



THE HOUSE

"A PLACE TO GROW AND REMEMBER"

SYRACUSE CHAPTER DELTA UPSILON FRATERNITY

1935-1939



The Delta Upsilon House front steps and entrance, 1891. Stephen Crane top row, third from the left. Note the formed concrete railings on each side of the steps. The doorway, framed with a carved wood scroll, exists today.



The Delta Upsilon House, 1938. The front steps and railings, shown above, have been replaced with a porch. The original, exterior dark green trim was painted white in 1937, enhancing the Victorian architecture.

Herb Dean '39

The House

A Place to Grow and Remember

Syracuse Chapter Delta Upsilon Fraternity 1935 - 1939

Houses, in time, where renowned people, of Stephen Crane's stature, reside become cherished landmarks; especially a Fraternity dwelling where several thousand brothers grew during their years at the University.

The writer relates some pleasant memories and a few unpleasant, but in retrospect enjoyable now, during the years 1935 - 1939.

An impressive pen and ink portrait of Stephen Crane hanging in a prominent place on the living room wall created interest. Pledges, in 1935, who might not have heard of Crane or his work, asked upper classmen - who is he? The reply - A Syracuse DU before the turn of the Century, and eminent author of *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Maggie a Girl of the Streets*, *The Open Boat* etc-, etc. Rumor was that *Maggie* was conceived, with early drafts written, while he lived in The House.

It is appropriate to mention briefly, the paramount rank Crane's writing has held from the 1895 publication of *Red Badge* to this day. The Modern Library of the World's Best Books published, in 1995, *Red Badge* with an introduction by Shelby Foote, eminent Civil War historian and author. His praise for Crane says it all. "Stephen Crane's *Red Badge* having reached its centennial, fulfills the academic dictum requiring a shelf life of one hundred years to establish a book as a classic".

Crane's writing; dispatches, sketches, short stories, novels, poetry and correspondence blossomed during his brief life, of 29 years. Literary scholars continue to research and evaluate his work. A fourth biography, *Badge of Courage*, by Linda H. Davis, Houghton Mifflin, 1998 reaches the pinnacle of authorship describing, based on painstaking research, the life of Crane and insights into his work. A gripping, exciting and revealing story.

We are proud that Crane lived in The House, growing as he honed and perfected his literary skill, attaining a more advanced level of expertise. While there, he very likely decided that his growth and mission in life to write, should continue elsewhere, instead of school - moving on to New York City to live and write about people.

Brothers referred to their home as The House - a common expression on campus upon greeting another DU was - "See you at The House".

The House, an impressive three story red brick Victorian mansion, graced with a double gabled roof, was built in the third quarter of the 19th Century. A cupola between the gables was reached by a narrow stairway from the third floor. Ideally located away

from the campus, in a residential area, a quarter of a mile climb up Marshall Street, to the corner at Ostrom Avenue. Although The House was reconstructed in the early 1950's, the front wall, with the majestic entrance and south wall, exhibiting the fireplace, were retained, keeping the original traditional flavor.

Across Ostrom, to the east, beautiful Thornden Park extends further up the hill, with a round red brick water tower on the crest, presenting an impressive view of the City of Syracuse and further west glistening Onondagua Lake, where the SU crew holds forth. The House had the same magnificent view, especially from the cupola. A winding road through the park led upward to the water tower, where years ago buggies and in later years, cars parked along a lover's lane circling the tower.



Singing was an important pastime, enhanced by a grand piano in the living room. Doc Parsons '37, an accomplished musician, played frequently for song fests after dinner and during rushing. We sang fraternity songs from a DU songbook (we knew the words from our training during pledge week); fun songs passed down through the years - *Up in Haven Hall*, *Down Among the Dead Men*, etc. and alma maters - from *Lord Jeff* to *Where the Vale of Onondaga Meets the Eastern Sky* - composed by a SU - DU brother.

A long standing tradition was singing a favorite, *Daylight is Over*," without accompaniment, at the conclusion of House Dances. The brothers gathered on the stately winding staircase, their dates assembled around the stairs in the front hall extending into the living and dining rooms. Doc was the conductor.

Daylight is Over"

*Daylight is over - gather round as brothers do
Singing the praises of our Delta U*

*Delta U we, love thee - we will keep thy honor bright
So until the morning Delta U good-night
Ever oh ever will our hearts return to thee
Never oh never will life brighter be*

*Sorrowing we leave thee though it will not befor long
With thee we are happy with thee we are strong*

*Delta U we love thee we will keep thine honor bright
So until the morning Delta U good-night*

Some dates were rushed to their living centers, too bad - Hey!! there were strictly enforced curfews. Others - seniors or those who lived elsewhere - well they got home eventually.



