

# FarmHouse Fraternity at Michigan State University

## A Pictorial History

Originally developed for presentation at the  
65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, March 2001

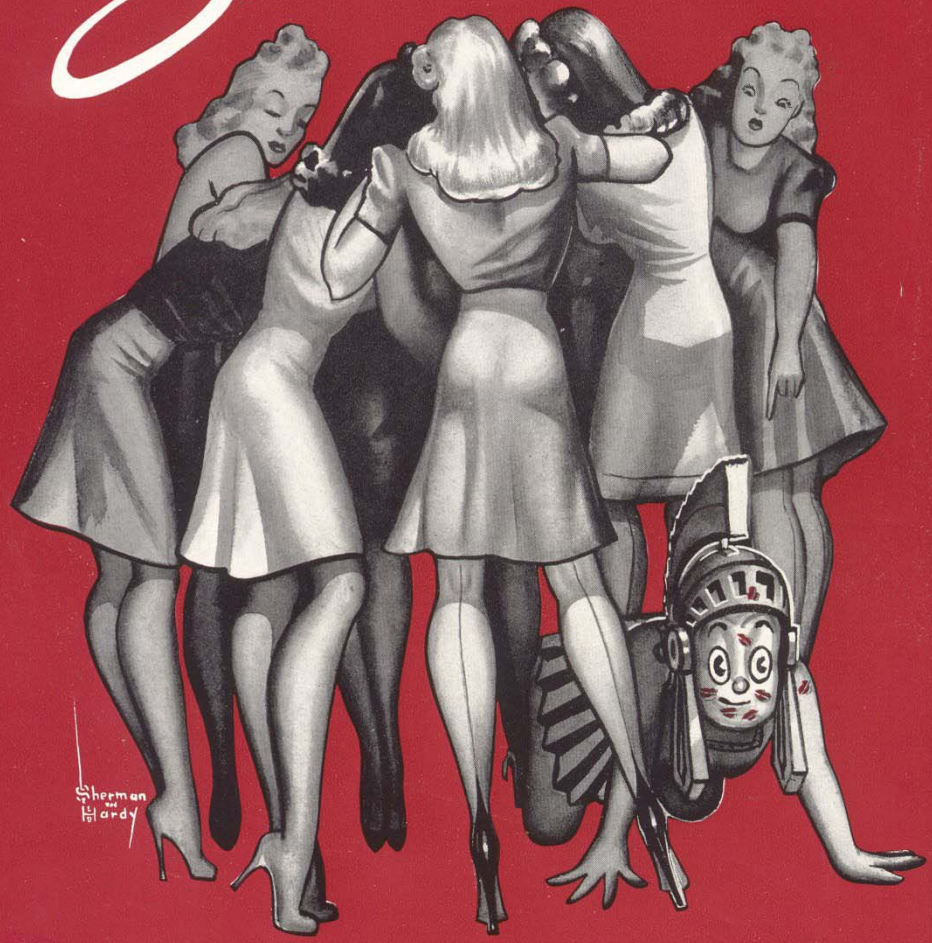
Mark E. Havitz, MI 77



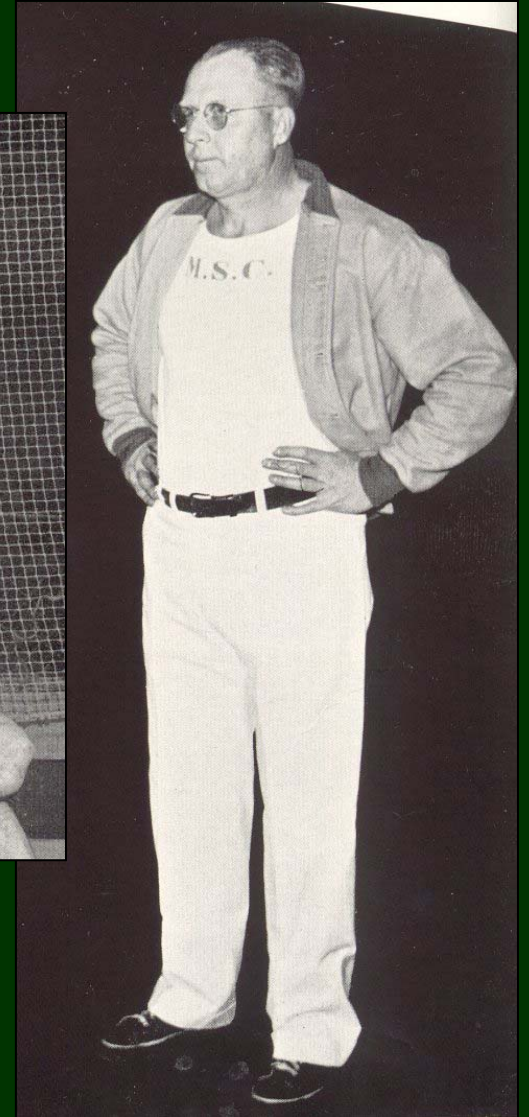
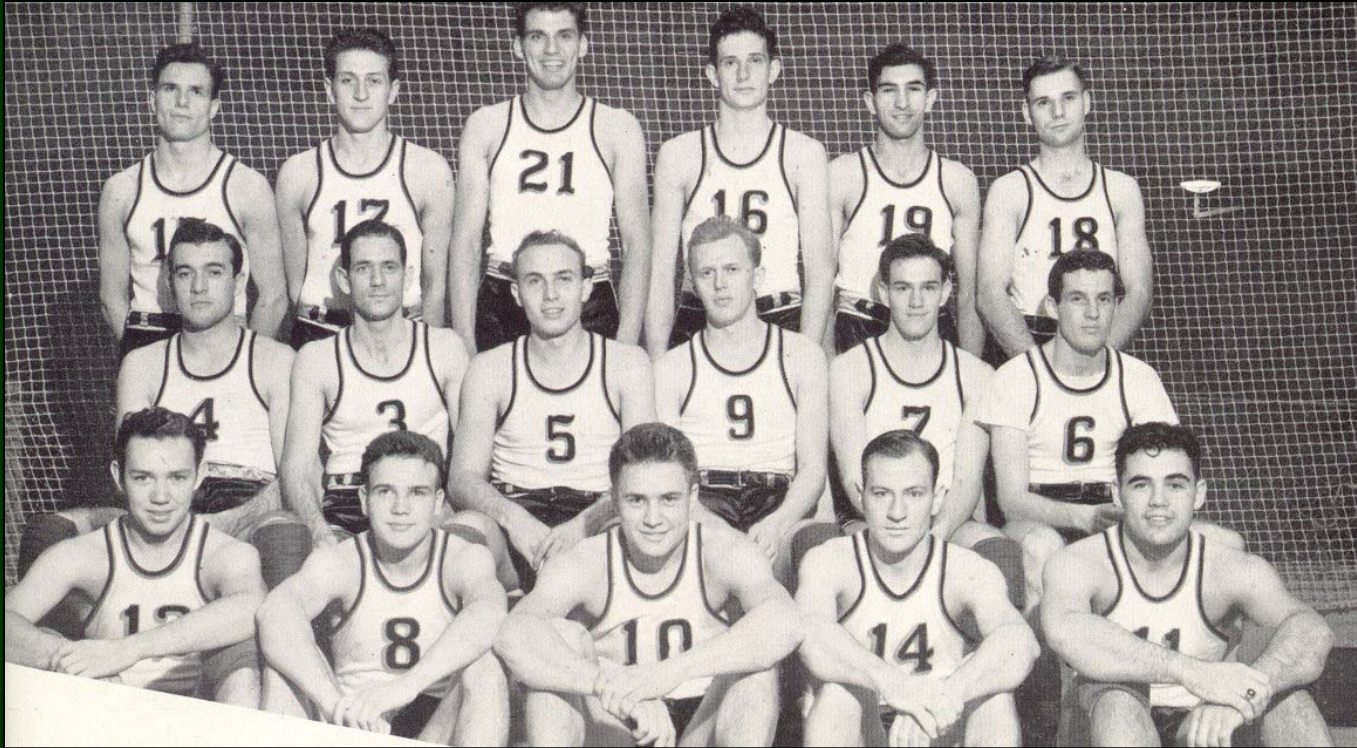
Part Four of Nine: War and Recovery --  
From 1940 to 1949

