occasion. With long experience at bidding farewell to ΑΣΑ convention attendees (and mailing their things home after them), Esther Bucher, HH, chairman of the farewell breakfast, did well in making that last experience vivid and impressive (in the stimulus sense). Signs inquiring whether the individual had done this, that or the other thing — from packing her toothbrush to buying a souvenir — were sprinkled about the tables.

A picture postcard of the Stanley, tied to a candy kiss, was at each place. A skit featuring the council behind cardboard bodies as Victoria "queens" was the hit of the program. The usual awards were also presented at this breakfast.

Finally, like the province of Gaul, the convention body was divided into three parts: the council and chairmen who stayed to work, the group whose play was ended and who were homeward bound via the buses to Denver, and finally those who were going to prolong

ΑΣΑ contacts for two or more days on the Grand Lake trip.

The convention may be summarized statistically by stating that there were present seven national council members, nine chairmen, 32 chapter delegates, 19 alumnae delegates, 14 advisers, 28 alumnae visitors, 37 college visitors and two guests, for a total of 148.

An able editorial staff under the direction of Mrs. Leib, Phoenix editor, again produced ΑΣΑ Antics.

Round-table discussions were especially helpful for their wealth of ideas and in formulating suggestions and recommendations. From the group that discussed the duties, obligations and authority of advisers, came the request for a chapter advisers handbook. The college girls pledged themselves "to be aware, to be alert, to be active," with the aim:

1. To make ourselves more forceful citizens of our nation and more intelligent representatives of the world;
2. To inspire our chapters toward more national cooperation and personal contacts between convention years;
3. To instill in our chapters the feeling of dignity and pride in our affiliation as national sorority women.

The alumnae spent much time on ideas for raising money and for planning meetings. They suggested four-, six- and 12-plan units for programs, the type to be determined by the alumnae group's situation. Their recommendations were

1. That the emergency fund, i.e., the $25 life membership dues and The Phoenix subscriptions adopted by the national council in 1945, be continued.
2. That a system be devised so that each $5 of these dues could be allocated: $2 convention fund; $2 general fund; $1 magazine fund.
3. That an alumnae delegate's expenses be paid to the convention, as done for this convention.

It was announced that contributions for the Fellowship Fund for 1946-1947 would be diverted to the philanthropic project as in the preceding year.

Membership cards

During this autumn, a project long planned was executed: the distribution of official, engraved membership cards to all life members. These cards, a size easily carried in an identification case, have proved an attractive and convenient method of establishing one's claim to membership. At least one large city department store has cashed personal checks on the presentation of said card.

Kappa Kappa marks 25 years

On March 22, 1947, Kappa Kappa at Temple University, Philadelphia, celebrated its silver anniversary with nine of its charter members among the many alumnae returning.