Fraternity pledging took place during a week in the fall of our Freshman year. At that time the writer lived in a rooming house, with 17 other freshmen and upperclassmen, a few blocks south of The House on Ostrom Avenue. The landlady was an authentic French Countess, Madam Onffroy. My sojourn there is another story. A sophomore tenant, a DU, John E. May (nicknamed Winnie May after the famous aviator Wiley Post's airplane), made sure Justin Duryea and the writer dropped in on the House. After several visits we were at home with the members and duly impressed with the ample, beautifully furnished living and dining rooms; where Oriental carpets, solid oak and leather appointments prevailed.

The final evening of pledge week, we were entertained with a stirring song fest following a delicious dinner. Although we visited other fraternities we decided DU was right for us. We pledged and were accepted. Upon returning to the rooming house Justin and the writer congratulated each other shaking hands - knowing we would be brothers, sharing the many advantages of The House for the next three years and beyond.



Hell week, in the spring prepares you for Fraternity initiation. Each of the ten pledges were given a DU Manual, for study, so we could become familiar with Fraternity history and tradition, along with a DU Song Book. We were required to be at The House during our free time from classes, jobs, eating and infrequent sleeping.

Paddles 18 inches long and five inches wide were distributed too. After "assuming the angle" each brother gave us a whack. His signature on the paddle indicated his job was done. This requirement had to be completed by the end of the week. Some brothers barely touched our behind - others really "laid it on".

There was some nonsense too. Dropping us off at a graveyard at midnight with instructions to find the birth and death dates for a name on a tombstone. Searching for the tombstone was haunting.

More nonsense and by far the worst. A roaring fire in the living room fireplace had to be extinguished by the pledges - lining up on hands and knees in the basement, taking a mouthful of a foul tasting solution from a dish pan, making our way, still on hands and knees, up the stairs to the fire and spitting what was left in our mouths on the fire. This was repeated until the fire was out. After a few tries we found it effective for three

or more of us to gather in front of the fire - spitting at the same time. The brothers must have enjoyed mixing the concoction and even more our continued efforts to put out the blaze.

Some of the assignments were creative. Harlan Munger '38 had to get the Mayor of Syracuse to autograph a railroad tie. The Post Standard and Syracuse Journal carried the story - Harlan became famous.

Supposedly these antics brought the pledges together in a close knit group.



Smoking was vogue -- Phillip Morris had a contest - the fraternity turning in the most empty PM cigarette wrappers, during the month of April, would win an RCA console combination, radio and record player. Stacking ten records and fine tuning was accomplished with an electronic eye, as the iris contracted. DU won the contest with the help of the Kappas, Alpha Phis, Thetas and several other sororities. Our guys were popular and persuasive. We won with a total of at least 1,500 wrappers; confirming the axiom - guys that can sing together can do well at any task, en masse.

The combination radio and record player was a red hot \$1,000 + item gracing the living room. In constant use, playing over and over - *I'm getting Sentimental Over You, Josephine, Old Man Moses Kicked the Bucket, Once in Awhile, Star Dust*. Remember the bands - Tommy Dorsey, Wayne King, Glen Miller, Guy Lombardo, Isham Jones, Paul Whiteman, Bunny Berrigan and Fred Waring to name a few. Recalling too Rita Rio, the eminent all lady orchestra, that played for the DU spring dance in '38, an enjoyable bash.



Bob Dublin '41, Rushing Chairman in '39, was some kind of an electronic genius, figuring out a way to use the radio to advantage during pledge week. We broadcast from our own station, a sometimes bull session room, shared by the writer with three roommates, at the top of the winding staircase, designated years ago as Grand Central Station. Jock Stratton's oar, from his days rowing on the varsity crew, hung close to the ceiling, along the east wall. Upon returning to their rooms brothers usually stopped to chat with whoever was there.

Gathering the prospective pledges around the console, Bob had me with a mike in Grand Central welcome the guests and tell corny stories. One about the island, inhabited with people and donkeys, off the coast of California. Everyone had an ass - it continued on and on in that mode. A new creative way to entertain. The guests loved it - possibly the writer should have continued in broadcasting.

Mrs. Engren our cook played an important role during pledge week serving delicious dinners. Pledges delighted to know that living in The House included excellent meals. Her husband Helmar vacuumed, dusted, kept the boiler fired and everything in The House in good working order. He dispensed helpful advice to the brothers too. They were a delightful Swedish couple living in a small cottage behind The House. As Fiscal Agent (Steward) my Junior and Senior years the writer commended her for the delectable dinners prepared for the prospective pledges. She replied "Ah!!! Dean I'm old but still bait".



