

# *Student Activities Since World War II*

CHAPTER XIV

World War II, together with successive world involvements, affected colleges in a decisive manner as it did other human institutions. Since 1940, young men have had to face the giving of a portion of their lives to the problems of the nation. Since the lives of young men were involved, the plans of young women were likewise changed; marriage was either pushed ahead for some young couples or delayed by others until the period of military service was over. Young men were forced to modify their plans because of the Selective Service and young women reacted to such a modification by changing their own lives to match the period of military service the males had to meet. This caused a searching of each young person's motives by himself and those who associated with him. Thus, the students were, to a great degree, being paced by the attitudes of the veteran during the whole shaky period from 1945 to the present.

This was to modify each student's life. It meant a much more serious attitude toward academic achievement than had been the case with their parents. They knew that their whole future could be vitally changed by their accomplishments in the academic field. The fact that there was a shortage of manpower in most professional fields was emphasized by the visitations on college campuses of prospective employers in the profes-

sional, scientific, and business organizations in search of employees. This brought home daily the worth of a college education. As a result, students wanted organizations on campus that stressed the intellectual, scientific and service attitudes.

When the veterans returned after World War II, it was only natural that a club strictly for veterans should be organized. The purpose of the Vet's Club was ". . . to help the returned veteran readjust himself to the role of student."<sup>1</sup> The following year the wives of the veterans also organized a club of their own and met once a week to play cards and ". . . to discuss housekeeping problems, husbands, and babies if any."<sup>2</sup>

The duration of both of these clubs lasted only two years and it was not until the winter of 1953 and the return of men from the Korean War that a veterans organization began in earnest and has continued to the present day. This group is called the Esquire Club. Its purpose is ". . . service to the college, scholarship, peace, and fellowship."<sup>3</sup> Membership is limited to ex-servicemen with two years of active duty or the equivalent in reserve time. The members sponsor dances, assist at athletic events, and at college blood drawings solicit donations for a Boise youngster who requires three pints of blood plasma each week. In 1968 the members collected money to build a Mall in memory of servicemen and women who lost their lives in the wars. The Mall was built on the south side of the Library and dedicated on October 22, 1968.

Another student activity that had been in the forefront before the war but really caught on after its end in 1945 was the student elections. The candidates dreamed up every vote-getting stunt they could possibly think of, ranging from free candy, coffee, cigars, and taxi service between college buildings, to a promotional parachute jump over the campus. Slogans such as "You can have Taft and the peacetime draft, but we'll take Goebel"<sup>4</sup> were very apropos of the late 1940's.

The enthusiasm prevalent during today's elections has waned somewhat from these earlier days, but much speech

making still continues and during election week, buildings, poles, and flights of stairs on campus are covered with flyers and posters containing policies and pertinent data on each candidate.

During all the years of the College's existence from 1932 to the present, there has been a student executive board which has governed all student activities other than academic ones. This group is elected yearly by direct vote of every full-time member of the student body.

Every full-time student of Boise State College is officially a member of the "Associated Students of Boise State College" (ASBSC). This membership entitles each student to vote in all student body elections, to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities, attend all home athletic events free, and to receive the student newspaper without charge. The elected student officers of the ASBSC are the Student Body President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the four class presidents. The Dean of Student Personnel Services is the official advisor to this group.<sup>5</sup>

While the student body officers have been predominantly male except for the war years, an organization which has been in existence since the College's first years and is for women only is the group entitled the Associated Women Students. All co-eds automatically become a member of this group when they enroll as full-time students and the dean of women is always their advisor. Annually they sponsor a spring tea for high school seniors to give them a preview of college life and every February select a King of Hearts from all the men on campus to reign at the Sweetheart Ball. Money for their various projects is raised by selling chrysanthemums for Homecoming and by a social event of a Slave Auction.

The Theta Mu Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa received its chapter in 1947. Nationally, it had been founded in 1918 to emphasize the importance of excellent scholarship in junior colleges. Over a period of many years, a student was not eligible for membership unless he or she maintained an average grade of 3.5 in 12 or more academic hours. This usually meant that the number of members stood at from 15 to 30. After 1965, the Chapter became inactive as a result of four-year emphasis.

Pi Sigma Sigma for men was formed at the close of the 1949 spring semester and began operating in the fall of 1950. With its motto of Pep, Service, and Spirit, the club promotes inter-club athletics and emphasizes more activity by male students in organized college affairs. In 1968, the club became affiliated with Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity and thus became a social fraternity.

Except for a break of a few years during the war, a club that has been in existence since 1940 is the one for members of the Home Economics Department. It began in 1940 as Eta Epsilon, was re-entitled Homettes in 1954, and took back its original name in the 1968-69 school year. Mrs. Thelma Allison, who has been head of the Home Economics Department since coming to the College in 1946, has been the club's advisor for the past 20 years. Due to her enthusiasm and absorbing interest in her subject, members of the club and the department have her same singleness of purpose. Club participation as a result, has been constant and increasing. The girls have weekly displays of current projects, give a basket of both baked and preserved foods to a needy family at Thanksgiving, and make and display clothes for a yearly fashion show.

