
ΣΑΕ in San Diego

A story of commitment, spirited social gatherings, great challenges, perseverance, and brotherhood.



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Foreword

ΣAE's new members are "encouraged" to learn the rich history of their fraternity: the founding brothers, first chapter house at the University of Alabama, the Civil War years, the special traditions and so much more.

However, most of us know much less about our local history. For example, it's important to know that we can trace our history to Epsilon Eta, the first fraternity at what was then known as San Diego Normal School. That a group of eight forward looking young men applied for affiliation with Sigma Alpha Epsilon, with the encouragement of ΣAE brothers from other chapters who had relocated to San Diego. Where were Cal Theta's earlier fraternity houses located? How and when did those massive lions appear at our front door?

Of course, especially noteworthy is the vital role that brothers from other chapters have had in the initial founding of Cal Theta—and subsequent formation of chapters at UCSD and Cal State University at San Marcos—as well as their ongoing contributions to the San Diego Area Alumni Association. We are indebted to brothers from throughout the Realm who have relocated to San Diego and contributed to ΣAE.

So we thought it was important to create a formal history of our fraternity in San Diego. This is a broad overview of the highlights from 1921 to 2015: from the birth of Epsilon Eta to the formation of three chapters of ΣAE—and much more.

We hope that this will not only give new members a better understanding of their fraternity, but will also provide ΣAE alumni an even greater appreciation of our history. All of us joined ΣAE for a variety of reasons—to develop long lasting friendships, meet a few young women, and expand our social calendar. While writing this history, I was frequently reminded of the impact of the "lasting bond of

brotherhood." You may not have attended a Founder's Day gathering in recent years, or spent much time reminiscing about your fraternity life. But as so many of you have emphasized, most of us have one or more really good lifelong friends—Brothers who we would not have met without our ΣAE experience. That alone is "worth the price of admission."

We appreciate the contributions of everyone who has helped develop this history. While so many Epsilon Eta members have passed on to the Chapter Eternal, I have been fortunate to talk with a few of them and also have read several letters and other material from that period. Special thanks to Bob Battenfield (CA-TH '61) who provided a detailed history of the 1950s. And I am grateful to all the other Brothers who took time to be interviewed. This is your story.

So, I encourage you to take a look way back and learn something more about how ΣAE was established in San Diego. As you'll see from the following pages, there are some great stories. We consider it a "living history" that we will continue to update with your input. (Send your comments to me at History@saesd.org).

Phi Alpha,

David Robinson (CA-TH '69), Editor

In addition to all of those Brothers who have contributed to ΣAE in San Diego so far, there are three others who deserve special thanks. Dick Troncone and John McMullen have been incredibly supportive (and involved) from the first day we discussed this major project. And Mike Templeton has taken a break from his newsletter editor responsibilities to create a wonderful design for "our story."

- Thank you Bros.

Epsilon Eta



The Beginning:

- Before there was Cal Theta on College Place or Saranac St.
- Prior to the founding of the ΣAE chapters at UCSD and California State University at San Marcos.
- Even before the San Diego ΣAE Alumni Association was formed in 1932.
- There was Epsilon Eta, which was established nearly 100 years ago.

In 1897, the San Diego Normal School was established for the purpose of educating local women to become elementary school teachers. Located in the University Heights area of San Diego, the school started with 91 students and seven faculty members.

As the student population increased substantially—and began admitting men as well—so did the development of diverse organizations to meet students' varied interests. The school had rowing clubs and other social activities but no fraternal organizations.

In 1921, San Diego Normal School changed its name to San Diego State Teachers College (SDSTC). That same year, a group of young

men decided it was time to establish the first local fraternity. On October 7, 1921 these eight friends announced they had formed Epsilon Eta. They were:

- Dwight Andreen
- Clement Cook
- J.C. Harding
- Alton Harpst
- Howard Miller
- Julian Molina
- LaVerne Wadell
- George Wilson

According to early archives, the fraternity was “Founded upon enduring concepts of worthy college traditions, lasting friendship, true fellowship, and the eventual brotherhood of man.” They held their first formal meeting on October 25.

The “Eps” opened SDSTC’s first fraternity house in September, 1923 at 1435 Fern Street in the Golden Hill area.



Making the Grade

It seems that academics were an integral part of Greek life as far back as the 1920s. For example, in order to encourage higher grades, the Inter-Fraternity Council and Inter-Sorority Council published the grade averages of the fraternity and sorority members in 1925. On a 3.0 scale, the average grade point average for all students was 1.49, with a 1.35 GPA for fraternities and a 1.47 GPA for sororities. We have no record of what EE members' grades were.

Notable Members

The most well known member of Epsilon Eta was legendary film star Gregory Peck. While he only stayed at SDSTC for one year (1934-35) before transferring to Cal Berkeley, Peck obviously had a positive experience with Epsilon Eta. In a September 1994 letter to Brother Dave Lippitt who had invited him to

an EE reunion, Peck said, “I have nothing but good memories of being an ‘Ep.’ We were, in our minds, by far the best fraternity on campus. I took pride in wearing my pin, had great fun at the frequently raucous meetings and helped to organize the annual Epsilon Eta dance at the El Cortez Hotel, without doubt the supreme social event of the year.”

Mr. Peck wasn’t the only notable Epsilon Eta member. Others included:

- Cliff May, designer and builder of famous California ranch type homes; featured in “leading home magazines since 1931.”
- Walt Lowe, San Diego County diving champion; runner-up in the California Collegiate Athletic “Association All Conference Diving meet in 1947.
- George Carter, Ph.D., a professor of Geography/Chairman of the Geography Department at Johns Hopkins University, and an authority on plant geography and the antiquity of man.
- John “Buster” Murphy, the third-ranking badminton player in the United States (1940), who became a prominent San Diego Realtor.
- Tom Scripps, who placed third in the 1941 International Star Boat Race and with fellow EE member Lowell North won fifth place in the 1948 National Collegiate Sailing Championships.
- Enrique Hester, the Western Regional Amateur Jai Alai champion.

“We were, in our minds, by far the best fraternity on campus.”

– Gregory Peck, film star and member of Epsilon Eta

In addition, other members played key roles as:

- First editor of the college newspaper and yearbook.
- Author of the school's Alma Mater.
- Student government officers. (Epsilon Eta was the first fraternity to have members elected to the presidency of all four classes in one year.)
- Founders of the San Diego State College Men's Glee Club.
- Organizers of the first theatrical productions.

The Social Scene

Continuing to set the Greek system trends, Epsilon Eta was the first fraternity to have a formal dance, called the "Black and White," which began in 1921. "Being a Christmas affair it has become one of the big occasions of the year when the alumni and active chapters get together to renew old acquaintances and meet new members." (from Epsilon Eta's proposal to ΣAE headquarters)

Epsilon Eta also held a popular springtime "open-bid" dance called the Ford Frolic that Brothers introduced in 1937. The fraternity purchased a Model T Ford as a door prize, sold raffle tickets and awarded the car during the dance. "This event has become an institution whose annual renewal is looked upon with eager anticipation by the entire college." (from



the EE proposal for ΣAE affiliation) "The

whole city was aware of it as the door prize was an actual, running Model T. It would parade around the campus and the whole college area with beautiful coeds on board advertising the Ford Frolic. It became a college institution and was eagerly anticipated by most Aztecs." The Ford Frolic was popular through 1961.

The fraternity also held an annual Summer Formal at the conclusion of the Spring semester.

"We weren't necessarily the best athletes, but we gave great parties and all the girls wanted to attend," said Dave Finster, who joined EE in 1947.

Other Traditions



One of EE's other early traditions was the annual "Dad's Day Dinner." As noted in EE's 1949 petition for ΣAE affiliation, it "Is an event that was revived shortly after the termination of the War as a tribute to the fathers of active chapter members." The "after-dinner" programs were planned to help fathers revive memories of "The Good Old Days."

In addition, a Big Brother program was started, with each new member assigned to a "big brother" within the active chapter "to help and advise him" in his college career. Later, as the fraternity began considering the affiliation with ΣAE, the program included an alumni advisory group of Epsilon Eta and ΣAE

members. "Each member chooses, from the ΣAE-EP alumni organization, a big brother who has a mutual vocational interest" and the little brother receives "advice and guidance in his chosen career from one who has experienced success in the field."

ΣAE Alumni Association Forms

As more ΣAE's relocated to the San Diego area during the late 1920s and early 1930s, it became apparent that they needed to organize. The San Diego Alumni Association was officially formed January 26, 1932 by a group of ΣAE brothers from various chapters who had relocated to the area.

There were two historically significant signers of the Alumni Association charter:



Alfred K. Nippert, Eminent Supreme Archon and John O. Moseley, Eminent Supreme Herald.

The charter currently hangs in the office of Dick Troncone, longtime president of the San Diego Alumni Association. "It reminds me of our lengthy history as an Association, and of the significant contributions that Brothers from various chapters have made to ΣAE in San Diego," said Dick.

Campus/Greek System Grows

San Diego State Teachers College relocated to Montezuma Mesa in 1931. The campus originally featured seven mission-style buildings. In 1935, the school was renamed San Diego State College.

By the mid-1930s there were eight fraternities and 11 sororities, which expanded to 15 fraternities and 12 sororities in the 1940s.

The first fraternity to go national was Theta Chi and the first national sorority was Alpha Xi Delta.

The War Years

The Phoenix reminds us that just about five years after ΣAE was founded (in 1856) many Brothers were preparing to fight in the Civil War, where a number of them were injured or died.

While there are no accurate records of how many EE members served during WWII, we do know that several did join the Armed Forces, with some of them killed in action. (A future update will include their names.)

National Affiliation

In early 1948, a group of Epsilon Eta Brothers decided it was time to affiliate with a national fraternity. They considered their options and of course Sigma Alpha Epsilon was one of the leading candidates, at least partially based on the encouragement of the local Alumni Association members. It's critical to remember how important the support of brothers from other chapters has been to the ongoing development of ΣAE in San Diego County.

After a great deal of discussion, the 32 members of Epsilon Eta decided that ΣAE would be the ideal fraternity with which to affiliate. The San Diego Alumni Association members invited the EE bros to attend a meeting to get acquainted. Brother Harold

Krotsch, a San Diego resident and member of the Washington Beta chapter (Washington State, '31), attended that meeting and agreed there was a good match. "We adjourned feeling impressed on both sides," he would later recall. "It was determined at the Epsilon Eta meeting that they desired to petition Sigma Alpha Epsilon."

There were a few Eps who decided to affiliate with other national fraternities, including Pi Kappa Alpha.

Petitioning

The local alumni contacted ΣAE national headquarters in Evanston, Illinois to begin the process of petitioning for a chapter at San Diego State College. "It is no simple task to prepare a petition," Krotsch emphasized. "The Epsilon Eta men worked long hours preparing pictures, statistics, geographic studies of mountains, desert, ocean and Mexico...The faculty was very helpful as some had knowledge of campus life with ΣAE. The Epsilon Eta men had respect on campus with students and faculty."

The EE members sent ΣAE's national headquarters a color brochure—A Petition to Sigma Alpha Epsilon—that detailed San Diego's history, Navy, agriculture, San Diego State College campus and of course, their decision to affiliate. They noted that:

After much investigation and discussion and upon the recommendation and advice of the San Diego Alumni Association of ΣAE, Epsilon Eta selected Sigma Alpha Epsilon as the national fraternity with which affiliation is most to be desired."

To enhance their chances at being accepted into the ΣAE Realm, they sought endorsements from prominent ΣAEs. For example, John Moseley, then Director of Leadership Training, wrote:

"I have visited San Diego State College on a number of occasions and I am personally acquainted

with the members of the Epsilon Eta fraternity now petitioning for a charter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Therefore, I can speak out of my own knowledge of the high standing of the school and the acceptability of the members of the petitioning local...Another thing which greatly impresses me is the enthusiastic support they are receiving from the local alumni of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. All conditions here are met to insure an outstanding chapter of our fraternity. I urge that the charter be granted."

And Edward G. Hathcock, Eminent Supreme Chronicler, emphasized:

"It is an esteemed privilege and a real pleasure to be afforded this opportunity to bring to your attention my wholehearted and unqualified endorsement of Epsilon Eta for a chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon at San Diego State. I have long regarded this splendid state college as a fertile and favorable site for a chapter of our Fraternity and now, in this year of 1949, is the most propitious time for establishing that chapter...We are most fortunate in having our petitioner from this campus the oldest and consistently for more than twenty-five years one of the strongest local fraternities. The excellence of personnel, both active and alumni, the background and prestige of this outstanding local insure that the position of Sigma Alpha Epsilon at San Diego State College, if its petition for a charter is granted, will be second to none."

The 1949 Convention—During ΣAE's 1949 national convention in Los Angeles, the assembled Brothers would decide if SDSC would have an ΣAE chapter. Sixteen San Diego area alums traveled there to show their support. However, they learned that several eastern and southern chapters were concerned that three California schools were petitioning at the same time. In addition to EE, local fraternities at Fresno State College and the University of California at Santa Barbara wanted to affiliate with ΣAE. It seems the main issue was that if all three schools were approved, there would be nine chapters in California, the same number that southern provinces had at the time. There

was definitely no guarantee that ΣAE would grant a charter to SDSC.

Gaining Support

The Epsilon Eta brothers and local ΣAE alumni knew that they would need to make a positive impression at the convention. “We had to do something to gain approval,” said Krotsch. The enthusiastic brothers saw their opportunity. “It so happened there was unusual timing wherein the convention was interrupted by Labor Day,” he said. “Outside meeting activities were planned for the day.”

The San Diego contingent volunteered to bus 75 convention attendees to Tijuana’s famous Caesars restaurant and bar on August 31, which was usually a popular excursion. If there was any question as to the commitment of the alumni to secure the ΣAE Charter, consider what happened after the ΣAE Brothers returned from their evening in Tijuana. “Now the time is 9 p.m.,” recalled Krotsch. “No hotel rooms were available so the alumni ‘absorbed’ the guests by each taking four or five to their homes for the night. My wife fixed sleeping for eight and my mother’s beach house had 16 come to our house for breakfast.”

Obviously, the Eps and the other two California fraternities had done their homework and made a positive impression with a sufficient number of ΣAE Brothers. “Now the serious voting with all the suspense, talk to doubters, politics, and the result—all three (chapters) are accepted into the greatest fraternity,” said Krotsch. Cal Theta became ΣAE’s 152 chapter.



Epsilon Eta

Fall	Officers	Spring
Jack Swoboda	President	Jon Lippett
Jon Lippett	Vice President	Des McNary
Des McNary	Secretary	Chandler Bach
Des McNary	Treasurer	David Finster

In 1921, Epsilon Eta became the first fraternity on the State College campus. Their social activities, among which is the very popular "Ford Frolic" (at which some Aztec is given absolutely free a reasonably well-preserved Model A), have since set precedent for the functions of succeeding organizations.

