



Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity

New York Delta Chapter
2209 - 16th Street
Troy, New York

October 31, 1948

Dear Mr. Zimmer;

Sigma Phi Epsilon extends its gratitude for the wonderful example of workmanship which you accomplished in making the wooden screw. This afternoon at the football game we are having a ceremony at which time Arnold and two others dressed as monks from Tibet will present it to the President of the Sophomore Class, who will in turn present it to the officers of the Freshman Class. From then on it will be kept in the custody of the house and presented to the Freshman Class each year after they loose the grease rush, which is a frame up.

Thank you again sir!

Sincerely yours,

John C. Sheridan
John C. Sheridan
(Historian)

THE SCREW: A NEW TRADITION AT R.P.I.

A new tradition was born at R.P.I. on saturday Nov. 6 between halves of the R.P.I.-Clarkson football game.

In a colorful ceremony, three black robed brothers of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity presented a giant wooden screw to the losers of the annual grease rush held between the sophomore and freshman classes.

The ceremony began with the sophomore class officers at the west end of the field and the freshman representatives at the opposite end of the field marching toward each other. As they met at the center of the field the contest for which the screw was being presented was described over the public address system. " One of the oldest R.P.I. traditions is the annual grease rush between the sophomore and freshman classes. In the past the sophmores have always emerged victorious, and so it was no quirk of fate when freshman hands were found lacking on the baton last saturday."

"In the grease rush the participants are covered with a liberal coating of grease and the battle for the baton begins. At the end of five minutes the class which has the greater number of hands on the baton is declared the winner."

At this time two black robed figures leaning on walking staffs (brothers Bill Krucke and Fred Lane) hobbled out on the field escorting a third "monk" (brother Arnold Zimmer) carrying the symbol on a black pillow veiled with a black cloth.

As the "monks" made their journey across the field their pilgramage was described over the loud speaker.

"Since 1824 the afflicted students of R.P.I. have been seeking a token symbolic of their plight. Many have searched the profound tomes in libraries and museums. Some have gone to the grave disappointed in their quest. Others wandered about the earth, a few even venturing into the dark and forbidden land of Tibet hoping there to find the object of their search."

"Amidst the barren wastes of Tibet an ancient monastery was discovered where an aged mystic dwelled. It was the good fortune of these pilgrims to learn from him that the monastery had been the site of the Mashpur-Kwatapure Polytechnic Institute, a scientific and cultural center founded shortly after the beginning of time. In token of good will this mystic presented them with the standard of this now defunct institution."

"Last week was home-coming week-end, and the wanderers returned to Troy--to their Alma Mater. They brought with them the symbol for which so many had sacrificed their all. At their bequest this standard will be given annually to the class that loses the grease rush and be kept in the custody of the Brothers of Sigma Phi Epsilon, To be forever guarded as the emblem of Rensselaer."

The symbol was then unveiled and presented to the sophomore class president who turned it over to the freshman representative.

"This symbol is made of Hymalayan cherry wood and fashioned in the now abandoned materials laboratory of the Mashpur-Kwatapure Poly. Inst."

"It is intended to act as a source of inspiration and guidance for every freshman class as well as to remind those who have gone before of the fundamentals of life."

"This symbol will be kept on constant display at the Sigma Phi Epsilon house, forever guarded by the three men who have sacrificed their careers for it. It will be Presented each year to the new freshman class to acquaint them with the customs and ideals of this great center of knowledge and culture."

The freshman deeply moved by receiving such a symbol got down on their knees and with their little freshman caps and --- showing sang "Ah Me" to the sophmores.

The screw was made and donated by Mr. Arthur Zimmer and will bear a gold plate with an inscription and the class numerals of every class to which it is presented.