



# Sighs of Psi



## INSIDE:

Chapter Highlights • 2-3

Alumni News • 4-5

From the Historian • 6-8

PSI CHAPTER OF DELTA KAPPA EPSILON AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA ♦ SPRING 2013

## OH, CANADA! DKE IS AN INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY

After publishing the fall *Sighs*, it was brought to my attention that I had mistakenly referred to DKE headquarters as “national” whereby we are an “international” fraternity. After conducting extensive research (watching Doug and Bob McKenzie on SCTV and “Strange Brew”), I have concluded that Canada is, in fact, a separate country and not the state of North Montana as I had been led to believe. It must be terrible fending off wild moose attacks through those six months of darkness only to read that the Great White North has been slighted in such an austere publication as the *Sighs of Psi*. I feel like such a stupid hoser and hope that our northern brethren will accept the apology from someone who was raised believing that the Mason-Dixon line was interstate I-10. I’m choosing to look at the bright side—this confirms that the *Sighs* is an international publication!

Enough raving about that...This house corporation is very pleased to report that the chapter is continuing their streak of accomplishments. We initiated 41 pledges without any major infractions with respect to the code of student conduct. The fall semester chapter grade point average was a strong 3.11 which was 5th overall for fraternities. Beauty, eh? Lastly, game days continue to be banner events—and the team did not disappoint, once again rewarding the Bama faithful with a national championship.

We are well into rush as I write this and confident that the Chapter is building a very high caliber pledge class. As you well know, strong pledge classes provide a four (or more) year benefit to the house and help enable us to continue to pay the mortgage. We structured the note such that the Chapter pays for eight months and your donations and pledges pay for the remaining four. In this way everyone has “skin in the game.” If you have not completed your pledge or you are considering donating to the University, please contact me or someone on the house corporation.

Have some beers and back-bacon while you enjoy this issue of the internationally acclaimed *Sighs of Psi*.

Hose off,  
**Black Chaffe '83**  
House Corporation President  
(469) 951-2031 | black\_chaffe@hotmail.com

## FROM HEADQUARTERS

By Doug Lanpher, Delta Kappa Epsilon  
International President

DKE International continues to expand and develop new programs for the brothers. We now have 52 chapters and eight colonies (a chapter-in-training), so we could be up around 60 chapters next year, possibly our largest number of active chapters ever. Our undergraduate membership is up 10% over last year, and we have added a third chapter consultant to the staff. This will enable us to visit more chapters more often, especially to some of the weaker and newer chapters. This summer, we will conduct a leadership academy for our undergraduates, similar to a convention but more informal, with a retreat-like atmosphere. That will be the first such academy in a couple of decades in the non-convention year. DKE's board of directors has one undergraduate member, **Davis Vaughn '14** from Psi, and this semester he will be creating and heading up an advisory board of undergraduates from 14 chapters to provide advice and suggestions to the international staff. All these developments point to a healthier fraternity across North America.



## Recruitment Recommendations

DKE has already begun its recruitment process for the 2013 pledge class. Please plan ahead for our next recruitment and e-mail your recommendations to **Sayre Kearley '16** [wskearley@crismon.ua.edu](mailto:wskearley@crismon.ua.edu). The sooner the recruitment chairmen can begin to contact potential new members, the easier the recruitment process will go. We appreciate your input!

## SAVE THE DATE

2013 Psi Day Tea & Homecoming  
Saturday, October 5

*More details to come!*

# CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



## ANNUAL DKE CRAWFISH BOIL

Anticipation filled the eyes of the 350 hungry-handed recruits, brothers, and friends at the DKE house this spring as **Marcus Porter '13** hoisted vats of succulently steamed Cajun crawfish into the air, sweat trickling down his sun-drenched back, and dumped them across the wooden tables made by **Daniel Bebee '14**. Three hundred pounds of cretaceous spice scent spilled into the air, blending wonderfully with the aromatic quality of a cold natural light. It must be the crawfish boil.