SPRING PLEDGES

Dick Anderson	Steve Patterson	Alan Secord
Ken Fletcher	Frank Pearl	Frank Smith
Bryan Hansel	Dave Russell	Bruce Vay
Jack Kelly	Bob Rye	Howard B. Woodworth
Bob Mellison	Dick Rye	

1949



Ralph Boster
Chuck Graham
James Iverson

Eugene Clark
Reese Graves
Robert Kircher

Stuart Depew
Mack Grove
David Kirkpatrick

H. D. Farrar
Ben Hagar
Dexter Lanois

Dave Finster
Bob Hobson
Kenneth Lee

John Finster
Albert J. Hodges
Walter Lowe

Thomas H. Fox
John F. Hutsel
Des McNary

Sherman Grable
Jim Hysham
John Percival



Robert Tupper



Paul K. Sewell
Jim Winther

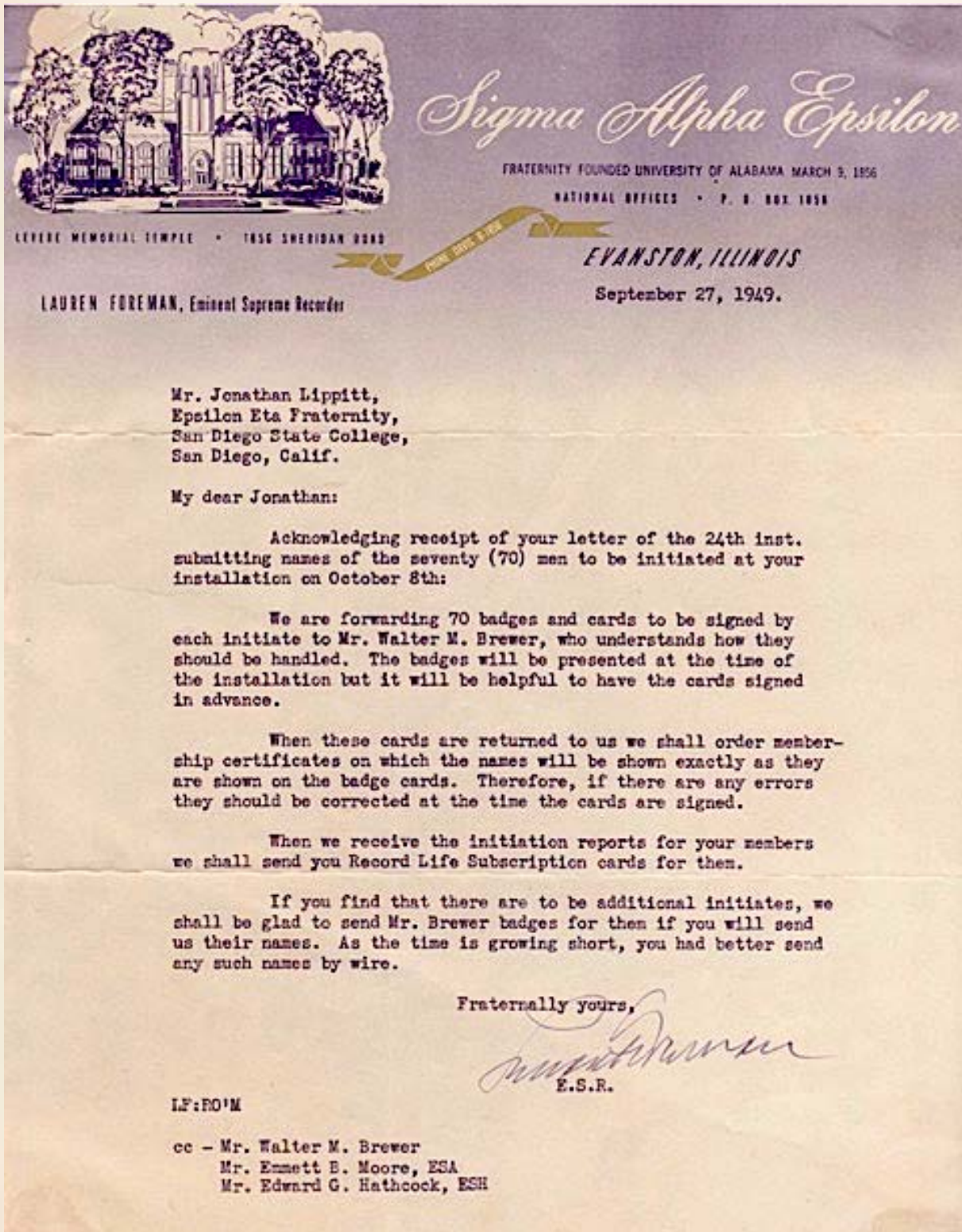
John Stalnaker
Ronnie Young

Jack K. Swoboda
Dr. James Hunter

COMMUNITY
SERVICE—
coaching at the
Boy's Club



ΣΑΕ in the San Diego Area



The Initiation

On October 8, 1949, Cal Theta's formal initiation ceremony was held at the San Diego Athletic Club. "Eminent Supreme Archon Emmet B. Moore, who was my engineering professor at Washington State University in the 1930s, officiated in the initiation," said Krotsch.

The new Cal Theta chapter included about 30 Epsilon Eta brothers.

Cal Theta: The Early Days

The first group of ΣAEs were obviously excited about their new fraternity. "We liked being Epsilon Etas, but of course, were proud to be ΣAEs," said Dave Finster who had joined Epsilon Eta as a freshman in 1947.

Dave's brother John was Cal Theta's first Eminent Archon. "I was the third EA and my brother Jim was the fourth," said Dave. "That was a source of great pride. We were profiled in the Record."

When ΣAE was founded in 1856 there were no pledges; those who were invited to join the fraternity were considered members. However, sometime after World War II, ΣAE chapters introduced the concept of pledging—whereby those receiving bids to join the fraternity were required to spend a semester learning about ΣAE's history and generally "prove" themselves worthy of becoming an official member. The first pledge class of the new Cal Theta chapter included Cal Theta house architect Dick Laureau; Bud Townsend, who would become a successful Long Beach businessman; and future San Diego school board member John DeBeck. John Leppert (a former EE member), who later became deputy city manager of San Diego, was the pledge trainer. "I remember John Leppert telling us that it was great being in the first pledge class," said Laureau. "Of course, in some ways the actives were learning what it was to be an ΣAE right along with us."

There were no on-campus Greek houses at the time, so fraternities and sororities found various places to meet and socialize, such as Balboa Park. The Cal Theta Brothers also held some of their meetings in a building on Euclid Ave. and El Cajon Blvd. "Afterwards we would often go to a place called the Streamliner on El Cajon Blvd.," Finster said.

Cal Theta's first formal house was located at the corner of Laurel and Albatross in the Banker's Hill area of San Diego. "Eight of us rented a house there in 1950," said Dave Thomson, who had pledged CalTheta in 1950. "This house particularly appealed to us, because there were two lions out front."

"If you're driving up Laurel Street Hill, you can look to the right and you will still see two lions guarding the entrance," added Finster.

Moving Forward

As the San Diego State College campus changed from the 1950s through the sixties, eighties, and to present day, so has ΣAE.

By the numbers:

- ΣAE has introduced three different chapters to San Diego County.
- Cal Theta has had four different houses.
- The combined chapters have included approximately 3,000 brothers
- The Alumni Association has had members from numerous chapters throughout the country. Currently (June 2015) there are members from 27 chapters.
- Brothers have included one mayor and one police chief (same Brother), several professional athletes, numerous business/other CEOs, a San Diego County Supervisor, and a wide range of other successful alumni members.

Σ Sigma A Alpha Epsilon



Dick Anderson Chandler Bach Fred Ball John de Back Dave Conger James Decollos



Gordon Dale Frank Dean Jim Dewes



Lorin Dexter William Emery John Erwin



Dave Finster James Finster John Finster



George Rye Charles Gresham James Gresham Dick Greenbaum James Harrington



Fred Henry Jim Hysom James Iverson Richard Kanther Jack Kelly Kenneth Lee

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Full
John Finster
Chandler Bach
Kenneth Lee
James Gresham

OFFICERS
President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer

Boys
John Lippert
David Finster
Ralph Butler
James Gresham

Σ Sigma A Alpha Epsilon



David Kirkpatrick Ted Kohl Dick Loreau John Lippert Jon Lippert R. D. McNary

1950

Sigma Alpha Epsilon, formerly Epsilon Eta, had its usual good year, both socially and academically. It had their annual Ford Frolic where they gave as a door prize a slightly beat up Ford. In all, this has been a good year for S.A.E.



Claude Merzbacher Robert Mollison J. L. Montanye



Lay Moore Steve Patterson Frank Peard



John Perival Ralph Roster David Russell



Bob Rye Dick Rye John Starkey Jerome Smith Frank Smith



Robert Tupper Bryce Vay Harold Wheeler Francis Williamson Jim Winther Ronnie Young

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Decade by Decade - the 1950s

Campus Snapshot: The 1952 Del Sudoeste listed 11 sororities with an average membership of 42, and 15 fraternities with an average membership of 40. The period of the 1950's was one of growth in chapter size, as the enrollment of the University steadily increased.



Campus Leaders

As one of the earliest national affiliated fraternities, it didn't take long for Cal Theta to become a force on campus. A 1950s era rush brochure confirms that the bros were involved in a variety of areas. A few excerpts:

"Active in all campus activities, the group boasts of members in student government, honorary and service organizations, journalism and athletics...Last year an Σ AE was vice-president of the student body and this year one of our members will serve on the AS council...

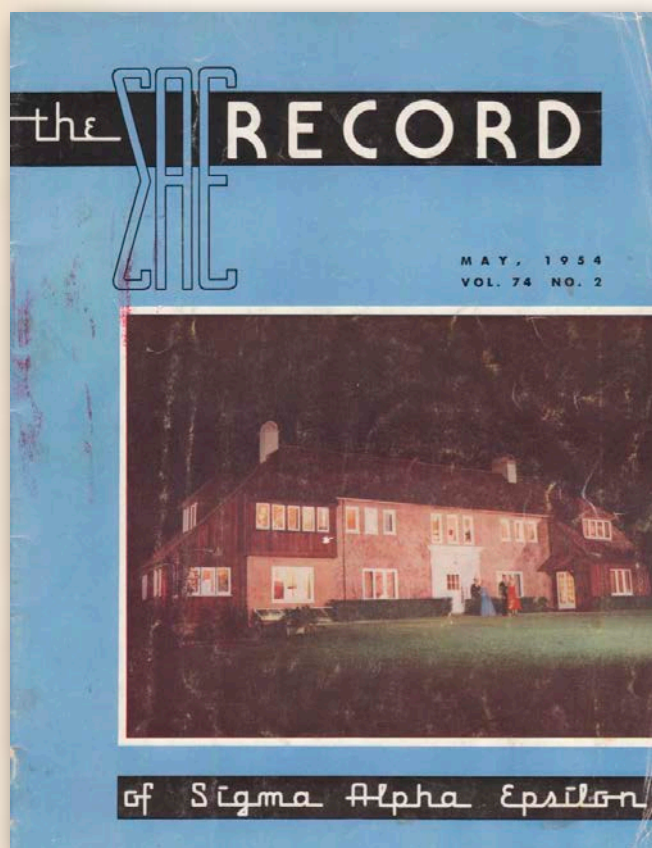
"In athletics too, Σ AE is well represented. Last year, several members were on the varsity

football squad, and the fraternity finished third among 14 contenders for the inter-fraternity sports crown."

"Sigma Alpha Epsilon is known the world over as the 'Singing Fraternity,' and our California Theta chapter upheld the tradition last May by winning top honors in the college Spring Sing."

Saranac St. House

In 1952, the Brothers agreed that it was time to relocate from the Laurel and Albatross house to the first fraternity-owned property-- on Saranac St. (just off of 70th St.) in La Mesa. Epsilon Eta alum and well-established San Diego Realtor O.W. Cotton sold the "grand,"



CA-TH House at 7140 Saranac St.
Featured on the cover of "The ΣAE Record"

two-story redwood house to ΣAE. "Don Harrington, a brother and an attorney, finalized

the deal in February 1952, overcoming objections of the neighbors and gaining approval for the land to be rezoned from R2 to R3," recalled Bob Battenfield (CA-TH '61).

The stately house was reminiscent of those in the South; complete with a small house/room in the back for Cal Theta's housemother.

"It was really a neat house, like a mansion," said Al Higdon (CA-TH '61).



Who Painted the Lions?

"It was beautiful and impressive to look at," agreed Jim Young (CA-Th '62) who served as house manager. "It was long, had a big attic (where some of the bros would occasionally study) and a basement. The two lions we had in front of the house are the ones now in the back of the College Place house. This was the ideal place for a fraternity."

There weren't too many houses located nearby San Diego State College, so Cal Theta's off-campus La Mesa site wasn't that unusual. One benefit was that the school's fraternity advisor didn't stop by very often to check on the Brothers.

Membership

It's difficult to imagine the size of the San Diego State College campus in the early 1950s. "When I left for the Navy in 1952 there were approximately 5,200 students on campus," said



1954 CA-TH Pledge Class

Dave Thomson. "It seemed like you knew most everyone then."

During the mid-fifties, the Cal Theta membership would evolve, reflecting the change in the student population, including many Korean War veterans returning to school. "Some of the brothers active in Cal Theta in the mid-50s were veterans of the Korean War, having interrupted college to serve six months to two years active duty," explained Battenfield. "Their influence brought maturity to the chapter."

Jim Young remembered that in the latter part of the decade, the student population was still more "local," with most students coming from the San Diego area. "We did have several guys from up North but basically it still seemed to be more of a local college," he said.

"ΣAE was a great influence on my college days and in later life. It was a terrific time - then, and now."

- Joe Turner (CA-TH '58)

Social Scene

The Brothers were certainly creative party hosts. There were many exchange parties with sororities and they also continued the tradition of the Ford Frolic dance that the Epsilon Eta had started.



1958 Ford Frolic Preparations

However, the new Cal Theta members had an especially imaginative social calendar. "The brothers of Cal Theta always thought we had the best parties," emphasized Battenfield.

And the most frequent, often having small parties at people's apartments or homes on Friday nights, an all-fraternity party at some off-campus location on Saturday night, and a "joint" with a sorority at the Saranac house on Sunday night.



1959 Saranac House Party

“Several of us bought an old hearse and we used it to carry the coffin to the Paddy Murphy



1955 SAE & Theta Homecoming Float

party,” recalled Young.

Then there were the more unusual theme parties, such as the Swamp Party in the pool at a Point Loma house. As each couple entered the back yard and patio area, they were instructed to get into a rowboat to cross the pool to the deck for food and drinks.

Especially unique were the “sewer parties” that occurred in the culvert beneath the Waring

Road off ramp from I-8. A small generator supplied electricity for lights and boom box/speakers and blankets were rigged up to reduce



1954 CA-TH Bobby Jones Day

detection. The plan was to dance (and drink) in the tunnel beneath the off ramp.(In the 1960s, Brothers also held a few TGIF sewer parties.) Jackson’s Barn in Mission Valley was another popular and secret keg party location.



1956 Serenade Practice at Saranac House

Another festive tradition was the sorority serenade. A large group of ΣAE actives and pledges dressed in coat and tie would serenade a sorority to celebrate the news of a Brother giving his pin to his sweetheart. Prior to the Saranac house, and before very many of the sororities had houses near campus, the serenades were held in the courtyard of the

House of Hospitality in Balboa Park – the building where the Prado Restaurant is now.

