



PHI GAMMA DELTA

BUILDING COURAGEOUS LEADERS

January 2017

Dear Omega Mu Fiji Graduate Brothers,

To quickly introduce myself I am Chip Chapman, a Maine Fiji who graduated in 1982. The purpose of this letter is twofold: 1) to let you know that Pig Dinner is April 22, 2017 this year. I would like to encourage you to attend. We have been seeing record numbers of over 100 graduate brothers returning with last year's events recollected as "one of the best ever.", and 2) let you know of an important history update project we are undertaking and ask for your input.

When I was asked to be the Graduate Historian for Omega Mu, many narrative memories started to surface in my head about being an Omega Mu Fiji and living in *The Castle*: the pledge period, pledge bagging, our initiation, the chapter room, Mud Bowl, RAM shenanigans, Fiji Island, road trips, 11-2's, life on the Phoenix Lounge, walking as a group to and from classes and the library, our shared meals, and all the other loops of energy and activity that took place, and I was thankful for whatever luck or chance that brought me into the Fiji brotherhood in 1979. Living in the house left permanent textured memories and friendships that I cherish, and certainly, in some deep way, I have no doubt that each of you have a reservoir of memories about the years that you lived in *The Castle* that penetrated down deep into your character and your subsequent career, exhibiting an enthusiasm for the life of the mind and the heart. It is safe to say that we are proud of Omega Mu, and every trace of our passage within the house was life-enhancing and life-changing, and that is still true today for the undergraduate brothers which number around 50.

Without doubt, Omega Mu has an important history that needs to be told by all the Graduate Brothers, and as Omega Mu is closing in on its 120th anniversary in 2019, we are planning to do just that because we have an embracing sense of our past and continued belief in its vitality and growth in the future. And now, after some strategic, forward thinking, many things are now in the works to celebrate our venerable Chapter and historic house, which, in case you had not heard, is now on the National Register of Historic Places. A strategic plan for the house has been created for improvements and the long-term care of the house, and you will be hearing the details of this plan from Joel Gardiner (1983) and others very soon.

As part of this strategic plan, I have been asked to oversee the literary and historic archives components of our house and our brotherhood, and I am, indeed, excited about this responsibility. What I wish to ask each of you to do is to summon your Omega Mu memories and reflections, however serious or humorous, long or short, poetic or otherwise; and, before the sediment of time causes those memories to become increasingly shadowy, deficient or corrupted, write them down so we can create a comprehensive narrative history that makes connections between years and decades for all Omega Mu Fijis to read and enjoy. Our collective writings about the house will provide a complete line of historical understanding that we can be proud to have created.

Simply put, the overall ideal is to weave together the largest tapestry of Omega Mu stories and memorabilia that we can gather, archive, scan to digital and preserve. The criteria are simple: share your stories with care, energy, and passion. It should be explosive with Omega Mu nostalgia and recollection; therefore, be beautiful and moving in what you write rather shaming or embarrassing. In short, use good judgment in what you write about. Everything we write should reflect well on *The Castle*, our Omega Mu brothers, and fraternity life. In it we will be asserting, by our literary voices, what we believe to be true: creating and sustaining and supporting a community of brotherly affection that speaks to that phrase we so often say: "Not for college days alone."

To that end, preliminary work has been done to set up a website where your finished written pieces will be uploaded to share with all Omega Mu brothers (past, present and future) to be followed by a book that will be tripartite in nature: first, the history of the house through decades with accompanying pictures; second, short biographic pieces of various brothers; third, the literary section with all your stories, reminiscence, reflections, poems, so forth. It will be a seamless chronological narrative from decade to decade revealing the collective beauty about the Omega Mu brotherhood and our shared life in *The Castle* and at the *University of Maine*.

It is going to take time for everything to come to fruition, but it will be worth our collective effort to create a literary-historic arc by 2019 connecting 120 years of Omega Mu brotherhood. Viewed personally and historically, I am proud to be an Omega Mu Fiji, and I know that all of you are as well because we are all the proud native sons of Omega Mu. It is not hard to imagine Hosea Buck and Ted Curtis, though *The Castle* now hums with computers, cell phones, and ESPN, would still find *The Castle* eminently fitting as when they first walked through the front door to become Omega Mu Fijis.

Can you see why I am so excited about *The Castle*, our Graduate Brothers, our Undergraduate brothers, our 120-year history, and our next 120 years? I hope so.

With warmest fraternal regards, I am,

Chip Chapman, 1982

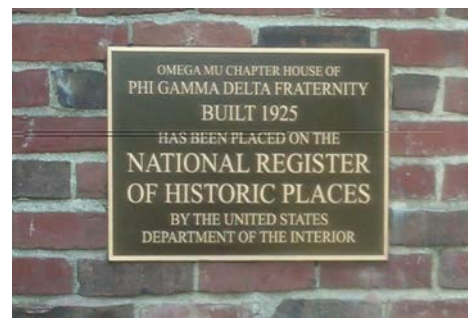
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Note: If you have any physical memorabilia or archives such as photos, old Pine Tree Fijis, paddles or other unique items you would like to make a part of this project, please contact me to discuss or send to my home address noted above. Most information can be scanned or photographed and returned. If you would like to donate anything permanently we are also working with the University's archives department as part of the project to house permanent archives in our Chapters name.