Although full-scale fighting had broken out in both Europe and Asia by the start of the decade, the U. S. was not yet involved in the fighting and the 1940s started almost business as usual on campus. The most obvious question accompanying this picture is "Why on earth is Sparty trying to escape?" [Source: 1942 *Wolverine*]

# "Sparty"



The basketball team was in good hands as Ben Van Alstyne (right) was MSC's all-time winning hoop coach. The 1941-42 squad finished 15-6. Chet Aubachon (#3) was the star. For the record, neither Van Alstyne nor Aubachon were FarmHouse initiates. [Source: 1942 *Wolverine*]



In the Fall of 1941 probably just weeks before Pearl Harbor shook the nation and the world, Brothers Bill Dickison ('42), Ted Ross ('41), and Marv Eppelheimer ('41) joined Mother Bartlett for a chat. Looks like both an ashtray and a spittoon on the coffee table. It's doubtful that they were there for Mother Bartlett! The yearbook photographer also found Jack Daniels ('40), Robert Manby ('41), Marv Eppelheimer ('41), and Don Chamberlain ('41) playing cards. Apparently unaware of the photographer, it appears that Daniels is about to pull an extra Ace out of his pocket! [Source: 1942 *Wolverine*]



Jack Daniels passed away as this project was nearing completion in 2002. The *Sturgis Journal* noted that he worked for a dairy in Detroit, Kellogg's in Battle Creek, and for 25 years at American Industrial Services in Sturgis. He was also co-owner of R&J Stripping and drove school bus for Centreville from 1975-1985 [where he toted several future FH members to and from school]. Jack was named Centreville's Citizen of the Year for years of community service which included presidency of the village council, coaching Little League and high school basketball, and as president of the Athletic Boosters. Jack is a member of Centreville High School's Sports Hall of Fame. [Source: *Sturgis Journal*, August 14, 2002]. Dickison is the retired chief of the management science Division at Wright Paterson Air Force Base in Sault Ste. Marie, Ross is a retired salesman in South Carolina, and Manby is a retired technical writer from Ford Motor Company. Chamberlain has passed away.

Like the rest of his Fraternity brothers, however, Marv Eppelheimer (MI '41) did more than socialize and play cards. Indeed, he was in the vanguard of one of Michigan State FarmHouse's great multi-generational families. Marv and his brother Don, MI '39 were both very active on campus. Don served as President of FarmHouse and both were members of the MSU Livestock Judging Team. Marv and Don each had several sons who were FarmHouse mainstays. Don's two sons were Don (MI '69) and Bob (MI '74), whereas Marv's included Dave "Flicker" (MI '73) and Chad (MI '74). [Source: 1939, 1942, 1971, and 1975 MSU FarmHouse composites]



Don Sr.



Marv



Bob



Don Jr.



Dave



Chad

When the war did arrive, both of the senior Eppelheimers served. Marv's son Chad wrote: "Marvin Eppelheimer, US Army Cavalry was transporting from the Philippines as part of the main Japanese island invasion force when the atomic bombs were dropped and was reassigned to the Japanese post-war occupation force. Donald Louis Eppelheimer, was a US Naval officer I believe on a Frigate or Destroyer serving in the Pacific Theater and possibly involved in at least one large battle. I think his ship was credited with a Kamikaze kill."

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the war began in earnest for the United States. ROTC drills and reviews such as this one, although already common sights on campus, took on a new sense of urgency. [Source: 1942 *Wolverine*]



# 'No More Cokes at Union Grill' - Foster

By JINNY CLARK

Students counting on keeping coke dates at the Union grill this afternoon or any other afternoon from now on had better either cancel them or plan on sipping a substitute, because there will be no more cokes available in the Grill, it was announced by E. G. Foster, Union manager.

As a result of sugar shortage, there has been a wholesale cut in coke sales all over the country,

and until the 1941 cane and beet harvest next fall, there is little possibility of any increase in coke sales here, according to Foster.

Michigan State's Union grill has long held a position as the foremost single distribution center of cokes in the middle-west, which title it now relinquishes in the interest of national defense.

Statistics show that approximately 56,000 cokes a year are pushed across the counter of the

grill by white-jacketed employes. An average of 2,000 thirsty students jam the grill every day, with hot weather boosting this population considerably.

Foster suggested that there may be several drinks, such as fruit juices and carbonated flavor mixtures, which will form satisfactory substitutes for the nation's number one college favorite, now honorably extinct on Michigan State's campus.



The war affected campus life in many obvious and occasionally curious ways. The above newspaper clipping was in the 1942 yearbook that I purchased nearly 60 years later. It explains that no Cokes would be sold in the MSC Union Grill until the sugar beet harvest came in! The 56,000 Cokes sold per year at the Union probably seemed like a lot at the time, but surely pales in comparison with consumption by today's massive student body! [Source: 1941 *Michigan State News*]

I am not sure whether this East Lansing milkman (left) had not yet converted to internal combustion power or whether he reverted back to horse power to save fuel. Regardless, it is not surprising that milk was still delivered in bottles during the 1940s! [Source: 1945 *Wolverine*]

Numbers dropped dramatically at both MSC and in FarmHouse as men went into the service. I've selected the 1943-1944 composite to represent this decade because it shows that most FarmHouse men were either gone or soon to be enrolled in the armed services. Many still on campus were enrolled in veterinary medicine or were classified as 4-F (physically unable to serve) and others were in ROTC. The Sunset Street house was rented out to female students and the remaining men moved into smaller quarters at the Hendrick House co-op from 1943-1945. The Chapter advisor (seated front row right) is Dr. Karl T. Wright. More on him later. [Source: 1944 MSU FarmHouse composite]



Top row: (left to right) C. Kline, W. Freeland, R. Manby, M. Parlin. Second row: V. Westfall, B. Porter, W. White, J. Venema, R. Crane. Bottom row: K. Frey, B. Brewster, B. Carpenter, S. Grossfeld, K. Wright.



The Fall 2002 issue of *Pearls and Rubies* noted that “1,022 FarmHouse men (forty percent of our total initiated membership at the time) were called to service.” *Pearls and Rubies* also noted that fifty-nine percent of them were commissioned officers. Nationally, thirty-nine FarmHouse men lost their lives in the War. Five MSC FarmHouse men made the supreme sacrifice. Please join me in a moment of silence for our World War II Gold Stars. From left to right they are: Edwin Hankinson '37 US Navy, Miles Newell '38 US Air Force, Robert Henny '40 US Army, Paul Ehman '41 US Air Force, and Garth Snider '43 US Army. [Source: 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1943 MSU FarmHouse composites]



At this point, I would like to acknowledge George Greenleaf (MI '46), Robert Fox (MI '54), Norm Veliquette (MI '63), Charlie Wolgamood (MI '79) and Rich Miller (MI '81) each of whom contributed money to help me restore the WWII memorial plaque in the Spring of 2001 and to numerous anonymous donors who topped up the donations at the Anniversary Celebration. The plaque was formally presented back to the Active Chapter in March 2001 at the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. Presenter George Greenleaf was, himself a veteran of the US Army, twice wounded in World War II.