Leadership School

ΣAE's leadership school was established in 1935. While it has become an annual tradition for a certain number of Brothers from San Diego chapters to attend, in the 1950s this was still a relatively new experience for Cal Theta undergrads. Our first local leadership school "students" drove rather than fly to Evanston, Illinois. "It was my good fortune to attend two ΣAE Leadership Schools at the Levere Memorial Temple," said Battenfield. "Flying? No, the tried and true style was to pack three or four Brothers into a car and drive there. Flying was considered too expensive. The first year we had a six-man delegation in two cars. I was with Tom Mullen and Steve Lydon in Steve's parents' 1955 Buick Dynaflo, a big bath-tub of a car and the other car was occupied by Bill Carey, Theron Cooper and Joe Hardy. Leaving San Diego around 3 pm, we drove all the way Lubbock, Texas, on that first leg to a motel with a swimming pool."

"I love the camaraderie and the chance to contribute to the Association."

- Gary Keehner (WA-AL '59)

Decade by Decade - the 1960s

Campus Snapshot: U.S. President John Kennedy gave the graduation commencement address at Aztec Bowl in front of 40,000 people on June 6, 1963. Throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s there were numerous protests, sit-ins, and radical changes in traditions among the students. Students mainly protested racism and the war in Vietnam. The period of Greek growth lasted through the early sixties, and began to wane as the decade ended. With the activism of the late sixties and early seventies, several chapters were closed.



The Social Scene

Cal Theta's Social Chairmen maintained a full schedule of the popular events during the sixties, from the Boxer Rebellion and Paddy Murphy party to Black and White formal dance and a variety of spontaneous gatherings that didn't require much more than a couple of kegs, a band or sound system (4-track, 8-track etc.), and a sorority. Not much different than most other eras.

However, the Homecoming festivities were a highlight of the sixties, requiring the imagination and talent of the social chair and other volunteers.



Building the Homecoming Float

San Diego State's annual Homecoming activity included the chariot races held at Aztec Bowl, a huge on-campus bonfire, and the always popular parade. Fraternities and sororities would build floats—some more creative than others—to be driven down Montezuma Road.



The Fighting '69

One of the most memorable parades occurred in 1961. According to some accounts, it was actually a revenge mission of the Fighting '69 (Cal Theta) against other fraternities that had been somewhat unfriendly in previous parades. "At times our parade entry was just a group of us riding bicycles at the end of the parade," said Dennis O'Neel (CA-TH '64). "On a couple of occasions, a few fraternities took the opportunity to lob water balloons at us, so in 1961, we decided to get back at them." One of the Bros located a World War II era Amphibious Landing Craft (Duck) and they prepared it for the 1961 Homecoming parade. "We placed a sign that said 'Tijuana Chemical Warfare Battalion Fighting '69,' loaded it up with fire extinguishers, water and paint balloons, and whatever else we could think of,

and took our place at the end of the parade," O'Neel explained.

As they approached the Kappa Sigma house, a raging water fight ensued (reminiscent of the final scene in *Animal House*). "And then we ran out of ammunition and ended up back at the house," added O'Neel.

The skirmish was a major event and even mentioned on CBS (national) Evening News. "My mother saw that and asked me if I was involved; of course I told her no," O'Neel said.

However, it wasn't over yet. "We did have to suffer the consequences," O'Neel recalled. "Which as I remember, meant we were placed on Double Secret Probation (another *Animal House* reference) and banned from the next year's parade."

Cal Theta would continue to participate in future Homecoming Events—building floats and decorating the house—but without the support of the Amphibious Duck and the Fighting '69 crew.

"We had a very strong pledge class. I remember building floats for the parades, participating in fraternity events, spring sings, and serenades. I have special memories of those experiences and many lifelong ΣΑΕ friends."

- Dr. Tom Shows (CA-TH '61)

Move to Campus

After a decade living in the Saranac St. house, the Brothers were interested in moving closer to campus. Dick Lareau (CA-BE '54), who was now a successful architect, volunteered to help locate a new site, design the house and help arrange the financing. "We had a small search committee of actives and pledges who reviewed the map of the college area to identify all available parcels of land," he said. They finally located a property with two adjacent

houses on College Place, whose owners initially didn't want to sell but were eventually persuaded. "Actually the first owner we approached was willing to sell on a time payment plan after realizing the buyer was ΣAE, which they had heard was the largest fraternity in the country. And they then helped convince the second owner who was more hesitant to sell."

In the summer of 1963, Cal Theta Brothers prepared to leave Saranac St. for their new home. Jim Young has the distinction of being the last one to leave the Saranac St. House. It had already been sold and the other Brothers had moved to the new place. "Everyone else had left but I planned to stay for a few more nights before moving," Young said. "However, a couple of guys had thrown rocks through a few windows and when I entered the house that same night I had to walk across broken glass. I felt it was time to leave, so the next day I locked up, took a last look at the lions and our old house and closed the door behind me."

The Green Houses



Brothers in Front of Old 5076 College Place

The new Cal Theta home was actually two small houses located on the current College

Place property. One of them was next to the current Pi Phi house and the other was closest to the TKE house.

It is a major understatement to say that the two faded green dwellings were modest compared to the Saranac St. house. One of them served as the chapter house where meetings were held and included a kitchen and the other was a dormitory. Dick Troncone recalled that as Cal Theta president then, he lived with Mike Drake (CA-TH '67), treasurer, in the EA room—which was actually located in a separate garage. "There was some carpet on the floor, but it was basically just a large garage room," Troncone said. "It wasn't that nice, but we made do."



Old 5076 College Place Chapter Room

"When you had to use the bathroom at night you would have to go to the main house," said Drake.

However, Drake added that despite its "dumpy" appearance, the house had "character and it was ours. Also, we were in the hub of activity...so close to other sororities."

O'Neel was one of the first Brothers to move into the small dorm and he agreed that while the Bros' new dwelling wasn't fancy, there were definite advantages. "First, we didn't have to worry about leaving early (from La Mesa) to try and get a parking spot on campus," he said. "We could walk to school. And we were also

closer to the sorority houses, which was a definite plus.”

The Brothers initially thought that the two green houses would be replaced by a more spacious home sooner rather than later. “I remember rushing in 1964 and saw there was a rendering of the new house,” said Dan Bamberg (CA-TH ‘67), who was pledge class president and eventually EA of Cal Theta.

However, arranging the financing for Cal Theta’s permanent home was more challenging than the bros had anticipated. For some reason it wasn’t that easy for a fraternity to obtain a large loan. “We needed to borrow about \$100,000 and no bank was willing to lend the money,” Lareau said. “However, fraternity Brother Jack Starkey’s own brother Skip was president of First Federal and in 1967 we finally got the loan.”

Bamberg remembered that the loan was obtained with what today would be considered “unconventional” financing. “They needed to make a down payment for the loan and apparently there wasn’t enough money. So one of our Brothers who owned a paving company agreed to prepare the site for free and valued the work at \$5,000, which was considered enough for the down payment.”



New House Construction Notice

In a May, 1967 issue of The Monthly Roar newsletter, EA Bamberg described his enthusiasm at the prospects of finally having a new house after six years of delays. “The myth is finally a reality...My excitement is hard to contain....I just finished talking to Richard Lareau who informed me that a San Diego firm has committed to a loan of an undisclosed amount. He assured me that the loan was quite satisfactory and that groundbreaking will take place on about May 1...To the brothers in the active chapter, I would like to say that it seems hard to believe that the house I was supposed to live in three years ago, will be a reality in September....How Sweet it is.”



New College Place House Under Construction

The rendering that Lareau had prepared (with the support of Carl Hotten, a fraternity Brother who helped with the design) was now going to be a reality. “We wanted the house to have a nice chapter room (Epsilon Eta) and pledge area, and enough space for the bedrooms,” Lareau explained. “However, it was also important to have a dynamic entrance, which of course became a very dominant feature.”

It only took about five months to build the Cal Theta house, during which time the Brothers lived in apartments and houses throughout the college area and held meetings at various places.



1967 Brother Jerry Sandler at the New Entrance

Finally, in the fall of 1967 the first residents moved into 5076 College Place, although Drake and others don't remember that there was a formal housewarming party. "Organized parties with alcohol weren't allowed at the time," he pointed out.

However, there was at least one recognition event to celebrate the completion of ΣAE's new home. A "first man through the front door contest" was held and more than 30 alumni, actives, pledges, mothers and Little Sisters all bought raffle tickets for a chance at this honor. The winner was Dick Troncone. As Howard Fisher (CA-TH '65) wrote in his Guest Editorial appearing in the March 1968 issue of *The Monthly Roar*, "Dick will have an 8 x 10 picture of himself committing the act hung in a prominent location somewhere in the house. Henceforth, all pledges will be required not only to know the eight Founding Fathers and the sage of the Bunting Brothers, but also the name of this august bro who first stepped through the portal of the new house."

And it seems the bros couldn't wait to live there. "I was one of the first to move in and there wasn't even carpet on the floor in our downstairs (old pledge/bar area) room, so we had our beds on the cement floor," said Drake.



1968 Brothers on the Back Deck

Housemother "in The House"

In earlier days, fraternities were required to have a live-in housemother, similar to sorority living arrangements. The Saranac St. house had separate quarters for ΣAE's housemother, Florence Scott. The Green Houses didn't have room for one, but when Cal Theta's new house opened, our housemother, Mrs. Carol Cummings, was the first to live in what is now referred to as the EA room (where EA and treasurer live). And, she was actually the mother of Cal Theta Brothers Rick, Jack and Mike Woy.

Housemother Cummings' presence did tend to have a somewhat calming effect on the Brothers' often exuberant behavior. You can imagine her sitting quietly at the dinner table, listening as some of the bros made an effort to tell recent party stories without too much profanity, or perhaps politely asking them to stop running up and down the hallway. In the House Mother's Harrangue column of the March 1968 issue of *The Monthly Roar*, Mrs. Cummings wrote "This has been a monumental time to remember for all of us, especially during the trying process of adjusting to one another's idiosyncrasies amid the trials and tribulations of the new house...Note, we will have a 'lightweight pig' which collects fines levied at

the table for various infractions of table manners...Let us watch our manners and adhere to the True Gentleman code of ethics...I shall keep cookies and fruit in my room for emergency kennel rations!"

She lived there for a couple of semesters until the housemother requirement was lifted and the room was taken over by the EA and ET.

The Lions Arrive

The lions that had stood watch at the Saranac St. house and later guarded one of the green houses were now on display at the back of 5076 College Place. However, it was clear that much larger ones were needed for the front. Brother Laureau had a friend who, while driving cross country in 1968, saw two winged lions in a vacant lot somewhere in Oklahoma. He contacted the owner who agreed to sell them for \$500. The membership agreed with the plan to buy the lions and have them hauled back to San Diego for placement at the front entrance. But then, recently initiated Brother Mike (Mad Dog) Matson thought he had a better plan.

Mad Dog, whose own brother Sam was EA in 1966, was only 18, but full of creative ability and confidence. He called Dick to make his offer. "I can build two large lions," said Mike who, however, had never made massive lions (or any other size) before.

Lareau listened carefully and not wanting to dismiss the offer of this enthusiastic Brother, told him to come to his office to discuss the situation. In their meeting, Mike appeared confident that he could make the lions and Dick asked him to create a model and develop a fundraising plan that would hopefully encourage supportive alumni to donate a sum of money in exchange for a model lion. "I think we raised about \$125," Mad Dog said.

Not to be dissuaded from his mission, Mad Dog continued to refine the models, somehow came up with the funds for materials and then

went to work during Spring break of 1968, when most of the brothers were at Palm



Pouring the Concrete for the Lions

Springs or another "quiet" retreat. He created a paper Mache form covered with fiberglass that would be the basic mold. "We had to build a large frame and then added sand around the model, hoping that it would withstand the pressure from the cement so we could use it for the second lion," Mike recalled. "We mixed cement and poured it into a five-gallon bucket with a rope tied to the handle. The bucket was then lifted to the top of the rickety scaffold, which also served as the frame for the plywood box surrounding the fiberglass mold. One bucket at a time the concrete was pulled up by hand and poured into the mold."



CA-TH Lion Building Volunteers (l - r) - Steve Ironhill, John McMullen, Mark McLaren and Doug Butz

Mad Dog was the creative director, but fortunately he had a team of enthusiastic Cal Theta volunteers, including John McMullen ('70), Steve Ironhill ('70), Mark McLaren ('68) and Doug Butz ('68) who would work with him on the two day project. McLaren remembered the challenges they faced. "We had no idea how long it would take for the concrete to dry. When the frame and other material was removed, Mike began chipping away and then we saw the lion. It was amazing."



Mike "Mad Dog" Matson Completing the Lions

"Each lion was an all day project, but by dusk the eight foot lion, with its mold still in place inside the sand filled box, was complete," said McMullen. "When Mad Dog took off the

mold he said, 'Great, it worked!' I asked him what he meant. Mike replied that he wasn't absolutely certain that we wouldn't have a big pile of concrete sitting there. The rest as they say, is ΣAE history."

As Brothers arrived back from their Easter vacations, they were ecstatic to see the two iconic lions now standing guard at their ΣAE house. There wasn't a fraternity on campus that had such impressive "mascots." We could have had two small lions from Oklahoma. But we wouldn't have been able to share this incredible story with each new group of Cal Theta members.



Newly Completed Lions

All The News That's Fit to Print (and some that wasn't)

Helping keep the Brothers connected during the year and sometimes in the summer was the chapter newsletter—then known as the Monthly Roar. It included some important news—financial reports, IFC Sports, Little Sister updates and other matters—as well as the more colorful items.

Obviously, the following "From the Eyes of the Lion" column excerpts from the May 1967 issue will primarily be of interest to Brothers of that era, but it does illustrate occasional humor that we can appreciate:

“EA Bamberg is picking on Grubbs and Roach again.”

“Rick Woy was seen recently defending himself in front of the Pi Phi Standards Board.”

“Brother Calmer is giving the pledges instructions on table manners.”

“Fletcher has a new technique for washing his hair.”



It's possible that those mentioned don't even remember just what the specific comments actually meant.

The member newsletter would be published on an irregular schedule over the years. (In 2009 House Corp. President Gary Losey began an e-newsletter that was distributed to the Brothers as well as their families.)

Brothers Serve in Military

During the mid- to later 1960s, a number of Brothers served in various branches of the

armed forces, including some who were stationed in Vietnam. They included:

- Dan Bamberg
- Bill Barsz
- Terry Bourne
- Charlie Cattell
- Bob Cleator
- Mike Drake
- Tom Gable
- Buddy Grubbs
- Marty Kovacevich
- Carl Laughead
- Guy Maddox
- John McMullen
- Jerry Monell
- Gene Myers
- Jerry Sandler
- Dick Troncane
- Harvey Walseth
- Bob Wendt
- Jim Young

There were probably more Brothers serving during this era than any other period of Cal Theta history. (Please note, if we have inadvertently omitted the name(s) of anyone from this list, please let us know.)

Retreats Were a Bonding Experience

In the 1960s (and possibly earlier) a new tradition began—Cal Theta retreats that gave pledges and “actives” a chance to get to know each other better away from the fraternity house and college campus.

Julian was one of the most frequent retreat locations. Brothers would gather at the Long Branch saloon for a few beverages, spend the night at a local campground and on the

following day engage in a wild water fight or some other activity. The retreats would continue off and on for the next decade or so. (Photo below is of the Julian retreat with 1968 CA-TH pledge class.)