With athletic ability limited to the high school level and a love for sports, the writer was encouraged by some of the brothers to try out for manager of a Varsity Team. Basketball was big at SU, luring me to join four other scrubs my Sophomore year. Two were selected as Assistant Managers for the Junior year and finally one was selected as Manager the Senior year. The losing candidate became Frosh Manager. Both were awarded the block letter "S" a notable achievement - you might even be referred to as a BMOC (big man on campus).

Scrub was an appropriate designation - the old Archbold Gym floor was creaky and dusty, requiring damp mopping before practice, a game and again during halftime. Other duties were to handle uniforms and equipment, chase loose balls, supply towels and of course water for the players. Uniforms and equipment had to be watched closely - Pat Hopkins the fiery CEO of the Equipment Room became upset when uniforms or jackets were missing. We were a gofor for Doc Hugo the Trainer, proficient in his profession and a loquacious psychologist to the injured players. Doc could effectively reduce the size of a "swell head", when needed, as he performed his magic.

The scrubs task was time consuming - November through February with practice six days a week - plus doing all this stuff during games. Waiting on table at the AE Phi Sorority during my Sophomore year, providing meals, left little time for study. Friendship with the players made the job somewhat of a pleasure.

The writer had the good fortune of being selected Assistant Manager along with a fine local boy Ed Dollard. In the fall of my Junior Year, serving as Ass. Mgr. (as we were referred to), it became known that Ed's father had preceded Lew Andreas as Basketball Coach. This was a real shock, presenting an almost impossible hurdle to overcome, to reach my objective as Varsity Manager.

Deciding to continue as my goal was worth a shot - the writer would do the best job possible. A prominent DU alumnus Sam Cook might help. He was president of WSYR, SU Trustee and President of the SU Athletic Association. The brothers loved him - he was a humorous story teller at fraternity events.

Close to the end of the season the Manager assured me of his vote and to work on any possible connections. Meeting with Sam Cook was a disappointment - telling me "Herb you have done a fine job - in this instance there is no way I can help you". This was understandable as he and Coach Andreas were close friends of Ed's father. Ed had a car and chauffeured the Coach to and from games - more than likely the Coach had known Ed since boyhood. Pat Hopkins stated "Both men are outstanding and would make fine Managers" - that made me feel good. As Fosh Manager my Senior year - working with Coach Ribs Baysinger was a privilege - a capable coach and outstanding person.

The lesson - important to me early in life - know your competition and even a strong network sometimes isn't enough. However, always try to establish the best network possible. A splendid introduction for me to Community Service, continuing with enthusiasm and pleasure (the professionals were the scrubs) throughout my career.



Flipping through the newspaper, Friday after dinner, to determine which movie looked interesting, Ben Ackley '39 spotted the headline "Kentucky Derby Tomorrow". Bob Dublin, Wait Wasson and Ed Skeates, all '41, along with Ben decided "let's go". With about \$7.00 each, they were on the road within thirty minutes, in Ben's four door Plymouth. Hailing from Empire Farms in Copake, NY Ben had a keen interest in horses, especially trotters. A few years back he had nine trotters; with only one now, competing at Saratoga and other tracks in the North East.

Expressways were nonexistent, 50 mph was about top speed on roads that would be considered "back roads" today. Arriving at the track during the fourth race, and paying \$.50 admission, for standing room only, in the crowded Oval. It was impossible to see the horses or the track. A bet of \$2.00 was placed on a horse that came in second. Bob had a camera - climbing on Ed's shoulders he took a picture to furnish proof, to skeptical brothers, that they made it to the Derby.

Heading back immediately after the Derby they hoped to reach The House before the dinner hour Sunday. Prior to nightfall signs were spotted on several houses reading "Chicken Dinner \$.50", so they stopped to dine. Traveling all night proved to be unpleasant; dressed in winter attire, they sweated due to the crowds and heat from the blazing sun in the Oval. The odor in the car was unbearable. It was uncomfortably cold when the windows were opened. Somehow they prevailed reaching The House for dinner with ten minutes to spare.

Today the trip would be called "Cruel and Unusual Punishment". All four had money left in their pockets, after paying for gas, admission to the Derby. the bet, chicken dinner, etc.

Thanks to Bob Dublin for providing this sketch.