Nor should we forget others who served. The next few pages provide but a partial list. I am hopeful that we can produce a more complete record in the future.

Allyn VanDyke '40, pictured here in his ROTC uniform while posing with the 1942 MSC Livestock Judging Team, was in the Army and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. His son Allyn Jr. was initiated into FarmHouse in 1967. [Source: 1942 MSC Wolverine, personal communication with Chad Eppelheimer]

Ray Ely '38 (right), served in US Army during WWII from 1942 to 1944. His son Lane '64 has enjoyed a productive career on the Dairy Science faculty at the University of Georgia. Source: 1939 FarmHouse composite, personal communication with Lane Ely.]

Bob Hakala '46, pictured later in this presentation, was with the US Army Air Corps. He earned flight officer wings and was severely injured in a flying accident at Fort Bragg, NC. Bob's cousin Doug Berlin Mi 42 (right), was a member of Co. B 714th Tank Battalion, 12th Armored Division, Europe, 1944-1946. Both men are originally from Ironwood. Doug and his two grandsons recently attended the 55th Reunion of the 12th Armored Division Association. October 6, 2001 where the 12th Armored Division Memorial Museum, Abilene, TX was dedicated as a Memorial to the 817 "Hell Cat" buddies killed in action from 1944 to 1945. The Museum, the only Armored Museum in USA now lives as an educational model in partnership with the History Department of Abilene Christian University. Web Site: <http://www.12tharmoreddivision.com/> [Source: 1947 FarmHouse composite, personal communication with Doug Berlin]



The photo above right was taken 24 March, 1945 in Speyer, Germany. On tank, left to right: Sgt. Rothell, tank commander; Cpl. Doug Berlin, liaison; T/5 Koenig, driver; PFC Harrel, loader man. Standing: T/5 Edwards, assault driver; Cpl Horowitz, gunner. Co. B, crossed the Rhine at 3 a.m. on 27 March, 1945 at Worms, Germany. [Courtesy Doug Berlin]

Buddies George Greenleaf '46 (left) and Dick Goodale '42 (right), pictured here in their ROTC uniforms as members of MSC's 1942 Block and Bridle club, pledged together though the war interrupted both of their academic careers. George wrote: "Dick Goodale and I went in service as ROTC grads in the fall quarter of 1942, while attending Michigan State. We marched off the graduating platform in June and with all the ROTC fellows were sent to Camp McCoy (WISC). We both graduated from Officer Candidate School in Fort Benning on 13 Dec 1943 as 2nd Lt, Infantry. I served in Europe, 1st Army - was wounded twice and returned home in December, 1945. I also served in the Korean affair in 1949 and 1950 - as Education Officer at Camp McCoy, graduating over 1500 young men from the fourth grade during the year I served. It was a great experience for me - just tough on my young family." [Source: personal correspondence with George Greenleaf]



Greenleaf and Goodale were there when the Fraternity lived in Hendrick House co-op during some of the war years. This was a much smaller facility than the Sunset Street house. Goodale recently wrote that one of his best memories of the time was "sleeping on the cold porch and the small storage closet when there wasn't room on the porch." Dr. Goodale, now in his eighties and semi-retired in Tawas City, splits his time serving MSU as a horticultural program assistant and enjoying his hobby, calling owls! He served many years as a veterinarian. For the rest of this picture, see the next page. [Source: 1942 *Wolverine*, personal correspondence with Dick Goodale.]

Jim Lay '48 provided a brief summary of his service in the Fall of 2004: "Sept. 17, the 60th anniversary of my introduction into WWII combat, we jumped; took and held the Grave Bridge in 'Operation Market Garden'. After 63 days of combat in Holland, we were brought to France. Next, we rushed to the front of the Battle of the Bulge. On Dec. 20 (I received my first Purple Heart) we met the 1st SS Panzer. On Feb. 9 I received my 2<sup>nd</sup> Purple Heart. After the Battle of the Bulge, we advanced until we met the Russians across the Elbe." Information taken from his DD214 includes: Entered Service 2 Dec. 1942 -- honorable discharge 3 Jan. 1946. Served with 1st Battalion 504 Parachute Infantry Battalion- Earned Combat Infantry Badge, Parachutist's Badge. Battles: Ardennes; Rhineland; Central Europe. Decorations: American Theatre Ribbon; EAME Ribbon W 3 bronze stars; Good Conduct Medal; Purple Heart with 1 cluster; Bronze Star; Distinguished Unit Badge with Bronze Arrowhead; Belgian Militaire Orde Fourragere; World War II Victory Medal, Northwest Valley Veterans Association Honor Award, placed wreath at Tomb of Unknown soldier. Lay served many years with Eli Lilly until his retirement to Arizona. [Source: Personal communication with Dick Jung '42]



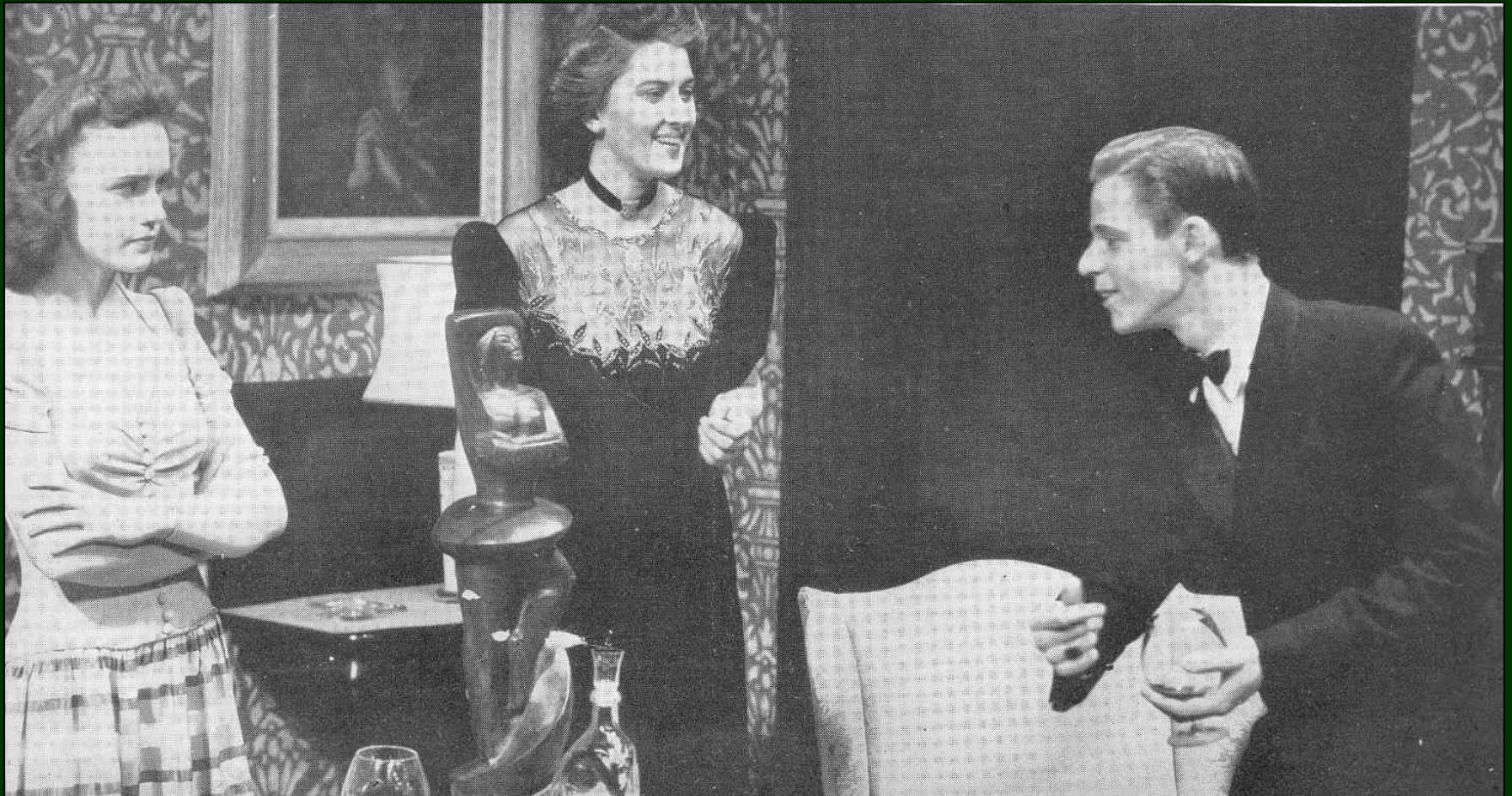
In 1944, despite the fact that most of its active members were not on campus at the time and the Chapter house was being sub-let, the Fraternity had taken the gutsy move of signing a mortgage to buy the Sunset Street property. K. T. Wright '36 later noted that MSC Agricultural Economics Professor Vern Freeman (below) developed the financing plan and provided much of the guidance for this endeavor. A graduate of MAC in class of 1908, Freeman was initiated as an Associate Member in FarmHouse in 1943.