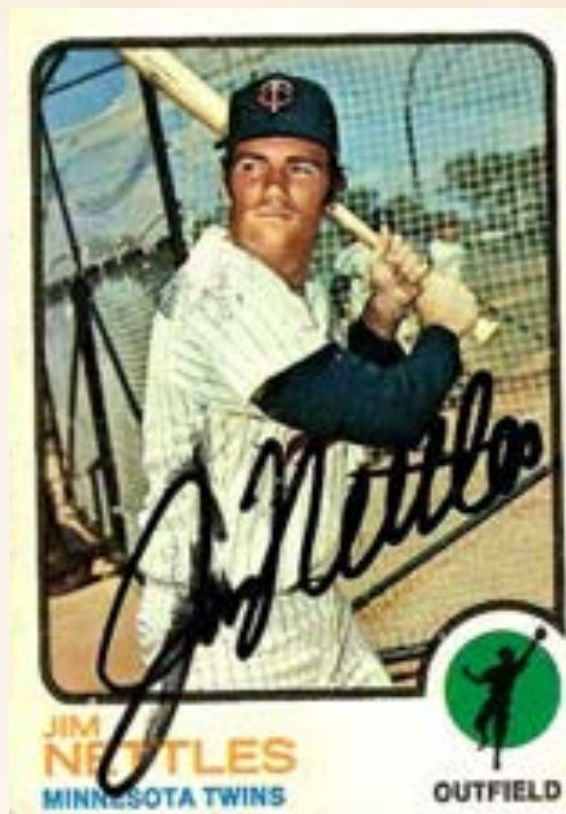


“The fraternity gave me a sense of working together, of camaraderie, and reaching out to help others.”

- Ross Ehrhardt (CA-TH '65)

Bros Go Pro

SAE has always had its share of talented athletes—playing at both the university and intramural level. We’ve also had a few professionals, including the three Nettles brothers from Cal Theta. Craig Nettles was 23 years-old when he broke into the big leagues on September 6, 1967, with the Minnesota Twins. He later played for the Indians, Yankees and Padres. Jim Nettles was drafted in 1968 and subsequently played for the Twins, Tigers, Royals and Athletics (1970-1981). Their brother Paul was an excellent rugby player at San Diego State who later joined a New Zealand team. Other Bros enjoyed great college success—including Mike Pompa (CA-TH '69), a popular Aztec player who later had a pro football tryout.



“Being in the fraternity was the greatest experience. I learned more during that period, including my time as EA, than I ever did in class.”

Bob Kingston (CA-TH '69)

“ΣAE means a lot to me, and the Association has been very important. I’ve made many great friends in my home state, the San Diego area, and elsewhere.”

- Jim Gaines (TN-BE '69)

Decade by Decade - the 1970s

Campus Snapshot: On January 1, 1974, San Diego State College was renamed "San Diego State University" (SDSU).



Rebirth of the Greek System

Many bros would conclude that the 70's were relatively uneventful, a peaceful period during which there were no major developments or difficulties. Some also consider the earlier part of this decade to be a "rebirth" of the Greek system, a time when waning interest of the late sixties evolved into a greater appreciation of the benefits of Greek life. "The tumult of the (late) 1960's, with counter-culture mentality and student protests, generally diminished interest in fraternities on

a national basis," said Bill Marckwardt (CA-TH '76). "However, a resurgence began in the early 1970's and Cal Theta participated in this regained popularity, with active membership pushing near 100 by 1973."

"The early 70's was definitely a transition era," added Paul Anes (CA-TH '73). "The Vietnam War was winding down and college age people were once again interested in the Greek Houses. ΣΑΕ was prominent with its impressive Lions at the entry to the College Pl. house and the quality of the undergrad

members. The movie "Animal House" came out in 1978 and I'm sure every Greek saw something in the movie that they had probably done. We did well in athletics and academics as well as partying. Who could have guessed that out of that 'mayhem of testosterone overloaded 20 somethings,' one of our members (Jerry Sanders) would become chief of police and then mayor!"

"Fraternity life prepared me for life working. It was something like a police department; there were so many different kinds of people with different ideas."

- Jerry Sanders (CA-TH '72)

Jeff Byroads agreed that the Greek System seemed to be stronger than ever. "In some ways I think the mid-seventies was a rebirth of the Greek system, when fraternities and sororities were stronger than ever," said Byroads (CA-TH '78), who was house manager and pledge educator and eventually active on a Province and national level. "There seemed to be some subtle changes, a more collegial, positive atmosphere and perhaps a little less hazing."

1970 Yearbook Emphasizes SAE Philanthropy

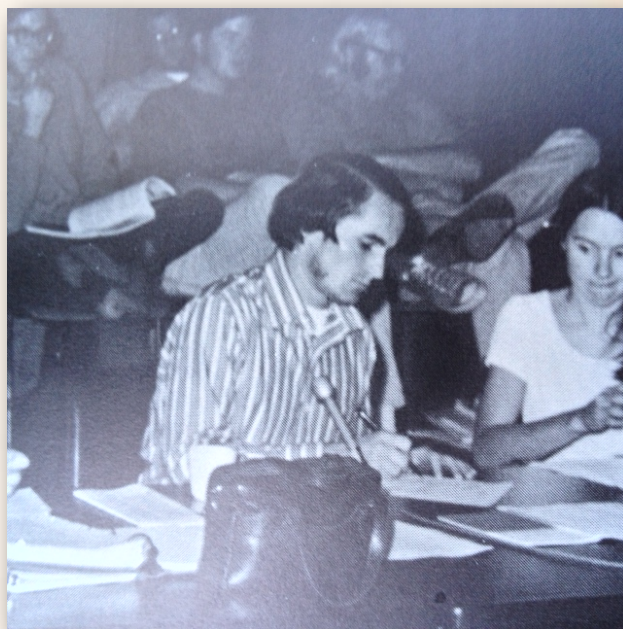
SAEs have always emphasized the importance of giving back to the community. For example, the headline of Cal Theta's page in the 1970 El Sudosste yearbook said "Sigma Alpha Epsilon...Involvement With the Community." It explained that "Sigma Apha Epsilon is directing its emphasis this year toward scholarship and community involvement. This year the SAEs have helped the Muscular Dystrophy campaign with its Christmas Show, put on a puppet show for underprivileged children, and held a Heart Fund Drive."

Campus Involvement

"Cal Theta was always held in high regard by other ΣAE houses, which was obvious when we attended the Southern California Province Chi annual conferences and even on a national level, when a few of us attended the ΣAE Annual Leadership School," said Gary Martin (CA-TH '81).

"I think we also had more recognition on the national level," noted Byroads. "Cal Theta was well known before, but even more so now."

Cal Theta was also represented among campus leaders, including Mike Boyle (CA-TH '72). "I had been involved with leadership activity in high school and wanted to continue that service, which I did as an SDSU freshman," he said. After serving on the SDSU student council, Boyle was elected Student Body vice president in 1970. Then when the President left his position early, Mike took over for the spring semester 1971. He remembers it as a very difficult period.



"Mike Boyle SDSU Student President"

There were major disagreements about budgets and related issues against a backdrop of

national unrest over social inequality and the Vietnam War,” he said. The disharmony culminated in a extremely tense student council meeting during which one faction barricaded the doors, made threats and a brief “standoff” ensued, with the San Diego Police Department massed nearby. “It was a very uncomfortable situation.”

Mike also remembers the positive side of his tenure. “Aside from the very challenging part of my time as ASB president, the experience helped fashion my attitudes about consensus building and community involvement, and I feel particularly grateful for being exposed to many fine faculty and staff members who contributed to my education and helped shape my life.”

“I had such positive experiences on campus and of course with Cal Theta that I wanted to return and make a contribution.”

- Rick West (CA-TH '72)

The 70s also began what would be a succession of Σ AE brothers serving as SDSU Alumni President. Bob Battenfield was the first, serving in both 1974 and 1975. During the next few decades, six other Σ AEs would continue in this important role:

- Dick Troncone (1976)
- Dan Bamberg (1978)
- Don Harrington (1980),
- Tom Carter (1982),
- Rick West (1998),
- John McMullen (1999)



Past Presidents of SDSU Alumni Association with SDSU President Steve Weber

No other fraternity has had as many brothers serve as president of the San Diego State University Alumni Association.

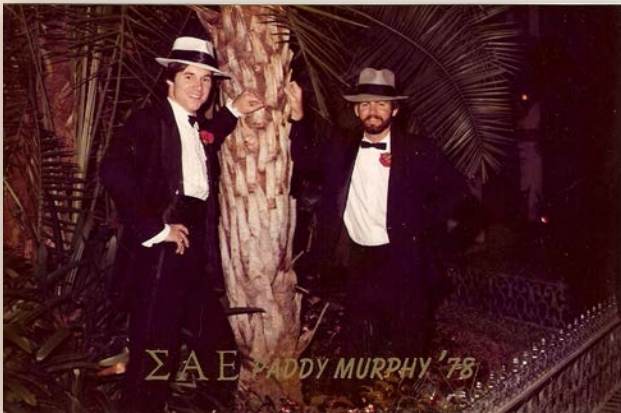
Sports Competition

Most brothers remember being “encouraged” as pledges/new members to participate in certain intramural sports such as wrestling or basketball. Of course, there have been a number of Brothers who played varsity sports at SDSU, including some who have made it to the pro level.

During the 1970s, it seemed that Cal Theta had its share of top tier athletes. “We attracted a wide variety of student athletes and it was common to have Brothers on the swimming, baseball, golf, volleyball and occasionally football teams,” said Gary Martin.

“Cal Theta consistently battled Sigma Chi for the sports trophy, with the actual claim alternating on a regular basis,” added Marckwardt.

The Social Scene



Brothers Jeff Byroads (left) and Bob Sloan

While the Brothers of this era were sports enthusiasts and presumably studied as well, there was also some interest in social activity. “The luau and Paddy Murphy parties highlighted the list of extravagant affairs,” said Bill Marckwardt. “The luau would involve importing hundreds of palm fronds, which were mounted along the back fence and numerous other locations. Sand was added, and water ponds and streams were created. We’d dig a hole in the back yard in which a pig would be laid, covered, and cooked. Absolutely delicious. Some very talented and creative minds conceived the layout.”

There also was the occasional party in front of the house “One of the things I remember most is the Friday afternoon parties,” said Glenn Southard (CA-TH/’74). “We would get this great band that played like Chicago—with all the horns. The weather was always great, the kegs flowing and beautiful sorority girls filled the cul-de-sac. Life was good.”

Spring Break in San Felipe

Spring break (AKA Easter vacation) has always been a welcome time of the year on college campuses and San Diego area SAEs were definitely enthusiastic about finding special locations for a few days relaxation. There was no one favorite place, but frequent

choices were Palm Springs, the Colorado River and Mexico.



San Felipe had been a popular destination for several years, but in the early 1970s more Brothers decided it was the place to be. Jeff Byroads remembers it as being the “go to” destination. “Our every semester San Felipe trips were attended by no less than 250 bros, Little Sisters and assorted sorority girls,” he said. “Everyone wanted to go to San Felipe during spring break.”

Of course, the daily routine was much the same as other vacation spots: wake up, enjoy a few beers, relax in the sun, a few more beers, an afternoon card game or other entertainment...

Rob Socci recalled that San Felipe as being much less developed during the early-mid ‘70s, and that it was definitely an ideal spring break getaway. “We always had a great time...a lot of fun. You didn’t want to miss the trip to San Felipe.”

"I learned about responsibility to myself and school work, and the true meaning of fraternity. The friendships are eternal."

- Forrest Oden (CA-TH '73).

CA-TH House Rehab

Cal Theta's house was less than a decade old, but the "wear and tear" was obvious and it was time for some serious upgrades.

Forrest "Frosty" Oden (CA-TH, '73) remembered the new focus on keeping the house in good condition. "Many members possessed unique and varied skills that were a catharsis to our fraternity," he said. "Our kitchen was cleaned up, renovated and reopened. Our grounds and building were better cared for than previously. Old cars in the parking were moved out and money was spent to build a fire pit, sound-proofed the large doors in the meeting room and a new antenna placed on the roof. The bathrooms repaired, dining hall floor was re-tiled and the "club house" given a new coat of paint. A bar was built down stairs to keep the drinking activity to a confined area."

Rob Socci (CA-TH '76) noted that one rehab effort was actually inspired by a brother from Iowa. "His name was Mo Levich and he just showed up at the house one day in 1974," Socci said. "He wanted to help out so he rebuilt the bathrooms and worked on the kitchen. Within six months the kitchen had been reestablished."

"The kitchen facility had not been consistently used for meal service for quite a while (Ethel was our original cook)," said Marckwardt. "The kitchen opened again for full meal service in the Fall of 1974. Cigar-chomping Leo was hired as chief cook and bottle-washer. This popular senior citizen wouldn't take any guff from actives, and was respected and loved

to the point of eventually receiving honorary brotherhood."

The chapter house went through a major renovation effort in 1978, led by EA Mark McMillin ('79), whose father owned the McMillin Development Company. Mark and Brother Gary Losey ('79) did much of the work, laying the linoleum floors and building the amphitheater seating in the downstairs TV room.

Decade by Decade - the 1980s

Campus Snapshot: In 1980 UCSD (below) had approximately 11,400 students and 900 faculty members. By the following year, "The campus had four colleges; and there were important changes to campus growth, including designation of natural reserve areas where development is discouraged and reserving land on east campus for health sciences and a research park." Meanwhile, in 1984, the California Higher Education Journal ranked SDSU as first among the CSU campuses and U.S. News and World Report ranked the school among the top five comprehensive universities in the west in 1983, third in 1985, and in the top fifteen in 1989. In 1987, SDSU reached its peak attendance with 35,945 students, ranking it the largest university in California and 10th in the nation. Fraternities and sororities which had been closed in the sixties and seventies were successfully reopened in the 1980's.



Continued Growth

Yes, fraternity membership was definitely strong in the early 1980s. "As the chapter entered the '80s, our actives typically numbered 125 and we had pledge classes both Fall and Spring that averaged 20 guys (usually more in the Fall)," said Gary Martin. "No doubt it was due to the 1978 success of National Lampoon's 'Animal House.' The Greek system was clearly on an upswing in popularity, with at least 15 fraternities and a dozen sororities. Greeks proudly wore their letters everywhere on campus and every car carried Greek decals."

Member Involvement

As with any group, there are usually a small number of members who enthusiastically take on leadership roles and otherwise be involved, while others are more committed to the camaraderie and social life. However, Ron Anderson (CA-TH '88) pointed out that in the mid-eighties there was probably a larger group of volunteers. "There seemed to be more bros who wanted to be involved. For example, whereas there were typically only one or two guys running for an office, for a while there were four or more."

"The house was very strong organizationally," added Dennis Warner (CA-TH '83). "We had a very detailed infrastructure with committee chairs and officers. We ran it like a large company with a hierarchy. Also, some of us we're involved in SDSU student government and we had a strong presence in IFC, which was important. Of course, we also had a very strong House Corp. led by our legendary leader Dick Troncone. Dick was always there for us."

EE Reunion

Epsilon Eta members continued to meet on a regular basis and celebrated their 60th

anniversary in October 1981 with a celebration at the San Diego Yacht Club. As Dave Finster had said, they were glad to to be ΣAEs, but still proud of their EE heritage.

In the November 1, 1981 Party Line, San Diego Union-Tribune society columnist Burl Stiff noted that "The original Eps—the fraternity dates back to 1921—haven't lost that old school spirit, not by a long shot. The hard-core faithful still get together at least once a year, on Epsilon Eta Founder's day, to relive the good times at State."