As the College grew in the years after the war, there was the desire among young ladies in the College to have a second service group (the first being the Valkyries). The Zonta Club in Boise became the sponsoring agent for the Golden Z's, the College equivalent. It was organized in 1957 by Mrs. Dorothy Lee, office administration instructor at the College, Mrs. Genevieve Turnipseed, the dean of women at that time; and Mrs. Maymie E. Pierce, a Boise business woman. Each year, the local Zonta Club offers a \$300 scholarship to the Golden Z member who has achieved the highest grade point average. The national Zonta organization gives scholarships honoring Amelia Earhart to Golden Z members in clubs all over the world who plan to enter the field of space mathematics. The club promotes high scholastic ability and a 3.0 grade point average is required to join.

As noted above, a national business women's group sponsored the Golden Z's as a Campus women's service organization. A similar action took place for men in 1966 when the Kiwanis Clubs of Boise sponsored the Circle K Club. This group emphasizes the high academic achievement coupled with a desire to serve others.

All in all, the number of clubs and organizations on campus has grown yearly from 1945 to the present. Practically every specialized subject and division in the curriculum has its own club. Whether it be religious, fraternal, athletic, governmental, or simply social, there is something for every student's taste.

Since its early years, the College has had a real appeal to students from other sections of the nation and from other countries. This has been partly due to the emphasis on foreign language and the fact that individual students were brought mainly from Spanish speaking countries such as Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico and Spain to assist the instructors of the Spanish Department. This started immediately after World War II when Carmen Monsanto came to the College in 1946 from Guatemala as a student instructor and also took a few college courses. She later married a Boise Junior College student who had attended one of her classes. She and other foreign students were treated so graciously by the College's student body that this friendly attitude was reflected in their letters back home to friends. Many were thus influenced to come to Boise College.

There has hardly been a year since 1946 that there has not been from three to seven Spanish speaking students at the College. In addition, many students have come from Asia Minor and Iran and a large number from Canada.

One of the greatest medians of developing international friendship on campus has been the constant emphasizing of foreign languages through such organizations as the French, Spanish and German clubs. These three organizations have been in almost continuous operation since the College's early years.

Within the past 20 years, the number of students from Hawaii has gradually increased, principally because of the open welcome they have received at Boise College and partly because of their excellence in athletics, particularly football. This group, in fact, has been so interested in the College and in their home territory and State that they have organized their own club—Hui O Hawaii. They have had special Hawaiian nights for students living in the dormitories and for faculty members who have been particularly friendly to this group. Many of these students have become leaders on the campus and have exemplified the Hawaiian spirit of friendliness.

With the advent of the bachelors programs, new professional fraternal groups have been formed such as Alpha Kappa Psi in business. Social fraternities and sororities, after being banned for many years, have come to the fore in the past year. There are four sororities that have obtained their charters—Alpha Chi Omega, Alpha Omicron Pi, Alpha Xi Delta, and Delta Delta Delta. Gamma Phi Beta is becoming colonized this semester (spring 1969-70).<sup>6</sup>

In December of 1969, Kappa Sigma fraternity received its national charter. Sigma Tau Gamma and Tau Kappa Epsilon have both been petitioned for national chapters and should receive action on these petitions within the next few months.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, group organizations at the College have always been very popular with the majority of the student body, but not everyone has the time or inclination to attend these club meetings which take place either at noon where there might be a conflict of classes, or in the evening when many students have to work.

For these people and also the ones who do belong to clubs, there are numerous social and educational functions taking place on the campus throughout the school year. Films, both in English and foreign languages are shown weekly in the Lecture Hall of the Science Building. Guest speakers, whose topics are many and varied, come from all over the United States

and the world. For example, in 1968 General Maxwell Taylor spoke on his experiences in Viet Nam and answered questions from the floor, as did Senator Barry Goldwater when he discussed politics in general. Artists from the entertainment field have also appeared, such as The Sandpipers, Victor Borge, and Spanky and Our Gang. Idaho Senators Frank Church and Len Jordan are frequent visitors to the campus to talk on both world and national affairs and attend social functions.

One activity that came to the College through state channels is the Miss Idaho Pageant that is sponsored by the Boise Lions Club. Miss Ann McKibben was the first co-ed chosen to represent the College in 1963. The Miss Boise State College contest is sponsored by two of the clubs on campus—the Golden Z's and the Inter-Collegiate Knights.

The live and let live attitude of the Inter-mountain West has affected the attitude of the young people who live in this area. The great expanses of this country requiring long distance travel tends, for that reason, to make them more tolerant to those living in an area where there is little distance of travel.

The students are naturally interested in all aspects of life because the contrast of city and countryside, which is very obvious in the total picture of social and economic conditions, is more easily observed than in a tightly packed urban region. This appears to be the fundamental reason why there has been no rioting or major racial prejudices exhibited to the degree that we see in large cities.

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<sup>1</sup>*Les Bois*, 1946. p.54.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid*, 1947. p.49.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid*, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>*Idaho Daily Statesman*, April 12, 1948.

<sup>5</sup>*Boise State College Bulletin, Catalog Issue 1969-70*. p.20.

<sup>6</sup>From conversation between Dr. Chaffee and Dr. Marjorie Jackson, Boise State College Dean of Women. February 1970.

<sup>7</sup>From conversation between Dr. Chaffee and Mr. Edwin E. Wilkinson, Boise State College Dean of Men. February 1970.