Years later, Vern received the 1978 Daryl Snyder award from the Chapter and achieved legendary status at the 1978 Crescent Ball. It seems there were so many women at the Burcham Hills retirement center where he lived, that he couldn't decide who to take! Unfortunately, the choice of too many potential dates wasn't a dilemma faced by most of the active members! Dr. Freeman died in 1991 at age 102. [Photo source: 1937 *Wolverine*]

This Block and Bridle club photo, taken during the 1941-1942 school year illustrates the extent of FarmHouse involvement in both campus affairs and the war. Those in uniform include the last four men in the top row (Bob Braden '42, George Greenleaf '46, Dick Goodale '42, and Walt Weber '41) and one in the front row (Al Van Dyke '40). Those in civvies include Don Eppelheimer '39 (front row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left), John Foster '\_\_\_ (front row, far right), Bob McCrea '\_\_\_ (2<sup>nd</sup> row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left), Milt Taylor '40 (3<sup>rd</sup> row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left), Bill Garvey '40 (3<sup>rd</sup> row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left), Marv Eppelheimer '41 (3<sup>rd</sup> row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from right), Bob Renz '41 (2<sup>nd</sup> from right), and Merle Parlin '40 (3<sup>rd</sup> row, far right). [Photo source: 1942 *Wolverine*]

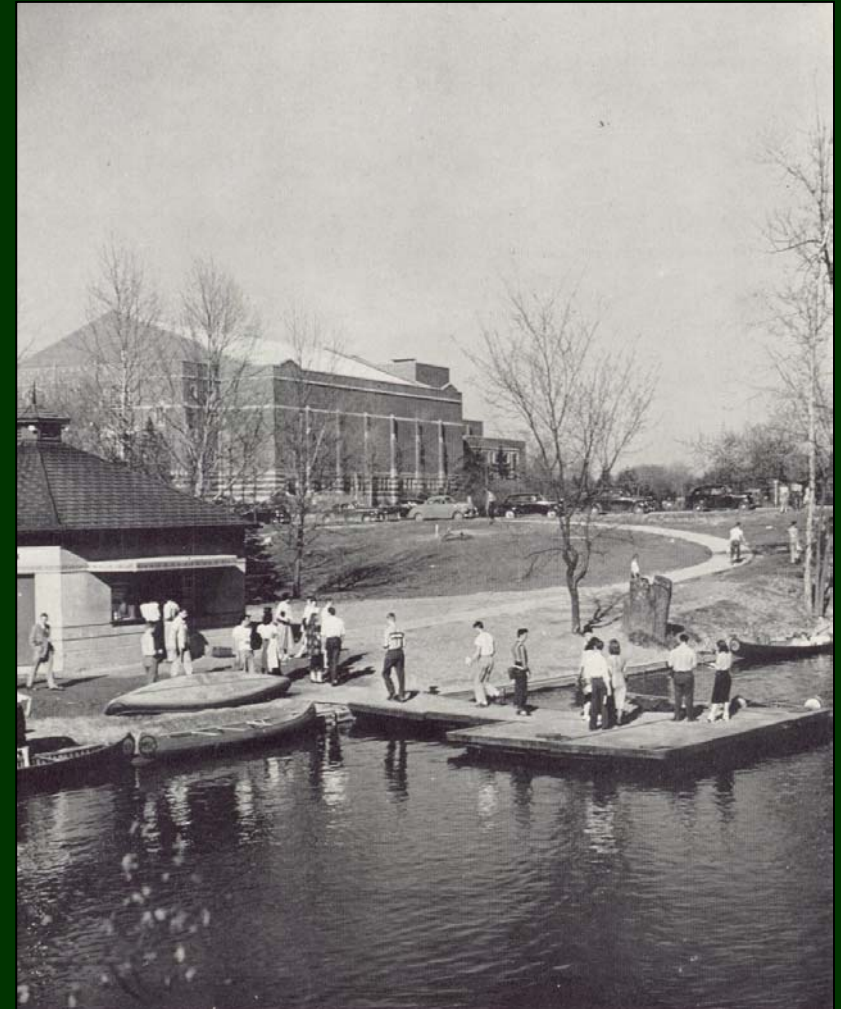
The male lead in the fall 1944 campus-wide production, *Kind Lady*, was none other than FarmHouse man Howie DeWolf '42. He's pictured at right, conversing with Kay Telfer who played his fiancée and Fran Joyner who played the lead as her aunt. Howie was also pictured in the 1945 *Wolverine* as one of six (this is not a typo or a mistake) graduates in the entire College of Agriculture, so thin were the campus ranks given the ongoing war effort. DeWolf later carved out a distinguished career in architecture. More on him later! [Source: 1945 *Wolverine*]





Campus quickly returned to normal after the war as evidenced by the canoes in the river (below). The MSC Auditorium stands proudly in the background. [Source: 1949 *Wolverine*]

Until occupied by FarmHouse during the War, Hendrick House (above) had been a co-op housing women. Phone numbers were apparently less flexible in those days. Consequently, the men answered, with good-nature, numerous phone calls from confused men seeking to reach the women who had previously lived there! Pictured above is a shot of the FarmHouse living room, taken during the 1944-1945 academic year. From left: George Lauff '45, Dale Brown '43, Dave Larson '45 (adjusting the radio dial), Cecil Kerr '45, Herman Lung '43, and Jacob Venema '43. After graduation Dale Brown owned an elevator in Owosso and George Lauff capped his career as Director for Program Development at MSU's Kellogg Biological Station. [Source: 1945 *Wolverine*]