He noted that David Lippitt had estimated there had been 328 members prior to the affiliation with ΣAE, adding that Eps included Judge Hugo Fisher, Arthur Jessop, Lowell North, Tom Scripps, Dr. Alton Harpst, Carl Ackerman (the first EE pledge), Jack Starkey, Phil Klauber and many other prominent citizens.

"The Eps it seems, were famous for their annual Black and White Ball (the fraternity colors) and for their Ford Frolic, where they gave away an old Model T Ford," Stiff wrote.

Backyard Sports

One of the most popular features of the College Place house was the backyard basketball half court. Over the years many brothers enjoyed playing a "pick up" game or just shooting a few. Some were accomplished high school players who relished the competition and others just enjoyed the after school interaction.

Then during the late '70s or early '80s a sand volleyball court was added. "We had some really good volleyball players including a few who played on the SDSU team," said Joe Farrage (CA-TH '89). "The volleyball court was very popular."

*He lived and died
in constant sin,
and drown his soul
in whiskey and gin.*

*Tho' to the devil
his soul shall go,
there never has
lived a happier bro.*

*Let no man say
he died in disgrace,
so party to his memory
at a Paddy Murphy pace.*

*The Brothers of
SIGMA ALPHA EPSILON
would be honored with your
presence at the
Funeral and Wake
of our recently departed Brother,
PADDY MURPHY
on the evening of
May Seventh
nineteen hundred and eighty-eight
Limousines will arrive promptly
at 5:00 P.M.
Reception to follow - all night*



Added Ron Anderson, "This was an everyday occurrence—as Brothers of varying skills would take a break from class or long hours of studying to play a little VB in the back yard. Occasionally games would be played at

midnight, with the court partially illuminated by the flicker of dripping candles."

Social Scene

SDSU was becoming increasingly well known for its academic programs and athletic successes (although the football team's success was mixed during this decade), but it also had another reputation that faculty and deans didn't encourage. In January 1987, Playboy Magazine ranked SDSU as the 3rd best party school in the nation, "We took great pride in the fact that SDSU was commonly ranked among the top party schools in the nation and ΣAE was the biggest, strongest, most popular house on campus by any measure," said Martin.

"I remember that we hosted a Thursday night open bar," said Warner. "The house would be packed and there was no shortage of cute sorority girls."

Alumni Association Newsletter Introduced

In March 1986 the first issue of Σ AE News was published for San Diego Alumni Association members and others. As then Alumni Association president Dave Dibble (CA-TH '69) said, "Our membership has expanded over the last few years and this newsletter is an ideal way to enhance communication."

David Robinson (CA-TH '68) edited the print format newsletter for most of the next 20+ years. Then in 2011, Mike Templeton (OH-EP '63) assumed the editor's role and converted the quarterly publication to an expanded digital format, which allowed for color photos and more articles. Σ AE News has been recognized as a top quality newsletter. For example, former ESA Brad Cohen said it is "A truly excellent newsletter that should serve as an example to all Alumni Associations and chapters across the Realm." The Newsletter went on to win National's Top Award for both its Printed & Electronic versions in 2015.

Cal Chi Joins Σ AE in San Diego

In 1986, a Colony at UCSD was well on its way to becoming an Σ AE chapter. In a newsletter article, it was noted that "The Colony, which currently has 38 members, will petition to become a full Σ AE chapter sometime this fall. Several alumni have been involved in the colony's inception and support."

Finally, after 36 years as the only chapter in San Diego, Cal Theta was joined by UCSD's Cal Chi chapter on October 24, 1987. (Cal Chi

would lose its charter in 2005, which was ultimately reinstated in 2012.)

A Difficult Transition

As Cal Theta Brothers have noted, the 1980s was generally a great era; with large rushes, good parties, philanthropic contributions and other activities. However, toward the end of the decade there was also a gradual shift in attitudes about traditions, responsibility and even perhaps, brotherly concern. Obviously, it's not an overnight transformation; the Cal Theta membership didn't become "irresponsible" within a few months. And the problems didn't involve the entire house.

"What I remember is that some of the house members went astray from the fundamentals of the fraternity," said Ron Anderson. "It seems that (at a certain point) the house took on a more party atmosphere over everything else. Some of the traditions were lost and so was the deep bond between many Brothers as it became more of a social network house."

It became evident to the Alumni Association and House Corp. that among other concerns, some of the Brothers weren't paying sufficient attention to their grades, financial obligations and the basic upkeep of the fraternity house.

As EA in 1989, Joe Farrage ('89) was well aware of a growing trend: as many of the older Brothers graduated, the chapter leadership was younger and less experienced. "I think it was a situation where many of the younger brothers began making some questionable leadership decisions because they didn't know better and didn't have more experienced bros around to guide them. Ultimately, it became the 'perfect storm' of wrong decisions, warnings, missed deadlines and other problems."

Σ AE certainly wasn't the only fraternity to experience a "schism" among members. Perhaps

in their view, they weren't doing anything that was especially out of line. But by this time, the Alumni Association and advisory committee were concerned and trying to get the chapter back on track, to avoid any major sanctions or other problems. Alumni Association members met regularly with chapter leadership to request specific corrective actions.

Risk Management Program Introduced

In the 1980s, it became clear to SAE's national office (and many chapter leaders) that there was a critical need for a more formal policy on alcohol consumption and related issues. There had been an increasing number of accidents and other problems resulting from house parties and other activity. In addition to the potential harm to the Brothers, there was a major concern about the fraternity's liability. SAE began to develop a risk management program that would address the situation.

"Fundamentally the shift was to centralize and coordinate insurance and risk management at the National Level," said Jeff Byroads (CA-TH '78), who was a member of the National Risk Management Committee for 30 years and its chair for five years. "Prior to the 80's it was left up to the individual chapters, which opened the National Fraternity up to significant exposures."

The National Alcohol policy started with an effort to "transfer the risk" to a third party, with the goal of eliminating open parties with alcohol and holding closed parties at establishments like restaurants. The guidelines included that there be no common serving containers (such as kegs) and no chapter funds to buy alcohol so the effort was to make it strictly BYOB. As Jeff noted, the policy has since morphed into a much stricter set of rules, metrics and education largely due to the "lack of adherence" to the initial rules. "As the National Risk Management initiative took hold

it grew to include education, a resource library, an emergency hotline and pooled insurance products that ultimately grew into a National Self-insured insurance facility serving the needs of not only SAE but several other national fraternities and sororities."

Of course, it wasn't necessarily an easy transition for fraternity members accustomed to numerous house parties. While new rules didn't curtail the fraternity's social calendar, there was a much greater emphasis on member responsibility and chapter leadership in San Diego and elsewhere. "Cal Theta was no different than every other chapter in their reluctance to embrace the rules," said Jeff. "Without the chapter advisors and House Corp it would have been impossible to implement."

Decade by Decade - the 1990s

Campus Snapshot: In February, 1990 ground was broken on the site of an old poultry farm, and construction began on the permanent campus of California State University San Marcos (below). Later in the year, CSU San Marcos admitted its first 448 students, all juniors and seniors. Meanwhile at SDSU, the 1990's were turbulent years for the Greek community. Alpha Gamma Delta, Sigma Alpha Epsilon and Tau Kappa Epsilon closed in 1991. In 1994 Alpha Tau Omega and Delta Upsilon closed and Sigma Alpha Epsilon recolonized.



Troubles Continue

The 1990s decade was an unhappy chapter in Cal Theta's history. However, it would also demonstrate the commitment and resolve of numerous Brothers to ensure that their

fraternity would eventually maintain a strong presence at SDSU.

By 1990, Cal Theta was in a difficult condition. Several factors had resulted in the close monitoring of the chapter and in August 1990, the Supreme Council of ΣAE placed

control of Cal Theta in the hands of an alumni commission as a “result of five years of unresolved problems.” The hope was that the chapter could make a dramatic turnaround so that more drastic actions wouldn’t be necessary.

However, approximately a year later, the Alumni Commission made a painful decision. After extensive discussions and conferring with national leaders and others, it was determined that the best course of action was to close the house. In August 1991, a letter was sent to the undergrad members informing them that as a result of not meeting the necessary conditions, Cal Theta would lose its charter and members would be considered suspended Brothers of ΣAE until graduation, at which time they would automatically become an alumnus in good standing. The letter from Dick Troncone and Ken Tracey, Eminent Supreme Recorder, stated “It is the belief of the Supreme Council and Alumni commission that over the last six years, California Theta has been given every opportunity to correct the problems which were brought to the chapter’s attention. Though there are some good young men currently among the ranks of California Theta, as a group, the Chapter has been unable to meet the standards of Sigma Alpha Epsilon.”

In a subsequent letter to alumni, Dick wrote “You should be aware that the decision came after very lengthy deliberation and was made jointly by the Alumni commission, national staff and Supreme Council. Furthermore, the decision was unanimous...The closing of the Chapter is not a permanent one. Cal Theta will be recolonized with a new group of undergraduates at some future date, when we can be confident that the fine traditions of Sigma Alpha Epsilon at San Diego State, dating back to 1949, can once again be ensured. We firmly believe the action that has been taken is the best long-term interest of California Theta.”

All current house residents were asked to leave, the IFC and campus administration were

notified that Cal Theta had lost its charter, and for the first time since 1949 ΣAE was no longer recognized as an SDSU fraternity. The ΣAE letters were removed—although the lions remained—and the house was leased to a sorority.

For most alumni who weren’t aware of the recent problems, the closure was a disappointing surprise. “I was living out of the area and hadn’t known that the problems were that significant,” said Gary Cringan (CA-TH ‘70). “It was a definite shock to get the news. Based on my experiences, I just couldn’t imagine that ever happening.”

Of course, it was a major disappointment for those alumni who had been involved in the ongoing steps to keep Cal Theta active. Jeff Byroads lamented the decision but having participated in the long review and evaluation process, emphasized that it was the right decision at the time. “It was an exhaustive process,” he recalled. “But it was a textbook case of doing it the right way. By controlling the situation and being proactive and explaining to the university, the Commission members knew that it would be much easier to reintroduce ΣAE in the form of a colony and then regain the charter.”

1991 National Convention

The Alumni Association was determined that Cal Theta would return to SDSU and in the meantime ΣAE would maintain its visibility in San Diego County. A good example of ΣAE’s presence was its hosting of the 1991 national convention. This was a significant achievement that was originally proposed by Brother Byroads. He thought that it would be a great opportunity to hold the convention in San Diego but also knew the challenge involved. “The Convention cities used to be selected on the basis of a formal and comprehensive proposal, much like the Olympic sites are chosen,” said Byroads. (Convention cities are

now the outgoing ESA's home city.) "They tried to mix them from east to west, so in addition to requiring a lot of preparation, the timing was critical."

San Diego Alumni Association Convention Host Committee	
Michael J. Collins, New York Epsilon, '84 Chairman	Jeffrey H. Byroads California Theta, '78 Chairman
Ron Anderson California Theta, '88	Gary S. Losey California Theta, '78
Bob Battenfield California Theta, '61	James L. Parker California Theta, '87
Robert Bell Minnesota Alpha, '59	Vince Perrine California Theta, '93
Michael B. Dunbar Utah Phi, '88	Robert Rubio California Chi, '92
Roger J. Evans California Theta, '85	Stuart Steinhauer Mississippi Gamma, '41
Jim Gaines Tennessee Beta, '69	Jim Stout California Theta, '88
Phillip B. Gair California Theta, '77	Richard Troncone California Theta, '65
Bill Hamlin California Theta, '84	Allan Ward California Theta, '85
Ken Henry Kentucky Beta, '67	Colonel Bob White Oregon Beta, '53
Dwight L. Johnson Utah Phi, '60	Bradley Young California Theta, '77



After several years of proposals, in 1986 San Diego was selected as the location for the 1991 convention and Byroads began to form a support group. "When forming the committee, I thought it was important to have a diverse group of brothers, so along with several Cal Theta alumni (including Ron Anderson, Bob Battenfield, Gary Losey, Brad Young, '78, and Bill Hamlin, '84), we had brothers from different eras and various parts of the country (including Convention Co-chair Michael Collins, New York Epsilon; Michael Dunbar, Utah Phi; Jim Gaines, Tennessee Beta; and Ken Henry, Kentucky Beta)."



Brother Jeff Byroads (third from left) and other convention attendees

The convention featured the usual meetings, votes, and special programs, along with trips to Sea World and other excursions.

Byroads noted that the work involved in organizing the convention was definitely worthwhile. "It was a great opportunity for us to show off the city and the fact that we had a strong local Alumni Association."

Alumni Association Recognized

In 1994, the San Diego Alumni Association was awarded the outstanding Area Alumni Association from the ΣAE National headquarters. There were 72 area alumni associations at the time so the award was quite an honor. The San Diego Alumni Association was recognized for its monthly luncheons, annual Founder's Day, Toys for Tots donations, newsletter and ongoing efforts to maintain strong brotherhood.

"San Diego serves as an example to other associations," said Rich Nero, ΣAE's alumni development coordinator. "The Association has become the standard of what we'd like to see."

Cal Theta Interest Group/Colony

After three years, ΣAE finally started on the long way back to regaining Cal Theta's charter.

In the Fall of 1994 a group of alumni hosted an IFC-sponsored Rush booth on campus and subsequently organized two events. "We tried to get guys enthusiastic about joining the interest group," Ron Anderson said. "Of course, it wasn't that easy; from their perspective there was no guarantee there would be a fraternity."

Obviously, some SDSU students thought it was a worthwhile opportunity. As Mike Boyle Alumni Association chairman noted in a newsletter article, "As a result of the fine effort by many alumni and brothers from our UCSD chapter, 15 well qualified undergraduates have formed an Σ AE interest group." That September they rented a small house on Montezuma Ave.

Anderson and the late Phil Gair (CA-TH '77) served as advisors to the group. The timetable called for recolonization to begin with a pledge class during the upcoming spring semester. "Our goal is to ensure that the Σ AE fraternity experience is positive and that our chapter adheres to fraternity and campus policies," said Boyle.

Boyle pointed out that the Cal Theta's return to the SDSU campus would be achieved based on performance. "There are milestones which the colony must achieve before the chapter charter is restored by the National Fraternity," he said. Those goals included providing regular reports to the National Office, demonstrating that it is financially stable, establishing a GPA above the university's all men's average for two semesters, and initiating a written pledge or fraternity education program. The hope was that Σ AE would return within two years. However, it would take a little longer.

Brad Duerks joined the interest group in 1997. However, he didn't think it would be quite that challenging. "When I rushed in the spring of 1997, there were about 25 actives," he said. "Twelve months later I found myself becoming the EA with only 14 active members." There was also talk that the alumni were growing

impatient with the struggling colony and were considering halting the process unless they could get to 50 members and were able to receive the charter by the end of the 1999 school year.



Cal Theta Colony Members participate in a Fall 1977 March of Dimes Walk.

Association Website Launched

In 1998 the Alumni Association took a major step with the introduction of its website, which was initially designed by two CSUSM Brothers: Aref Nohrudi and Rick Hernandez. It provided Association members and other alumni with another way to keep informed of Σ AE news, including the local luncheon, Founder's Day and other event details and photos; major announcements; and other updates.