Trim, handsome, well dressed and personable he was an SU Graduate Student, a DU from another chapter, who visited The House frequently, in the evening. Comfortably seated in an over stuffed lounge chair in a front second floor room, usually with a book for study. His habit of continually holding his forelock between his thumb and middle finger, tweaking the ends of his hair with his index finger, appeared strange.

Most of the brothers tossed their wallets and loose change on their dresser before retiring. The writer had the huge sum of \$11.00 to fund a trip, in a couple of weeks, to the SU - Columbia football game in New York City. The money disappeared along with the cash from a couple of my room-mates. In another room a few days later our visitor was caught, in the act, by one of the brothers.

We were told he confessed and that our money would be returned. He was gone, never to be seen again. The House benefited from the incident as another victim and the writer, without money, spent Columbia weekend varnishing the living and dining room floors.

A valuable lesson about people and handling money.

Brother George Oliver '38 was not a guy who would be involved in dirty tricks. Around midnight the last day of Hell Week, early in April, he pulled the cord turning on the light in the third floor dorm, where usually 27 of us slept, saying "THERE IS A FIRE IN THE HOUSE GET OUT IMMEDIATELY - I'M NOT KIDDING". One look at his face and eyes convinced us we should vacate instantly. Grabbing enough clothes to keep warm we gathered on the sidewalk in front of The House. One brother jumped, without harm, from a second story window.

By now the Fire Department was on hand to extinguish the blaze which started from a tossed away cigarette butt, in a trash barrel in the basement, under the kitchen, at the rear of The House.

The fire had not yet reached the dining room and the writer felt there was time to return to the living room to retrieve anything of value. Looking around a hasty decision was made, without thinking, to remove from the mantel, the trophy won in '37 for Intramural Football along with a square marble sculpture; ten by ten by four inches thick, (unlikely to be damaged in a fire), engraved on one side DU, similar to a DU pin. Using his gavel the Chapter President gave it a rap, calling for order during meetings. Upon rejoining the on-lookers, the two items were placed on the ground.

In the excitement no one noticed this gallant act of bravery. The fire was quickly extinguished; resulting in heavy damage to the kitchen and smoke damage to the dining room. That was all. After the fire, upon returning to The House, someone noticed the

marble sculpture. Never mind that Herb was the only one to daringly return to The House and that the coveted trophy was safe; he was ridiculed for saving an indestructible item. Oh well !! The kitchen and dining room were beautifully refinished, adding to the charm of The House.



Bob Van Arnum '36 was a role model and inspiration to the brothers. His extracurricular activities were numerous and creditable - Varsity Crew: Class Executive Committee 1,2,3,4; Class President 2; Corpse and Coffin; Boars Head; R.O.T.C.; Winter Carnival Committee; along with the coveted honor, Chairman Senior Ball Committee. His humor and positive outlook made him effective in resolving problems that came up in house affairs along with bull sessions.

During pledge week a decision had to be made, to accept or turn down, each prospective pledge. Some brothers tended to get picky, with long discussions, denouncing clothes worn, physical characteristics, etc. Bob suggested that some guys came from small towns, farms, even cities with a little "shit on their heels". While growing in The House these characteristics would improve, changing the individual to conform. This excellent advice was taken - getting some outstanding pledges that otherwise would have been turned down.

In 1939, three years after his graduation, working for GMAC (General Motors Acceptance Corporation), he was assigned to the Syracuse Office. Bob requested residence, temporarily, in The House. A vacancy existed so the writer (Steward) reached an agreement with him to pay the going rate for room and board. The brothers were delighted.

About that time the writer, an Accounting Major, had a thesis assignment to be completed during the second semester. While thinking about a subject for study Bob suggested that the local GMAC office could be made available for a project. A real break, turning me loose in the office to review their systems and procedures, from an accounting and auditing standpoint. My first look at an office - getting to know the people and discussing their responsibilities turned out to be a challenge that was enjoyed, resulting in an outstanding effort.

An advanced accounting systems and procedures course was valuable too. The text was written by George E. Bennett, esteemed Head of the Accounting Dept.

With these experiences under my belt, early assignments at Eastman Kodak, being trained as an Internal Consultant in Systems and Procedures, got off to a flying start. In fact every project "turned to gold". Hey !! GMAC is still going strong, presently holding the lease on my car.

Recalling these incidents has been a pleasure for the writer It is hoped that some of your distant memories, while living in The House, have reappeared.

Recently a Rector, during a sermon, while describing a function of the Church. stated "Its a Place to Help Each Other Grow"; likewise The House.



Herb Dean '39 -- June 23, 2002
3rd Edition July 27, 2004
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Printed by VIP Printing & Graphix
Vero Beach, FL 32960 USA
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