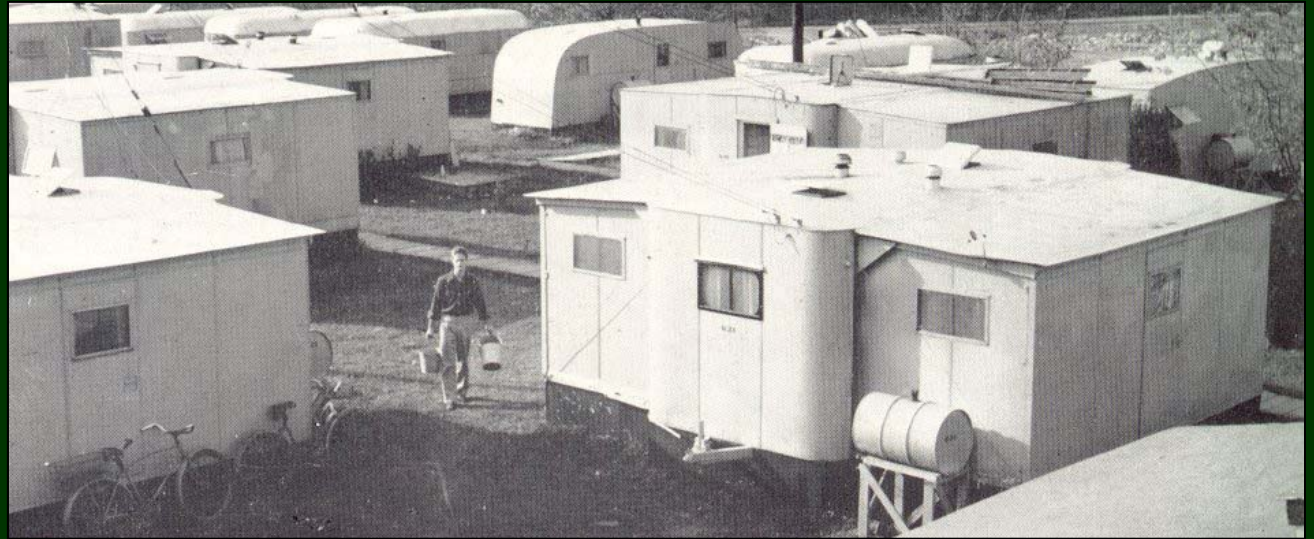
The College thrived under the guidance of the man who would become Michigan State's greatest president, John Hannah (right). Taking the reigns from his father-in-law Robert Shaw, Hannah assumed that post in 1941. [Source: 1949 *Wolverine*]



Pictured below is the State Board of Agriculture, forerunner of the MSU Board of Trustees. As World War II drew to a close its members included (from left): Charles Wilkins, Winfred Armstrong, Forest Akers, Sarah Van Hoosen Jones, John Hannah (President), William Berkey, Melville McPherson, Eugene Elliot, Clark Brody, and Karl McDonel. Melville McPherson, a farmer from Lowell, also raised a number of talented children. More on them later! [Source: 1945 *Wolverine*]



Enrollment leapt from 5000 pre-war to 10,000 by the end of the decade. Taking its name a bit too literally, Spartan Village (right) was truly “spartan” in 1949.

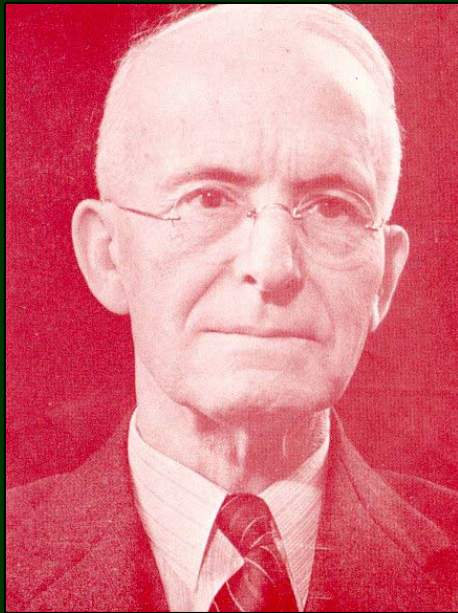


Campus underwent an enormous expansion. New academic buildings included Natural Science (lower left), at the northern terminus of Farm Lane and Agricultural Engineering (lower right) a few blocks south at the intersection of Shaw and Farm Lanes. [Source: 1949 *Wolverine*]



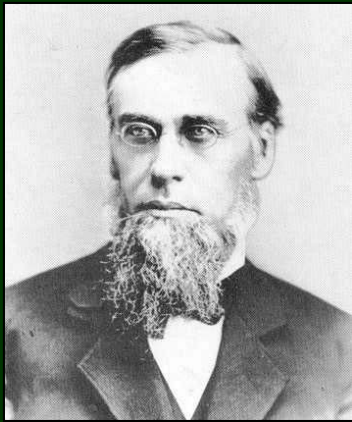


Brand new Berkey Hall, named after former dean William Berkey, was the largest classroom building in the world at the time of its completion. [Photo sources, 1942 *Wolverine*, MSU Website; text source 1955 *Wolverine*]



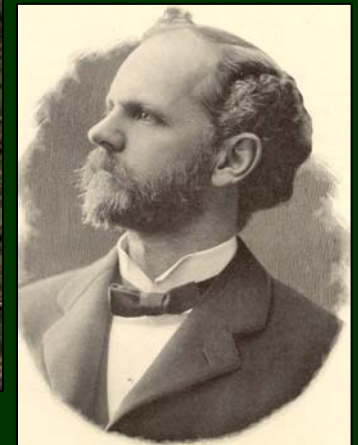
Although military surplus quonset huts served as temporary residents for thousands of students, many new dorms were constructed to meet the burgeoning student demand. One, in a complex built on the old northwest corner of campus between Circle Drive and Grand River Avenue, honored Sarah Langdon Williams, wife of the first MAC president Joseph Williams (inset). Williams, Campbell, and Mayo halls were all actually completed prior to the US entry into World War II. [Source: 1955 *Wolverine*, MSU Website]





Another dormitory honored Theophilus Abbot, MAC president from 1862 to 1885. Here's Abbot Hall. East Lansing's Abbot Street, running north from campus at the Union Building, is also named after president Abbot.

Former president Snyder, who served from 1896 to 1915 (you saw him earlier riding with R. E. Olds and President Theodore Roosevelt), was recognized with the naming of still another dormitory. The latter two dormitories (Abbot and Snyder) face the current FarmHouse from across Bogue Street. [Photo sources: Former presidents, 1955 *Wolverine*; buildings, MSU Website.]



Former registrar Elida Yakely (below right), who began service with the College in 1908, was also honored with the naming of Yakely Hall (below left). For years, Williams, Yakely, Landon, and Mary Mayo dorms were part of an all-women's complex which became affectionately known on campus as "the virgin islands." [Photo sources: 1929 *Wolverine*, MSU Website]

As an aside, the large Swamp white oak standing near Mayo Hall (but not pictured here) is most likely the oldest tree on campus. It has been dated at over 200 years old, rising as a seedling about the time George Washington took the oath as first President of the United States in 1789. Many of the mature oaks still standing near the old tree were planted from acorns a century later by professor William James Beal. [Text source: Spring 2001 *MSU Today*]





Longtime Dean of Agriculture during the early to middle years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Earnest Anthony arrived in 1928, became Dean in 1932 and made many important contributions to MSC as one of President Hannah's right-hand men. As noted earlier, he was on the speaker roster at the FarmHouse Chartering banquet. Dean Anthony was honored with the naming of the new animal science building. [Photo sources: 1939 *Wolverine*, MSU Website]





Pictured at left is former Dean of Veterinary Medicine, Ward Giltner. [Source: 1929 *Wolverine*]

Giltner Hall (below) stands across the street from the Natural Sciences Building. When constructed in the 1940s it served MSC as the Vet School. [Source: 1949 *Wolverine*]



# STATE MAKES BIG 10

EXTRA | Michigan State News | EXTRA

M.S.C. DAILY STUDENT PUBLICATION

ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS AND SOCIETY PAGES 12-14

1949-1950

Campus construction was very visible, but academic progress was also rapid. In addition, President Hannah lead MSC into the Western Conference (more commonly known as the Big 10) during this era, despite at least one negative vote from existing conference members. It seems that our neighbors in Ann Arbor still had some problems co-existing on par with the cow college to the north. MSC replaced the recently departed University of Chicago and remained the newest member of the conference until Penn State came on board in the early 1990s. The *State News* ran an "Extra" edition in which the front page aerial photo shows a still upper-deck-less stadium. [Source: 1949 *Wolverine*]



### President's Statement

**MSC Had Blessing Of Sports**

When statement of the President, President Hannah said, "I am very gratified that the conference has chosen Michigan State to membership this year and we are confident that we will be able to contribute to the athletic program."