John McMullen served as the longtime webmaster, coordinating several enhancements. For example, in 2009 he noted that "It recently received a complete makeover and has a whole new look and functionality." John later turned over responsibility for maintaining the Website to Mike Templeton (OH-EP '63) in 2013.

The website was recognized several times by Σ AE National, earning the top communications award for "Outstanding Association Website" in 1999 and 2004. It again won the top Website Communications Award from National in 2015.

Cal Theta's Turning Point

Meanwhile, Cal Theta was still trying to gain enough members to move forward. "We had a very unimpressive spring rush class of six and were very concerned, to say the least," said Duerks. "We knew what a wonderful fraternity Σ AE was, but unfortunately we were operating out of a very dumpy three bedroom house. Prospective rushes weren't impressed with the colony status."



Colony Bros playing in a 1998 Pi Phi over the line tournament.

Then there was a significant development. "At some point during the Spring 1998 semester we got wind that the sorority was not going to be renewing their lease on the College Place house and that the Σ AE House Corporation would need to find a new tenant," said Duerks. "I was already well aware of previous attempts by the colony to get the fraternity house back, but each time had been told no. And I was certainly aware that with the colony now only having 14 actives and six pledges, this was going to be a big long shot. However, though the colony's back was against the wall, we had nothing to lose by asking again for (to live in) the house again. If we don't get the house most likely the colony folds up in a year. If we do get the house, we have a great chance to survive and eventually thrive."



Colony Members attending 1998 Leadership School: top row (l-r): Mac Dodds, T.J. McKinney; bottom row: Alvin Mudaliar, Brad Duerks.

Duerks knew for the request to be taken seriously he needed a well thought-out plan. "So I typed up a proposal on why it would be a good risk for the House Corporation to allow us to move back into the fraternity house and let us compete for rushees on a competitive playing field. Fall 1998 rush was going to make or break the Cal Theta colony. Mark Wallbridge, our EDA at the time, and I met with Dick Troncone to present the proposal and explain why it would work. Fortunately for Cal Theta they gave us the opportunity that we needed."

Brad and others knew they couldn't be complacent. "We were not about to sit back and expect the physical house itself would deliver us a great pledge class. We put more effort into Fall 1998 rush than any other. Getting our house back gave us that boost of confidence we so desperately needed to make the big push towards getting out charter. Our fall 1998 rush chairman, Alan Mudaliar, did a great job and the result was a 25 man pledge class."

Future leaders Chris McCoy ('03), Adam Porter ('02) and Stefano Brunetto ('03) all pledged that semester. "I knew it would be more satisfying to help rebuild the fraternity (rather than join another one)," said Brunetto.



Final "Preferential Party" of 1998 Rush.

Porter recalled being interested in the colony—rather than any other fraternity—because his roommate and other close friends were members. “I hadn’t gone through rush, not even one event at the ΣAE house,” he said. “But one evening that summer my two roommates came home after a chapter meeting and excitedly said they were going to be moving back to 5076 College Place. I remembered back to the times I was invited to some of their parties. The house they called home then worked but it wasn’t a real fraternity house and wasn’t easy to rush new members. Now their new excitement about returning to the ΣAE house got me seriously interested in rushing. It really was the perfect time to get involved and we were all so excited just to keep the momentum going.”

“It was a small chapter, but there was a lot of energy,” said McCoy. “Even though it was still a colony, as a pledge I saw the energy and fire of the actives. Of course, we didn’t completely understand everything that the bros (colony) before us and alumni had done to get back.”

“During the interim period, the time between when we pledged and the return of Cal Theta’s charter, a lot of alums visited and told us the history,” said Brunetto.

Duerks noted that the progress made during the year made the difference. “It’s amazing to see how far Cal Theta progressed from the start

of 1998 to the end of the year,” he said. “I’ll always remember that and am so proud to be forever connected to that group of young men who accomplished so much, when not much was expected at all.”

In 1998, 20 members of the colony moved into the College Place house. It was another step in Cal Theta’s anticipated return to active status.

Cal Theta Regains Charter

“Now having sufficient numbers, we spent the rest of fall 1998 working on the administrative side of things to prepare for our request for the charter,” said Duerks.



Bros in front of the Cal Theta house (late 1998/early 1999): Mark Wallbridge, Mark Dewey, Andy Patel, “Big Mike”.

Finally on January 30, 1999 the Cal Theta chapter regained the missing charter. Joining 60 colony members, family and friends and alumni were Bill Woods, Eminent Supreme Deputy archon; Josh Cohen, Director of Extension; Dick Lies, Eminent Supreme Recorder; and several other ΣAE notables.

Following the initiation ceremony, there was a reception at the College Place house. Most of the attending alumni hadn’t been inside for many years. Later that evening there was a formal dinner and reinstallation ceremony.



"It was a great weekend and we look forward to a new era for Cal Theta," said Brother Duerks.

Cal State University/San Marcos Adds Chapter

In 1992, four young men at Cal State University San Marcos believed they had a brilliant idea. Bill Alvilar, Husam Ryhan, Billy Harrison and Ed Calvillo started a local fraternity called Sigma Phi Delta. Joining these Founding Fathers later were Aref Nohrudi and Sean Martin who also became "founding officers." During the summer of 1993 they drafted the fraternity constitution.

According to Martin (who would later serve his chapter as Pledge Educator), the CSUSM

administration wasn't initially receptive to campus fraternities. "We fought an uphill battle to be allowed on campus with the administration," he said. "We actually had to attend a hearing with the Administration to be recognized as a fraternity. It was also decided that we had to become a national fraternity if we wanted to stay on campus."

Sigma Phi Delta continued to grow and even played a role in the further development of the CSUSM Greek system. "We assisted in the formation of two sororities and later another fraternity (a local) was formed," Martin explained. "Prior to this there was no Greek life on campus or social life to speak of."

Eventually the local fraternity was ready to affiliate with a national organization. "When it came time to choose a national fraternity, we were approached by several but there was little doubt who we wanted to go with: Sigma Alpha Epsilon," Martin emphasized.

The ΣΑΕ colony was established at CSUSM in 1996. Martin speaks for many brothers when he said, "I still remember the excitement I felt during those days back in the early 90's! We were building something and though it was small at the time, it grew into the fraternity we all know, love and are so proud of."

On April 17, 1999, Cal Alpha Gamma at Cal State University at San Marcos became the third ΣΑΕ chapter in San Diego. Forty-six undergrad and alumni members were installed as new brothers. "It was a long time coming but definitely worth it," said outgoing EA Kevin Owens.

Martin, who graduated in 1997, was one of the fortunate Colony members who returned at a later time for his own initiation into ΣΑΕ. "It was an honor and a privilege to be involved on the ground level Sigma Phi Delta and later Sigma Alpha Epsilon when we made a colony," he said.

Decade by Decade - the 2000s

Campus Snapshot: On July 10, 2005 a new trolley station opened on the SDSU campus. In June 2007, SDSU was deemed the number one small research university in the nation



Phoenix--The New Era

The great news was that after seven years, Cal Theta was back on campus. Of course, there were challenges ahead. ΣAE was now in the rebuilding process, from its previous lofty place as the leading SDSU fraternity to a “start-up” in the process of being reestablished.

One challenge was the size of membership. Soon after the charter’s return, a large number of Brothers graduated. “In the fall of 1999, we probably had about 30 members, and needed a

good rush,” said Brunetto. “We put lot of time into 2000 rush and ended up with a great turnout. From that point the rushes got better and better.”

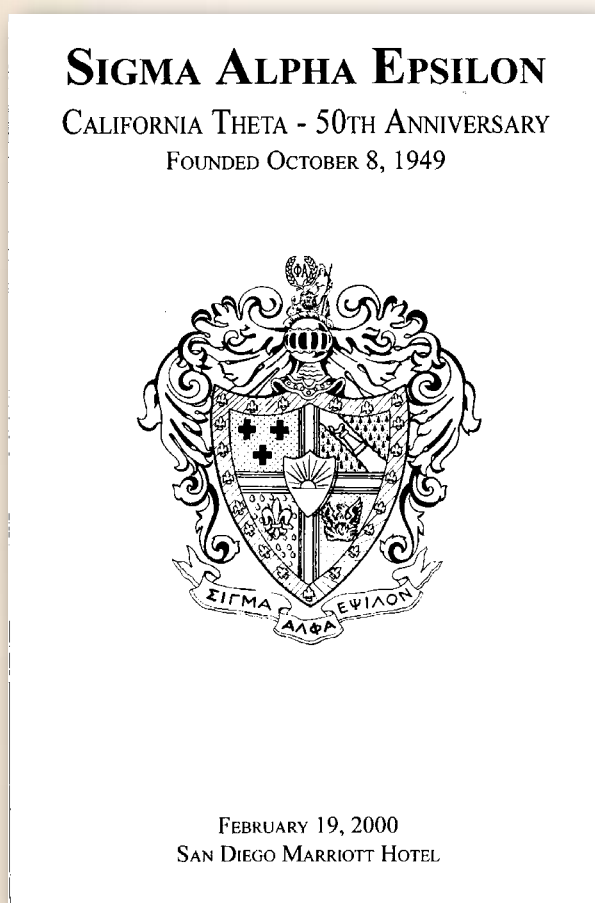
“After the 2000 rush we were able to double the size of the membership,” said Porter.

Cal Theta’s 50th Anniversary

The return of Cal Theta’s charter coincided with its 50 year anniversary (October 1999) but because of the preparations for Installation

Ceremony, the celebration was scheduled for February 19, 2000, which was combined with our annual Founder's Day.

Phil Gair was chairman of the dual event. He promised that "This will be the biggest event in SDSU/Cal Theta history. We're encouraging everyone to spread the word.



There were extensive preparations that included an impressive photo display organized by Mark Mays. "I enjoyed reviewing the many photographs that had been collected through the years," said Mays. "I'm sure that many of those attending the event had never seen most of them."

HONORED GUESTS....

Col. Bill Woods
Eminent Supreme Archon
Richard Hopple
Eminent Supreme Deputy Archon
Tom Bower
Eminent Supreme Warden
Larry Shackelford
Eminent Supreme Chronicler
Richard Lies
Eminent Supreme Recorder
Frank Ginocchio
Director of Chapter Services
Chuck Larson
Director of Development
Mark Rowland
Education & Leadership Consultant
Bob DeMarco
Province Chi Archon
Phil Gair
*Province Chi-Alpha Archon
& National Mens Health Committee Chair*

.....

REUNION COMMITTEE....

Jeff Byroads
Phil Gair
Mark Mays
John McMullen
Dick Troncone
Joe Turner

Almost 300 undergraduates and alumni attended the celebration at the Marriott Marina Hotel on San Diego Bay. Among the attendees were ESA Col. William Wood and ESR Richard Lies. "It was a nice opportunity for brothers who didn't regularly attend the luncheons and other events to meet or get reacquainted with those of their own and different eras," said John McMullen.

A highlight of the evening was presentation of the Distinguished Service Award to Dick Troncone. The DSA is the highest award the fraternity bestows upon its members. "It was a very special honor," said Troncone.

Chapter Leadership

Obviously, Cal Theta's new leaders were acutely aware of their responsibility to ensure the fraternity avoided any major problems. "We

knew it was important to instill that there are consequences to your actions, making the new guys/pledges aware,” said McCoy.

“We felt that as long as we took care of business, there shouldn’t be any major worries,” said Porter. “One of the best things that came out of all of us stepping in was learning what we were made of. And yes, if we fell down, figuring out how we were going to get back up only made us stronger as men.”

“We did have to get reestablished with IFC and Greek system in general,” added Brunetto. “However, within a couple of years we were back on top, out trying to win the sports trophy.”

There was also a renewed interest in taking on leadership roles. “More bros were stepping up as leaders,” said Ryan Thorsen (2006). Of course, Thorsen continued the “policy” of EAs serving for a full year, which started in the early 1990s (Prior to that it was a one semester position.) “As EA, I found different ways to work with people, interact with alumni, learn from my mistakes and make critical decisions,” he said. “Two semesters gives more time to make a difference.”

UCSD’s Rugby Brothers

There have been many SAE athletes on the three San Diego area chapters, including a group of rugby players at UCSD.

When Greg Terrazas arrived at UCSD as a freshman in 2002, he wanted to affiliate with the best fraternity, which was SAE. He also wanted to join the rugby team, which at the time was a “club sport” at the Division I level. “I was curious about the sport and went to some practices,” Greg said. “I had no experience, but team members and coaches were supportive and willing to show the basics to an inexperienced freshman. I really liked the game, gradually improved and was on the team all four years at UCSD.”

Rugby provided a special bond, as more than 15 UCSD players were SAEs during that period. Their participation offered some comfort when the SAE chapter lost its charter in 2005 (regaining it in 2012). “Being on the team was another way to stay connected with some of the Brothers.”

Other SAE rugby players included Brothers Nik Cherwinck, Kevin Hannegan, Nick Stoner, and Todd and Mark Gleed.

Social Scene

Cal Theta members also had to raise the fraternity’s social profile. “At first, sororities and others didn’t want to do a lot with us; we didn’t have much of a reputation that first year because we had been away and were still so small,” said McCoy. “We even did exchanges with USD and UCSD sororities. But changes were soon underway. Our on-campus reputation got better.”

“After the first couple of years, things started to jell, we were getting more recognition,” said Porter.

Definitely one of the highlights of Cal Theta’s 2000 “social season” was the Paddy Murphy party. Most ΣAEs have either been to a Paddy party or at least know of this unique celebration. It was being held for the first time in nine years, and the Brothers felt that it was deserving of more than a one night event. So they made it a weeklong extravaganza—March 6-11, which included a “blind date function,” date dance, and of course the traditional memorial party honoring Paddy. One added attraction: an on campus eulogy. “The casket was carried throughout the (SDSU) campus,” wrote Alvin Mudaliar in the Spring issue of *The Lion’s Roar*. “The eulogy had many spectators left in awe, and wondering what was going on. It made the front page of the *Daily Aztec*.”

Meanwhile, IFC and campus police were monitoring fraternities and sororities more closely than ever and loud(er) parties were not

tolerated. "There were definitely more restrictions regarding parties and the noise level," said Brunetto.

While ΣAE's risk management policies had been in place since the 1980s, actually following them was now especially critical.

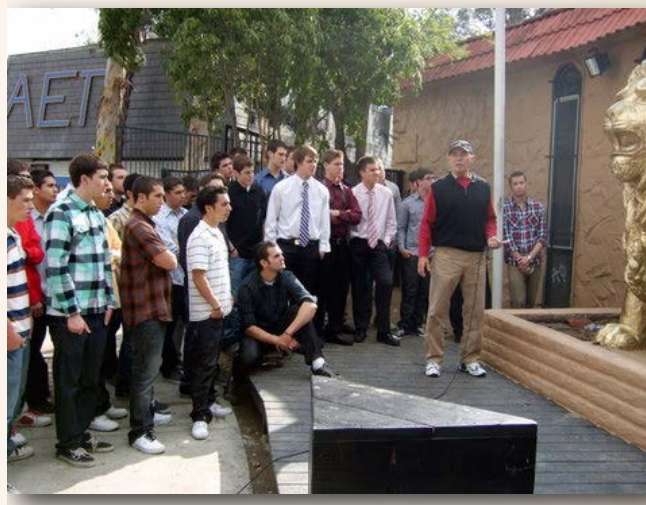
Pledge/New Member Breakfasts

One of the most popular new traditions was the pledge breakfasts that Brother Mark Mays introduced in 2002. He explained that his initial reason for starting the twice yearly gatherings was to ensure that pledges were aware of the history of the lions and specifically Mike Matson's role as their creator. "I remember being at an SDSU tailgate party and while talking to a new pledge learned that he had no idea who Mike was and how the lions were constructed," Mays recalled. "That obviously didn't seem right and I was determined to make sure that future pledges were aware of that and other critical parts of our history."

Mark and his late wife Karen (who would later receive the Order of the Violet award) hosted the pledge breakfasts at their house, also joined by a few alumni. "Karen loved to cook and enjoyed the breakfasts as much as I did," he said. After breakfast, Mark and brothers such as Mad Dog, Dan Bamberg, Mike Drake, Ron Coover, Dick Troncone and John McMullen would share stories about their time in the fraternity and the impact it has had on their lives. "It was our way of emphasizing the life-long benefits that the fraternity provides and how so many years later Brothers still have a passion for it," Mark said.

After breakfast, everyone goes to the Cal Theta house and gathers by the lions, so that Mad Dog can tell the story of how they were made. "When Mike finishes, the pledges all walk by and shake his hand," Mark said. "I know the experience resonates with most of them and it's been very rewarding for me as

well to get to know the younger bros, many of whom have become good friends."



Mad Dog Talking about the Lions

To view a Youtube video of Mad Dog's talk, please click [HERE](#).

"It has been a very positive experience having brothers share their experiences and stories of the past, and has helped create a bond with the different generations," added Bamberg.

In early 2013, the torch was passed to Bill Marckwardt, who with his wife Betty has continued the breakfast tradition. "Regular alumni attendees include sages Mike Matson, Gary Losey and John McMullen and a mix of younger ΣAE alums getting started in their selected professions are also invited each semester to provide mentorship and inspiration to the undergrads," said Marckwardt. "The program helps the young prospective brothers to understand the broad scope of their pending commitment, and realize that being an ΣAE doesn't end on graduation day."

Markwardt added that singing is a key element of the gatherings. "The ceremony concludes with a demonstration of intense enthusiasm by 'the singing fraternity,' " he noted. "Renditions begin with "Violets," which is sung to Betty, followed by "Friends" and finally an amped "Come Sing to Sig." On that upbeat note, the new ΣAE class heads back

over to 5076 College Place to hear the 'Presentation of the Lions' by Mad Dog."

Fraternity Row

SDSU's Greek housing landscape had begun to change as well. In 2002, the SDSU Foundation announced plans for a new Fraternity Row housing complex as part of the College Community Redevelopment project. The plan was to design and construct a neighborhood of fraternity and sorority houses in the area of 55th and Hardy Streets. While ΣAEs would have a significantly smaller home than our College Place property, Cal Theta was initially supportive of the project and anticipating an eventual relocation. "Brother Tom Carter (CA-TH '62) was an SDSU Foundation Board Member and a strong proponent of the Fraternity Row and we were definitely committed to the original plan," Dick Troncone explained. "We actually had a basic design of a new house and we got first choice of the proposed locations."

However, as planning continued there were concerns about limited parking, smaller living accommodations and other issues. "After a great deal of discussion, we decided that Cal Theta was much better off in its present location," Troncone added.

Brothers Cruise and Travel Abroad

During this period, several brothers were able to study abroad. For example, in 2005 Ryan Thorsen attended Oxford University as part of the Oxford Study Abroad Program, in which several other ΣAEs also participated. "This was a great chance to study at a prestigious school for a semester and also travel to various places in the UK," he said.

Others had an opportunity to travel on Leadership School cruises. For the first time ever, the 2006 leadership school was held on a Carnival Cruise Line ship, sailing from Tampa with an excursion planned for Cozumel,

Mexico. Brothers from both Cal Theta and Cal Alpha-Gamma participated in that school. It was arranged so that there were meetings and other sessions in the morning and afternoons, with group events and opportunities to visit ports at other times during the day. Then in 2009 the Leadership School took place during a cruise from San Diego to Catalina Island and Ensenada. "There was a good combination of lectures as well as free time so we could hang out with all the guys from different chapters and get to hear more about how they run their chapter," said Mike Butruce (CA-TH '10), one of the four Cal Theta undergrads attending that school. "It was cool being from Cal Theta, as people really looked up to us because of our strong reputation."

Young Alumni Association Formed

Most younger alums are usually busy establishing their careers and don't always have sufficient time to be involved in the fraternity. That's why Chris McCoy and Adam Porter thought it would be worthwhile to establish a young alumni group within the San Diego Alumni Association. "The idea was to help get more of the younger bros involved in the Association," said McCoy. "There was a group of younger brothers—those who had graduated during the last few years—that we wanted to help make the transition from college to their careers. It was another opportunity to help bridge the gap between the different eras."

"It was a good way to keep some of the younger alumni involved," noted Porter.

In 2007, they had their first poker tournament with subsequent events also held. In addition, the Alumni Association has made a major effort to include younger members on the Board of Directors and involve them in other ways.

Career Counseling

One of the benefits of being an SAE is the professional networking that is available. Joe Farrage is the ideal example of a Brother who received a major career boost as a result of the connections he made as both a Cal Theta undergrad and an SDSU alum. For example, Dick Troncone gave him a solid endorsement to Brother Ron Roberts, then a San Diego City Council member, who hired Farrage as community liaison/policy advisor.



Cal Theta and other chapters have held events to provide undergrad Brothers with career advice. For instance, in November 2009 Cal Theta alumni shared helpful insights about their professions with a group of undergrads. "The alumni Board realized that many of us had gotten our first job out of college by direct connection through SAE," said John McMullen. "We thought it would be valuable for undergraduates to have an opportunity to talk with an alumnus who had a successful career in a discipline that they might be interested in." The resulting "Career Fair" at the Cal Theta chapter house featured break-out groups in the areas of law, insurance, real estate, entrepreneurship and other areas. "We continue to believe that networking with alumni is an excellent opportunity for younger Brothers and undergraduates to

develop their career opportunities," said John. "Membership in our Association is the first step."

Chapters Give Back

ΣAE chapters have a reputation for giving back to their communities. For example, the Rebuilding Together program (formerly known as Christmas in April) involved brothers helping paint and renovate a deserving homeowner's property. During the first few years of the decade, Brothers Ron Coover (CA-TH '71) and John Lomac (CA-TH '69) directed much of this activity and were assisted by a hardworking group of undergrads and alumni. "This was a great experience because it brought a lot of Brothers together for a good cause—to help homeowners who weren't able to fix their houses by themselves," said Coover.



Alumni & Undergrads Refurbish a Home

Added Lomac, "The benefits of these projects were compelling. First, they have been great opportunities to bring the active and alumni brothers together for a day of real connectivity. Shared stories abound, along with the shared work experience of interior and exterior painting, yard cleanup, plumbing electrical repairs and more. The interface of active and alumni working together throughout the day was a 'purple and gold' moment in the fraternity experience."

CA-AG had its own special project with the Rebuilding the South Community Service event. For several years, a group of brothers traveled to New Orleans to help families rebuild their houses that were destroyed in the hurricanes, along with other needed repair work at schools and other sites. A newsletter article noted that, "Last year, the chapter sent 20 brothers and each performed 50 hours of community service, for a total of 1,000 hours over an entire week". "The chapter partnered with First Line Charter Schools, where they rebuilt an old storage room that was water-damaged, into a multipurpose room for the students."

Brotherly Reunions

In addition to the annual Founder's Day gatherings, smaller reunions have been organized by various groups of Brothers, including one from the 1960s-70s eras that made annual trips to Palm Springs.

Starting in 2003 Al Higdon (CA-TH '61) and his wife Marian began hosting popular gatherings at their five-acre Crest ranch for 1950s-60s Brothers. "We held the first one that year and have had 10 more since," said Al. "The bros like seeing their buddies and reminiscing about the times they had in college."



Brother Jerry Sanders Elected Mayor

Many SAE's from San Diego universities as well as other chapters have been highly successful in their business, legal, medical/dental and other professions, but Brother Jerry Sanders (CA-TH '72) was the first "local" to be elected Mayor.

Following a long career with the San Diego Police Department, including his final role as Chief, and subsequent position as Executive Director of United Way, civic leaders urged Sanders to enter a special run-off election after San Diego's mayor resigned just six months into his term. "I'd never been into politics before," said Sanders. "The city was in a crisis. It was on the brink of bankruptcy and was being investigated by the Securities and Exchange Commission for what were classified as fraudulent bond filings."

Sanders won the 2005 election and immediately launched a top-to-bottom review of the city's budget and streamlined city operations, which meant eliminating more than 1,800 positions to reduce overhead costs. During his two terms in office, city financial staff completed six years' worth of backlogged audits, which allowed San Diego to return to the public bond markets in January 2009. This helped fund Sanders' commitment to repair the city's long-neglected water, sewer and transportation infrastructure. Sanders also introduced "managed competition" to city government, a process that allows private companies to compete against city employees for the right to provide municipal services.

Sanders completed his final term as mayor in December 2012. Just one day after leaving office, he began his duties as president and CEO of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Year 2010 to the Present

Campus Snapshot: In 2010, after 15 years as president, Stephen Weber announced his retirement and the following year Elliot Hirshman assumed the top role at SDSU.



Cal Chi Returns

ΣAE's UCSD chapter, which originally received its charter in 1987 and closed in 2005 because of a series of incidents, started the road back to recovery in 2010. "Beginning in the Fall quarter of 2010, two students, Trevor Gerard (Freshman) and Ryan Shaver (Junior) expressed interest in bringing a Chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon to the campus of UC San Diego," said Thadeus Odom, an early member. "They contacted the ΣAE Coordinator of Extension, Alex Hand (CA-AG '10) in hopes of starting a Phoenix Colony."

For the next few months Gerard and Shaver worked with the UCSD Greek Life Advisor in

order to begin the process of colonization. "Gerard and Shaver rallied support from their fellow undergraduates forming a very strong interest group called The True Gentlemen Organization," recalled Odom. "After being voted in by the UCSD Inter-Fraternity Council, The True Gentlemen Organization was allowed to colonize, which it did on May 20, 2011 with a group of 24 men. By signing the IFC Affiliate Chapter Contract, UCSD ΣAE entered into a commitment to ultimately meet and exceed all expectations and requirements to receive their charter as a fully recognized chapter."

“California Chi was honored with a charter from the National Fraternity on May 19th 2012, the one year anniversary of colonization,” said Odom.

As John McMullen noted in a San Diego Alumni Association newsletter article, “A model initiation was held, with a national team conducting the ritual and Eminent Supreme Archon Ken Tracey placing the pin on each initiate. Testimony of campus and fraternity administrators was given extolling the quality of men making up the new chapter.”

“Since then, the chapter has continued to grow and now currently has around 65 members and continues to grow,” said Odom (in 2014). “This chapter has already had a great amount of success in their youth receiving recognition from IFC at UCSD and winning a chapter achievement award from national/Sigma Alpha Epsilon. All of the founding fathers have since graduated from the chapter and the members they recruited are looking forward to building this chapter even more.”

CA-AG Become Campus Leaders



Mike Matson Donates Portrate of Nobel Leslie DeVotie to Cal Alpha-Gamma Chapter

The California Alpha-Gamma chapter demonstrated that we can combine social activity and athletics with campus leadership. “(CSU San Marcos) chapter has faced a fair share of adversity over the past two years,” said EA Weston Ryan in an April 2011 report.

“However, these hardships have made the chapter rise from the ashes to become stronger than ever before. The chapter currently consists of 20 brothers who represent the values enunciated in the ‘True Gentleman.’ Currently, ΣAE comprises six out of the 13 Associated Students Board of Directors. Each of the 20 brothers are not only active on campus, but they are the leaders in their respective organizations.” A very impressive achievement.

Time to Restore

While wear and tear is inevitable at all fraternity houses, by 2009 Cal Theta’s home was 41 years old and in special need of attention, which was exactly what new House Corp. president Gary Losey had in mind. “When Dick Troncone asked me to be president (in 2009), I said that I wanted to be proactive in getting repairs done and other



remodeling scheduled.”

The initial phase of Gary's long-term plan included repair-remodeling projects totaling \$200,000, for new double pane bedroom windows, exterior paint, remodeled pledge room, new emergency battery back-up lighting at all inside common areas, two large new chapter room double-pane back doors with electronic locks.

To help defray the costs, he developed the Honor Wall, with bros being able to purchase a plaque.

That was just the beginning. During the next few years, Losey has continued the ambitious remodeling, including upgrades of all bedrooms and bathrooms, an extensive overhaul of the kitchen, and numerous other improvements. In addition, he partnered with Brother Mad Dog Matson to enhance the pledge room, with new ceiling and wall treatments, fireplace mantel and more.

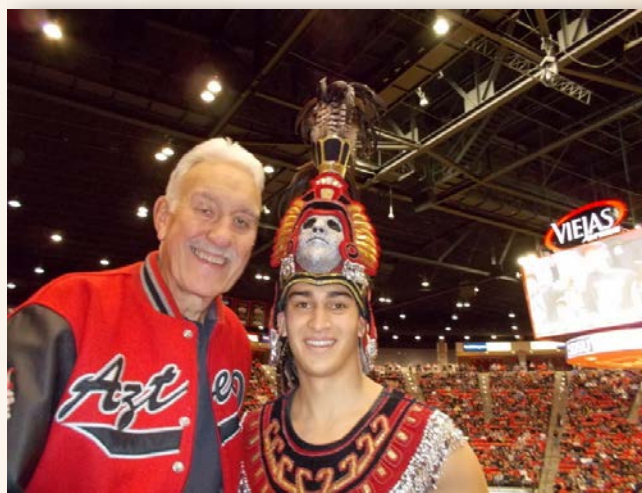


Then in March 2015, Brother Losey announced the completion of the house's \$150,000 commercial kitchen renovation (along with a new chef and meal plan), which included a separate kitchenette and laundry room.

A key part of the major remodel is ensuring that the Brothers will keep the house in good condition. "Reinforcing the importance of taking care of the house is an ongoing process with the bros, but we continue to see progress," Losey said.

Bro Selected as Aztec Warrior

Throughout our history, numerous brothers have played on SDSU's major athletic teams, some going on to play professional sports. However, in 2010 Kyle Anderberg had the distinction of being selected as the Aztec Warrior, the second Brother to be chosen for this ceremonial role. (Our first Cal Theta Warrior was Len Duncan, '54.)



Dick Troncone & (Monty) Kyle Anderberg

Anderberg, who served as Eminent Treasurer of Cal Theta, beat out four other finalists during tryouts at the Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center. A selection committee, composed of alumni and athletics staff along with current Aztec Warriors and students representing SDSU's cheer squad and dance team, conducted interviews and tested candidates' spirit skills. "Kyle showed everybody he has a passion for being a San Diego State Aztec and embodies what it is to be an Aztec for life," said Christian Deleon ('09), the Athletic Department's director of corporate and community relations who organized the tryouts. "He did a good job. He led everybody in 'The Fight Song' and really got everybody pumped up conch-shell-blowing learning curve."

Anderberg was certainly ready for the new position. "I'm just really excited to carry on the tradition of the Aztec Warrior and I'm going to do my best to preserve the tradition and keep it going."