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### Celebration

## Wilson Voices Invitation

MEMBERS OF THE STATE NEWS



### State Five Drubbed 16 Big Nine Kings

Spartans Outscored Conference Champion Ohio State Team, 64-41

### Ohioans Get Local Honor In Wrestling

Local wrestlers from Ohio State University were honored for their achievements in the sport.

### Ag Council Names Date For Annual Achievement Fete

The Agricultural Council has announced the date for its annual achievement festival.

### Deveres Admission

Information regarding the admission process for Deveres University.

### A Message From The Governor

The Governor of Michigan has sent a message regarding the state's progress and future.

### Five Plans

Details of five different plans or projects.

### Chicago Quiz

A quiz about the city of Chicago.

### State-Rated High In Foreign Studies

Michigan State College is ranked highly for its foreign studies program.

### Chicago Quiz

Continuation of the Chicago quiz.

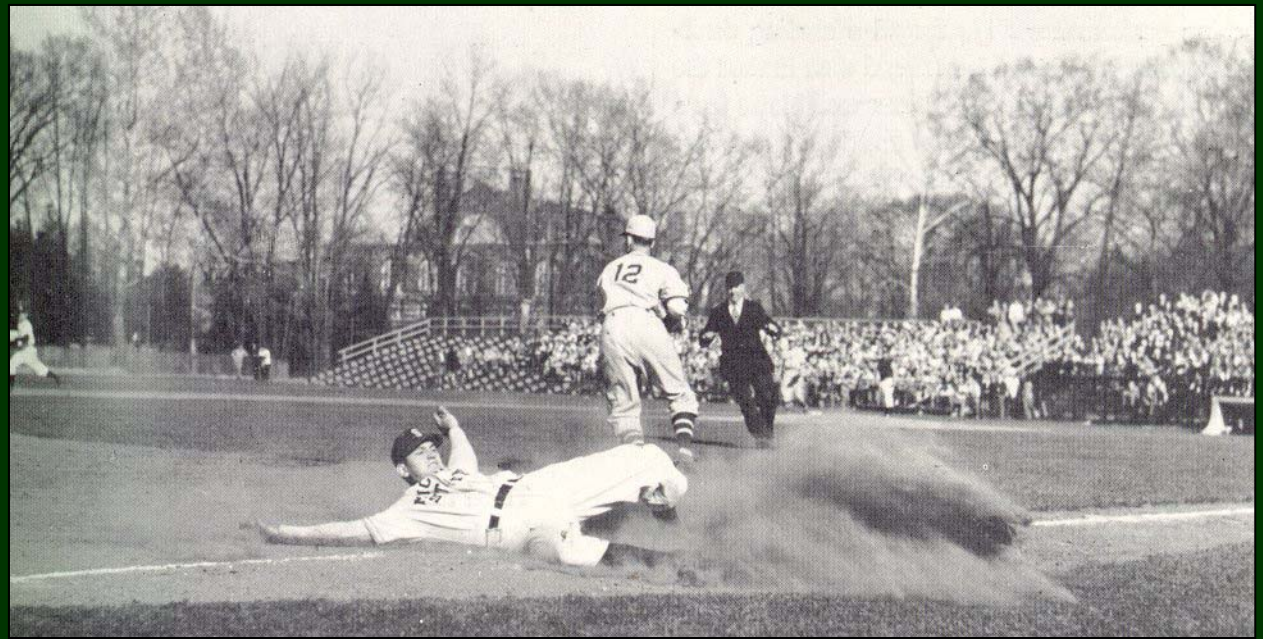
### State-Rated High In Foreign Studies

Continuation of the article about foreign studies.



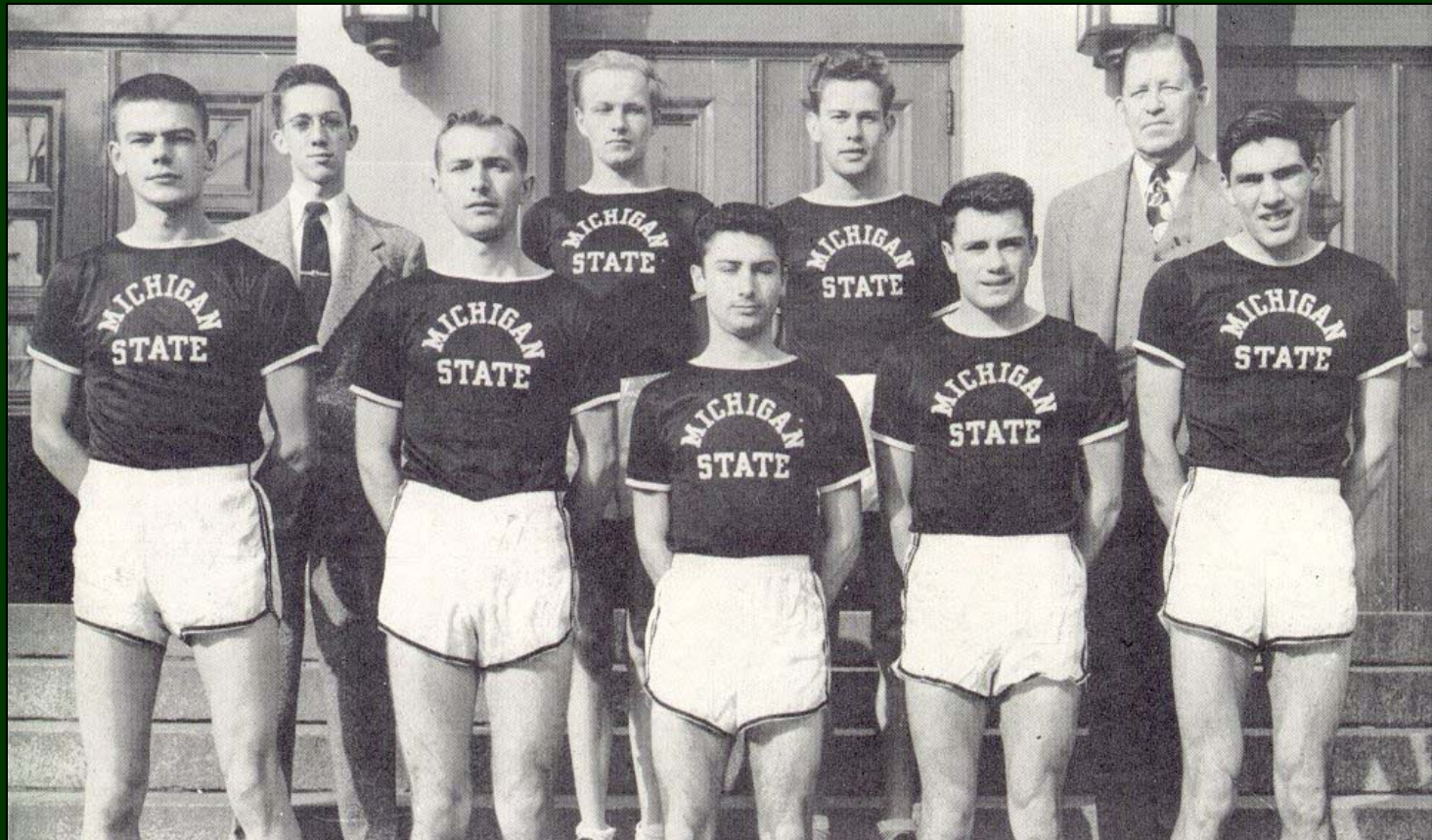
This Helped

The 1949 baseball team went 19-8 (bottom right). The picture above documents their hustle (Circle IM Building, built in 1918, is visible in the background). They boasted an excellent pitcher - Robin Roberts (not a FH initiate, below left), who later had a Hall of Fame career with the Philadelphia Phillies. [Source: 1949 *Wolverine*, *Spartan Saga*]