Chapter Newsletter Informs Families

As House Corp. President, Gary Losey was determined to provide the families as well as alumni with status reports on the Cal Theta activity. He introduced Fast News, an e-mail newsletter that kept everyone informed of the upcoming menu, building activity, and other developments. Here are a few excerpts:

Dear Active ΣAE Brothers,

ΣAE Parents & ΣAE Alumni,

ΣAE Meal Plan: Remember, any ΣAE, Active or Pledge, can sign up for the Meal Plan! Great low price...even better home cooked meals! Menu for this week:

ΣAE Eminent Archon Honored: Ryan Thorsen, ΣAE Cal Theta, SDSU, Pledge Call Fall 2006, was honored for his superior leadership as Eminent Archon 2009-2010 by Mike "Mad Dog" Matson & Gary Losey, with a presentation of a Mad Dog ΣAE Solid Bronze Lion. Ryan was "the E.A." that

"ΣAE has always played a significant role in my life. When I arrived in San Diego, one of the first people I met was Brother Frank Arrington (CA-TH '63), and we have been close friends ever since. It was through Frank that I had the good fortune to become involved with the San Diego ΣAE Alumni Association."

- Mike Templeton (OH-EP '63)

helped turn the ΣAE House around, and again toward the future. Well done Ryan! Phi Alpha!!!

ΣAE Josh Drayer, Eminent Treasurer: Josh is doing a great job as Treasurer....all his National bills are paid, his member dues collections are going well. Awesome job

Alumni Association Board Expands

In 2013, the Alumni Association took a major step to ensure the organization's ongoing development and service to its members. "When most of us think of the leadership of the ΣAE San Diego Alumni Association, we think of Brothers Dick Troncone and John McMullen," said Mike Templeton (OH-EP '63). "After all, for more years than they would probably like to admit, they have shouldered the bulk of the Association's administrative burden."

However, as Mike pointed out, while the Association's membership expanded, so did the challenge of accomplishing the work under a set of bylaws that hadn't been substantially changed since 1994.

Brother Templeton formed a committee with Cliff Bee (MI-DE '61) and Stefano Brunetto (CA-TH '02) to review and update the Bylaws for the "purposes of improved participation, shared workload, enhanced transparency, enriched communication, and continuity of leadership." Critical issues included the importance of having a Vice President ready to assume the duties in the event of the President's absence, developing working various committees to share the work load, and more formal financial reporting.

Events offer Great Opportunities, Emphasize Association's Diversity

One of the strengths of the San Diego area Alumni Association is the variety of events held

to benefit Brothers from three local chapters and many others from throughout the country.



At Founder's Day, the luncheons, summer reception and the holiday party you can count on seeing Brothers who attended colleges and universities from throughout California, as well as those from New York, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Delaware, Ohio and elsewhere. They are great opportunities for Bros of different eras and chapters to get to know each other.

"For me, the bonds of 'Friends, Friends, Friends' rings true and last forever," said Cliff Bee (MI-Delta '61). "I believe that one of the wonderful strengths of Sigma Alpha Epsilon is our diversity—in terms of chapter size, campus environments, our backgrounds, and the lifestyles of our members. Our special annual gatherings for Founders' Day, along with our lunches, receptions, and holiday parties



certainly enrich these bonds of brotherhood, friendship, common heritage, traditions and ritual."

Gregg Doherty (NY- Delta '55) has his own unique perspective. "I came to San Diego with the Navy in 1957. I called the Cal Theta house to see if there was an alumni group here and learned that the alumni were having a Happy Hour at the old 32nd Street Officer's Club. I went to the event, stayed active with them, and was Provence Chi Archon here from 1964 until 1967." Gregg subsequently moved back to New York and later to the Northern California. "When I came back to San Diego in late 1994 I again contacted the San Diego SAE Alumni Association. I have enjoyed being a member of the Association all these years and have made some very nice friends here. People like Joe Turner and Elon Place, Dick Lareau, Ron Roberts, Jerry Sanders, John Rebelo and many others. Thanks SAE."



Gary Keehner is another example of a Brother who has both received and given as an Association member. "For me the SAE San Diego Alumni Association has been an important element in extending and rounding out not only my Greek life but also my social one," he said. "I came from a strong chapter at WA-Alpha ('59) and found the same base with Cal Theta, which was very welcoming. It's been nice to see the evolution from several years ago when one of the events might have had about

10 Brothers from other chapters to our most recent summer mixer, where about 45 percent of the attendees were from other chapters—from Maine to Washington to Florida and all over California—who were enthusiastically socializing. Getting to interact with Brothers from all over the U.S. has been stimulating and exciting for me; who didn't know anyone 15 years ago and is now the Association's Events/Program chair."

Pledging is Abolished

On March 7, 2014, ΣAE National headquarters announced a major change to the fraternity. It was a move that many would disagree with and others accepted as the inevitable result of a series of unfortunate incidents occurring at various chapters and serious legal issues facing the fraternity. There would be no more pledges.



As the National office explained in an official announcement, "Sigma Alpha Epsilon, under the leadership and direction of the Supreme Council, has made a historic decision that will realign the Fraternity to produce the original member's experience that our Founding Fathers envisioned. This change will adopt a method, practice and policy that treat all members equally and fairly and strive for a continuous development of our members throughout their lives. Effective March 9, 2014, new-member (pledge) programming will be eliminated completely from our operations, and

the classification of new member (pledge) will no longer exist. All chapters and colonies will be required to implement this important change."

Brothers attending the Founder's Day celebration in San Diego on March 9, heard ESA Brad Cohen explain the rationale behind the significant decision.

In a subsequent article in ΣAE News, Alumni Association President Dick Troncone added "With the long-term viability of Sigma Alpha Epsilon at stake, the Supreme Council had no choice, but to point the Fraternity in a different direction. As ESA Cohen told us, pledge programs didn't come to be until after World War II. ΣAE flourished for almost 100 years before that, without them. Change is always difficult, particularly for an organization that is 158 years old. But it is incumbent on us, as Brothers, to support it and not dwell on the past.'

On a local level, the EA's of Cal Theta, Cal Chi and Cal Alpha Gamma knew there would be a few challenges to implement the new policy. "In light of the True Gentleman Experience being implemented on March 9th, the initial challenge for California Theta was planning an initiation within 96 hours for our Spring Pledge class of 12 gentlemen," said then Cal Theta EA Nick Wright. "This involved a meeting with the chapter to explain the changes and logistics of the implementation and a meeting with the pledge class was also necessary to clarify the initiation date and reasoning for the surprise changes. The new members were required to complete their online certification program (the Carson Starkey Pledge Program) along with their signature on the Scope of Association. The new members along with the active brothers are now required to complete regular online modules which reinforce continual education depending on their scholastic level within the University. Obviously at first there was some resistance to the changes, but after a few

meetings with the chapter, the active brothers realized the need for change within ΣAE and supported the movement."

Tad Odom, EA at Cal Chi noted that, "Initially hearing about the major change of eliminating the pledge process came as a shock and most of our chapter was very angry with the sudden change. But then after looking at the way our chapter education was already set-up, we realized that not a lot would actually change, other than some titles. Having the new members initiated and knowing the ritual from the beginning was the hardest part for the chapter but we came to realize that these sacred words wouldn't hold any meaning to these members until they personally witnessed it and lived through it down the line. Being a newer chapter, I feel like the change was easier for us than some. With this being said, I can see this new program being great for our new initiates as well as continuing the chapter's education as a whole, once it is solidified. I think this program gets chapters back in the mentality of building up their members rather than bringing them down."

"Being in the Fraternity was great; it was the center of my college experience."

- Masato Itoh (CA-TH '04)

Brother Lareau Recognized

October 17, 2014 was proclaimed Richard John Lareau Day in the City of San Diego and a plaque was duly presented by Mayor Faulconer and members of the City Council. The presentation was made at the annual dinner meeting of the Pt. Loma Association, attended by some 450 people. Not to be outdone, the Board of Supervisors represented by Brother Ron Roberts (CA-TH '65) and Gregg Cox, declared October 17th to be Dick Lareau Day

in the County of San Diego.

Dick was recognized for his architectural contribution to the City & County. In addition to designing the Cal Theta ΣAE house (with Carl Hotten) and assisting Gary Losey (CA-TH '79) and Mike Matson (CA-TH '70) with various house upgrades, Dick designed the Visitor Information Center, Peninsula Bank of Pt. Loma (now U.S. Bank), the Miramar MCAS Officer's Club, and most of the buildings at Pt. Loma Nazarene University as well as U.S. International University (now Alliant International University). He has also designed or monitored projects in London, France, Nairobi, Kenya, Hawaii, Mexico City, Japan – all together totaling some 300 other buildings.

When asked, Brother Lareau stated, "My architectural practice has been more fun than work."

Mike Pack Becomes 7th SAE to Receive Monty Award

In September 2015, SDSU honored several distinguished alumni at the annual Monty Awards—including Cal Theta Brother Mike Pack ('70), who became the 7th SAE to be so honored. Monty Awards are given by the SDSU Alumni Association to those who have made significant contributions to the University, the San Diego community or California, nationally or internationally. "The Monty is a symbol of achievement and success presented each year to distinguished alumni from each of SDSU's seven academic colleges and Library and Information Access."

Brother Pack, president of SunCal Outdoor Advertising, is a key supporter of and advisor to the College of Arts and Letters, especially with regard to its interdisciplinary international business major. A member of the university's Campanile Foundation Board of Directors and founder of the Pack Foundation, he is

committed to providing opportunities for young people to realize their educational goals.

Mike joins other ΣAE Alumni who have won this prestigious award in the past, including: Jack Goodall (CA-TH '60), Dick Troncone (CA-TH '65), Cliff Bee (MI-DL '61), Ron Roberts (CA-TH '65), Mark McMillin (CA-TH '79), and Tom Carter (CA-TH '62).

Dick Troncone Passes Leadership Baton to Adam Porter

After nearly 30 years leading the San Diego Area Alumni Association, Dick Troncone decided it was time to “pass the torch” to Brother Adam Porter, who took over as President in January 2016.

Dick has led the Association through the positive times as well as more challenging periods. He has overseen membership growth, expanded events and activities, chapter relations and much more. “For close to three decades our great association has grown and flourished under the leadership of Brother Dick Troncone,” said Adam.

Dick’s contributions to SAE on a local, regional and national scale have been well recognized. His numerous honors include the Order of Minerva and the Distinguished Service Award, our fraternity’s top award.

Adam had been preparing for his new role for some time. “I have known Adam Porter since 1998, when he became a member of the ΣAE Colony at Cal Theta, as part our efforts to bring ΣAE back to San Diego State,” Dick said in a newsletter article. “Since graduating, he has continued to be actively involved with the Fraternity, serving on the Association Board of Directors, as Province Treasurer and Cal Theta Chapter Advisor. I feel he is well qualified to take over from me.”

To ensure a smooth transition, Dick agreed to stay on the Board for at least another year. He received the Brother of the Year Award at

the 2016 Founder’s Day, further recognition of his extensive contributions to SAE in San Diego.



San Diego Alumni Association Receives National Awards

At the 81st (2016) John O. Moseley Leadership School, the San Diego Alumni association was honored with several 2015-2016 ΣAE National Awards. Awardees were congratulated on what they accomplished and what they’ve done to support ΣAE’s mission and values.

Our Association received the following three prestigious awards: Bill Fiscus Outstanding Area Alumni Association Award (Runner-Up), Outstanding Alumni Association/House Corporation Communication Award/Electronic Newsletter (Winner), and Outstanding Alumni Association/House Corporation Communication Award; Printed Newsletter.

The Bill Fiscus Award, “recognizes the area alumni association that has made an outstanding contribution of time and energy in its respective geographical area. The winning association(s) will exemplify consistent dedication in enhancing the fraternal experience for alumni from all chapters residing in the local area and, when possible, the

undergraduates of the chapter or colony that may be located in the vicinity, as set forth in the Fraternity Laws.”

The previous year the Association won the Bill Fiscus award, along with the award for printed newsletters, electronic newsletters and websites.

“I feel lucky to have been a part of ΣAE. The people involved with the Chapter and the Alumni Association are a testament to how outstanding the organization is.”

- Brian Rielly (CA-TH '91)

And, the Story Continues...

Obviously the story of Σ AE in San Diego continues to evolve. We know there will be many more successful new member rushes; accomplishments in academics, athletics, and campus leadership; and even some creative social events. There also will be some challenges along the way.

Of course, throughout the next few years and beyond, the young men who become members of Σ AE will form a “lasting bond of brotherhood.”

With your help, we will continue to update this history to highlight the developments of previous decades as well as the future.

Please send your comments and inputs to David Robinson at History@saesd.org



Glossary

Ditch—One of every pledge classes' goals was to pull off a successful ditch. There were several key requirements: all members had to "ditch" the Sunday evening pledge session to attend a four hour keg party at a hall/special location; accompanied by a sorority pledge class, a band, and two "kidnapped" actives. This was difficult to achieve: the active might sneak away to call the house and invite the brothers to the party or a sorority "girl" couldn't keep the secret.

Little Sisters—Little Sisters of Minerva was Cal Theta's (and other chapters) auxiliary group comprised of the most popular sorority members and a few independents. SAE later decided to disband the Little Sister organization.

Nicknames—The Brothers have had some colorful and unusual nicknames. Dogface, Bones, BK, Bomber, Tinman, Flood, Mass, Dr. Mung, Moon, EP, Blaster, Tilly, Bucky, TC, Maddog, Sane Dog, Basketball Head, Dude, Roacho, Hoppy, Irons and OB were just a few.

P&G Weekend—Named after SAE's Purple and Gold colors, this spring weekend gathering was often held at a Palm Springs motel where brothers and their dates would sit poolside, have a "few" beers and otherwise enjoy themselves. They usually had such a good time that the next year's group might have to make their reservations in the name of the Point Loma Swim & Racquet Club. Even after this outing was no longer on the regular social calendar, smaller groups of Brothers kept the tradition alive.

Pledging—Shortly after World War II, SAE chapters introduced the concept of pledging. Young men given a "bid" to their local chapter were no longer considered immediate members (as they had been since the fraternity's founding), but rather "pledges" for a semester. During the next few months they would demonstrate their commitment to being an "active" SAE by studying the Phoenix, getting acquainted with the active members (some of whom were more approachable than others), having members sign their pledge book, learning a few of the best songs ever, helping clean up the house (often referred to as "work parties"), planning the occasional ditch, having more fun than most were accustomed to, trying to maintain their grades, forming a very tight bond with their "pledge bros," and at the end of the semester enduring a "final work party" weekend that included a variety of interesting activities. Some considered pledging demeaning but bearable in order to become an active. Many others felt that being a pledge was a "rite of passage" that made membership in the best fraternity on campus all the more memorable. However, because of an ongoing series of hazing and other unfortunate situations on campuses throughout the country, SAE abolished pledging in 2014.

Redwood Hall—There were many locations for parties not held at the Cal Theta or other San Diego chapter houses. Some were decent, others not so much. Redwood Hall (located on University Ave.) was an occasional party place. It's only mentioned here because this unremarkable upstairs room was the site of the "End of an Era" party hosted by Brothers Ron Coover and Dave

Howard shortly before they graduated from SDSU. They distributed fliers throughout the campus, which obviously drew a large and rowdy crowd. From that evening forward, it's doubtful that few fraternities were allowed to host parties there.

*Of course these are subjective definitions. We'll continue to additional words/phrases that were part of the SAE in San Diego experience.