All-American distance ace Tom Irmen '47 (front row far left) is arguably this FarmHouse chapter's greatest athlete to date. "Sam" as he was known to his brothers, helped lead the 1948 MSC cross country team to the NCAA championship (one of eight national cross country titles that MSC/MSU captured between 1939 and 1959). Ironically, FarmHouse played a big role in his athletic career. He wrote: "I was goaded into representing FH in the 1947 InterFraternity track meet as a sophomore 'hell week' pledge. Despite never having competed in varsity sports in High School, I won the mile run. This led to making both the MSC track and cross-country team, captaining the 1948-49 track team, member of the MSC National Champion Cross Country Team 1948, and most importantly, a full scholarship for my last 2 years at MSC." His coach Karl Schlademan (back row far right) was mentor for six of those NCAA victories and is now in the MSU Athletic Hall of Fame. Tom's son Tom Jr. (not a FarmHouse initiate) captained the Spartan cross country team in the early 1980s. [Photo source: 1949 *Wolverine*, text source is *Spartan Saga: A History of Michigan State Athletics* and personal correspondence with Tom Irmen]



At least three other FarmHouse men participated in varsity athletics during the 1940s. Don Chamberlain '41 (left) was on the 1940 and 1941 football teams. After graduation, he advanced to the rank of Lt. Colonel in the military before entering the real estate field. Clifford Fletcher '45 (center), who later made his career as a veterinarian, was on the wrestling team. Benjamin Porter '44 (right) was a member of the MSU tennis team in the late 1940s. After graduation he carved out a career with Consumers Power company. [Source: 1943, 1945 and 1949 FarmHouse Composites]



Next to the “fight song” the most played music on a college campus is probably the alma mater. Prior to 1948, the MSC alma mater was the aptly named “Close Beside the Winding Cedar” which, despite the name, had actually been borrowed from Cornell University. In 1948, that song was replaced with a piece titled “The Shadows.” Based on a tune from the Donizetti opera “Lucia di Lammermoor, The now beloved “MSU Shadows” was arranged by MSC music professor H. Owen Reed.

I believe that this photo of the Abbott Street entrance off Grand River Avenue, though taken recently, captures the essence and mood of the MSC campus of the mid-20th century. [Photo by Tim Potter, copyright MSU Alumni Association, 2002]





Although “Mrs. D. Decker” served as cook and house mother for the Club during its time at the 323 Grand River Avenue address, Mrs. Nell Bartlett (left circa 1942, right 1953), is generally recognized as our Chapter’s first housemother. She served FarmHouse from 1937-1953. FarmHouse was the first MSC fraternity to have a housemother (they were mandatory at sororities at this time) and FarmHouse was such a good example that for a time, housemothers were made mandatory at fraternities as well. Upon Mother Bartlett’s passing the *Pearls and Rubies* noted that “She was a model Housemother, a gracious hostess, a knowledgeable consultant, and an open-hearted confidant to approximately 400 FarmHouse men.” [Photo source: Bob Braden '42 personal collection; 1953 MSU FarmHouse Composite]



Mother Bartlett with (from left) Clayton Cory '46, Tom Irmen '47, Ray Peffers '46, George Wilson '46, and Robert Ruhstorfer '49. [Source: 1949 *Wolverine*]



This is Mother Bartlett (seated) at a late 1970s, either 1978 or 1979, FH summer picnic in Grand Rapids with some men from the 40s and 50s. I believe that Tony Rapes and Al VanDyke are included. She died in 1980. [Source: Mark Havitz, personal photo collection]

“Going to MSC was my first extended time away from home. I am not ashamed to say I missed my family. Mother Bartlett helped me bridge that gap and for that I am forever grateful.” - Tom “Sam” Irmen, 2002 [Source: Personal correspondence with Mark Havitz]

In the Spring of 2003, Dave Geisler '49 (top right) sent an e-mail response to an obituary I had posted for Norm Braun '48. Dave's story recalled a long-ago road trip undertaken by some MSC FarmHouse men. Dave wrote "Sorry to hear about Norm Braun's passing. I don't like to hear about men my age dying. I remember Norm very well. I think it was in 1949 that we took a trip to Colorado for a FH chapter initiation. Indeed, we had a great time. We had enough for two car loads and, of course, we drove non-stop (before express-ways). Probably one of the highlights of the trip was that they served 3.2% beer in Colorado and all of us under 21's could buy it. Another memorable experience was seeing the Horsetooth Dam/reservoir project being constructed up in the mountains. We got acquainted with the chief engineer (at a bar, of course) on the project and we spent a half day with him touring the construction site. That reservoir catches water on the eastern side of the Rockies and supplies water to Denver. For those days, it was a massive project."



The second photo shows (from left) Jim Lay '48, Bob Ruhstorfer '48 (with head lowered), Ben Porter '44, the project engineer, Don Brinks '49, C. Dean Allen '48, George Wilson '46, and Norm Braun '48 at the Horsetooth reservoir site, just west of Ft. Collins. Men in the third photo include, from left, Norm Braun, Ben Porter, Fred Buckham, Dave Geisler.



Dave's memory is indeed accurate as the CSU Chapter received their Charter in April of 1949, the only chapter to do so during this decade, and the first FarmHouse chapter to Charter since MSC received ours in 1936. [Text source: Personal correspondence with Dave Geisler and Sam Irmen. Photo sources: 1949 Composite, personal collection of Dave Geisler]

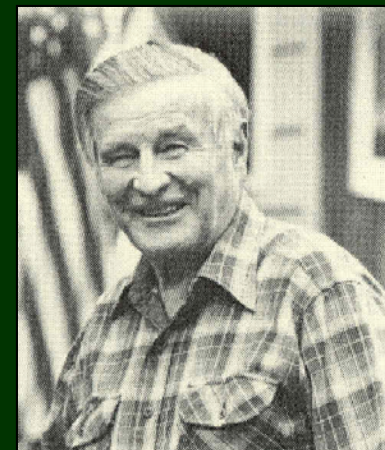


Many other stories could be told, but the following half-dozen or so stories about and from FarmHouse men from the 1940s provide examples of the diverse and successful careers of men from this era:



Gustaf Hultman '40 is as of this writing, the retired Superintendent of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway in northern Wisconsin. My uncle Bob Kinney was a homeowner along the river at the time when the National Scenic Riverway was being created in the early 1980s. The National Park Service was busy buying up property to preserve the wild St. Croix and its tributary streams. On a visit in 1982 I asked my uncle if he knew of my fraternity brother Gus Hultman. He replied "Gus Hultman! That horse's ass! Are you sure you're proud of him?" I knew that uncle Bob wasn't very big on environmental preservation so I immediately figured that Gus was doing a good job! [Source: 1941 MSU FarmHouse composite]

Another who contributed immensely to the natural resources field was Bob Hakala '46. Previously introduced as a World War II veteran, his career as a forester and naturalist included six years at Isle Royale National Park where he initiated interpretive services (visitor education and information). He later served as curator and new parks planner for the National Park Service, developing exhibits for some 20 national parks. He came to Alaska in 1962 as regional chief of interpretive services and his accomplishments included development of the Marine Highway interpretive program. He was active in 4-H as a youth and throughout his career he worked with youth camps and nature trails. He and his wife Jean started a 4-H forestry club and were involved in the Switzer Creek project, now the Richard Marriot Memorial Trail. He received many professional awards for his work. The Forest Service established a regional award named in his honor. He was a member of the Society of American Foresters, the National Forestry Honorary Society and Xi Sigma Pi. Bob Hakala, passed away in Juneau, Alaska in 2001. [Source: D. Robert Hakala funeral program]



Dr. Kenneth Frey '42 is a former MSU faculty member, FarmHouse chapter advisor and advisor of other ag-related clubs and societies in 40s and 50s. He served as president of Crop Science Society of America (late 1970s) and President of the American Society of Agronomy (mid 1980s). He is currently distinguished Professor of Agronomy at Iowa State University and makes his home in Ames, IA. [Source: 1944 MSU FarmHouse composite]



Fred Buckham '48 was a prominent farmer and stockman in Schoolcraft, MI. He co-owned Buckham Farms with his twin brother George. Mr. Buckham served on the boards of directors of the Federal Land Bank, Michigan Sheep Breeders Association, and the Michigan Cattle Breeders Association. He was a longtime 4-H leader and chairman of the Kalamazoo County Road Commission. Fred Buckham died 1986. [Source: 1949 MSU FarmHouse composite]

Most of you probably recognize this corporate logo and one or more of these three men! [Source: 1947, 1949 and 1951 MSU FarmHouse composites].



The Andersons began operations in Maumee, OH in 1947 with one grain elevator and 500,000 bushels of storage capacity, today has four operating groups: agriculture, rail, retail, and processing. Recognized as one of the truly principled companies in the world, the Statement of Principles in their 2001 Annual Report begins “This Company is founded on the belief that all of us are subject to a higher and divine authority, and that we should aspire to goodness, integrity and those virtues which we discern to be consistent with divine will.” Given those “principles,” it is not inconsistent that many of its “principals” were MSU FarmHouse men.

Tom Anderson '46 (above left) served many years as Chairman of The Andersons. He is currently Chairman Emeritus. Tom's brother Richard Anderson '49 (above center) served as President and CEO and is currently Chairman. Tom Irmen '47 (above right) was, as already noted, an All-American athlete for the Spartans. Now retired, Mr. Irmen served for many years as Chair of International Relations and as Operations Manager for the Grain Group. The Andersons reported 2001 revenues of \$985 million and their shares earned 19%. Several members of the next generation of Anderson and Irmen families have assumed high level positions within The Andersons and elsewhere in business and community service.

Several times in the past few years I have posed the question, “Who among your peers best represented FarmHouse ideals?” Tom Irmen is one who has responded. He wrote, “I would have to say Dick Anderson. Even though we were in different grades in High School, we were close friends. That friendship carried through MSU and has lasted a lifetime. His business and work ethics, positive attitude, and leadership qualities fit perfectly into the FarmHouse ideals. Those same qualities have made him an outstanding businessman and family man. Who has most distinguished themselves since graduation? I think I would have to go back to Dick Anderson on this one. He not only became the leader of The Andersons, Inc., but in the Toledo area as well.” Irmen’s comments were echoed by George Greenleaf of Mt. Gilead, Ohio who added that Dick Anderson is “very highly thought of in Ag Circles in this country. Many awards and honors at both industry and university levels.”

The Andersons’ 2002 Board of Directors included Dick (front row left) and Tom (second row left). Brother Don (second row right) was not an MSU FarmHouse initiate, but his son Steve ‘75 served as MSU Chapter President in 1977.





Tom Irmen also responded to my query “What was the funniest thing that happened during your FarmHouse days?” Tom wrote: “ We had a fraternity brother named John Baker. John was a great guy whose real strength was his practicality. He cut to the core of issues quickly and his instincts led to quick solutions. Spelling and note taking were his main weaknesses. He tended to spell phonetically and condense his class notes to simple words, rather than sentences. It was unbelievable that he could make any sense out of the notes later, but somehow he did. When we fraternity brothers wanted a good laugh we asked John to share his notes -- or sometimes helped ourselves. John also loved to play euchre as did many in the house. In honor of John and his spelling weaknesses, we had an annual Euchre tournament with the winning team listed on the trophy plaque. The plaque, "John Baker, Youcur Plack" with year and winners listed. I hope it doesn't sound like I am putting John down. To the contrary, he used the talents God gave better than anyone I know. He was tops in the animal judging teams and at his best as a county agent, super radio show host, and he was loved -- or at least liked -- by everyone he met. We should all be so lucky.”

Here's John Baker '47 at left. John's son Jim '81 (right) was also a FarmHouse initiate and a darn good Euchre player. As far as I can remember, he was also a good speller. Both John and Jim are active in the beef cattle industry. [Source: 1949 and 1981 FH composites]



“I can remember another incident that gave me a lot of laughter, even though it caused a lot of pain for two fraternity brothers, Dick Anderson and Ed Barton. One weekend they decided to ride their old bicycles from East Lansing to their homes in Maumee, Ohio, -- a distance of about 120 miles. They made it, but not without a lot of sweat and tears and blisters the size of baseballs on their rear ends. I saw them turn off the road into the Anderson driveway, stop, pick-up their bikes, throw them in the bushes -- never to be ridden again (at least by them) -- and stagger up the drive to the house like bow-legged drunks. Even though this was a sad-ass experience, Dick and his wife, Franny make annual bicycle treks through Europe. ‘There are a couple of differences now vs then,’ says Dick. ‘The wheels on our bikes are round, rather than square and the seats are padded almost as much as my rear end.’”



Harry Gardner '49 was professor of agribusiness and natural resources education at MSU and served several years as FarmHouse chapter advisor and was a favorite among men from several generations. Still contributing professionally, his late career focus is on giving students in metropolitan areas an understanding of farming practices and the rural environment. Dr. Gardner developed the Rural Resources educational program at Kellogg Biological Station to that end. He also pioneered, in the 1990s, an urban gardening program in Detroit. [Source: 1950 MSU FarmHouse composite]

Dr. Robert Kleis '48 is currently professor emeritus and Executive Dean at the University of Nebraska. He was Executive Dean for International Affairs (1976-1990) and Dean of Ag. Research (1968-1976). He took a leave of absence from 1985-1987 to serve Presidential appointment as Executive Director of the Food and Agriculture Board in Washington, DC. Dr. Kleis does international consulting and has served over 60 countries in the past 20 years.



“These days, at nearly eighty years, I spend a lot of time looking at the back trail . . . For all of those years . . . my life was entwined with nature, from the raw earth and the crops it yielded and the animals it supported, to the berry patch and trap line, to the forest on which we depended for wood and wildlife, to encounters with some of the most spectacular scenery in the nation, and to the airways when I learned to fly.” [Text source: Bob Hakala’s Memoirs]

Although ushered in during the dark days of WWII, the forties ended on a brighter note; full of promise for the world, the nation, the college, and the still young but vital fraternity. We at FarmHouse owe a great deal to the men and women from that era who brought us to this point.