The recruitment season is in full swing and the prospective members of our esteemed brotherhood are presenting themselves to the organizations they find most welcoming, distinguished, and beneficial to the holistic growth of a young man through a universal experience. With the reputation our Chapter retains, our recruitment parties are highly attended and highly anticipated. Through masterful planning on behalf of **Gaines Murphy '14**, local sensation band Plato Jones performed for the party, delivering nothing other than a quality lyrical experience.

Recruits from everywhere between Pennsylvania and Mobile traveled to the heart of Dixie in the hopes of getting to experience a party such as

they have been told in folklore. Thanks to the phenomenally devoted work in recruitment, our recruitment chairmen have delivered again a group of gentlemen that shows promise to maintain the stellar reputation our founding principles demand. There was excitement in the air when each vat of crawfish filled the tables, the Cajun spice tormenting your lips, only to be solaced by the watery goodness of a cheap pilsner.

“The best weekend of my life,” exclaims an ecstatic recruit I recognized from the night prior at the recruitment band party in the basement, as endless amounts of crawfish were pulled out of their scorched red Cajun shell. Nothing could sound better to the brothers who came together to organize and align this stellar weekend, and I hope this young man’s words resonate in all Psi members ears, to rest assured the house is in good hands with every active member. With successful parties and reputable actions we continue our success in Psi and our approach to yet another Lion Trophy.

In the bonds,  
**Mike Ravenfeld '14**

## DKE Senior Spotlight: Stewart Alvis '13



**Stewart Alvis '13** is a senior from the great pine-strewn hills and babbling brooks of Birmingham, Alabama, known by locals as Mountain Brook. Stewart embodies a jolly good fellow attitude with the rigorous work ethic of a gentleman scholar, much like *Mad Men*’s Don Draper. In the most highly celebrated four-year history of the DKE Chapter, Stewart served as executive officer for two terms, playing a major role in raising the fraternity’s reputation to the higher standard we now seek to achieve. Well-connected and even better dressed, Stewart quickly brought only positive attention to the Chapter with his involvement across campus in the Order of Omega and various academic honor societies in his respective school. Majoring in political science and history with a minor in

Spanish, he has remained busy in the classroom, giving him the nickname Steve Buscemi. Stewart spent last summer studying in Spain, gathering key knowledge on the native area.

A fit model of what the DKEs seek to produce in four years, we will be sad to see Stewart leave, but this great country will open its doors to a new leader upon his graduation in May. Stewart will be attending Cumberland School of Law. The DKE undergraduates revel in Stewart’s positive influence on the Chapter and the tremendous footprint he will be leaving at the Chapter; **Jake Morrow '14** says simply, “Man, I’m going to miss that Steve Buscemi.”



# CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

## MUSINGS FROM BROTHER BETA

Now that the executive council has settled into their new roles, I thought I would take the time to write my farewell to the house corporation and alumni. Since my second semester on campus, I have served some sort of officer role within DKE. These positions have been secretary of the judicial board, treasurer, and eventually Brother Beta. I can safely say that DKE has been the most important aspect of my life for the past four years.

In the last four years, there has been a total turnaround and transition period in the DKE culture. My freshman year was the first year with the reactivated judicial board, and I assisted **James Fowler '11** in writing the new code of laws. He had a vision for the Chapter that I believed was best for our fraternity, and this is where I received a foundation for what I saw as the future of the fraternity. However, the more I got involved, the more I realized that we faced some serious issues.

Despite financial and member problems, the most upsetting situation in my mind was the general apathy and the attitudes of the various pledge classes. Somehow in the past few years, it had become the norm within the DKE house that the pledge classes did not mingle. We were very weak internally, and I knew this would make us ineffective as a fraternity.

I mention all of these issues because I want to show every alumnus why he should now have a positive impression of the Chapter and the improvements that have occurred over the past three years. It is amazing how well the pledge classes get along now. In addition, the new officers have the ability to enforce rules within the house, an ability that had been lost.

One of the last attitude changes I think alumni would like to hear about is related to drug testing. I can honestly say the drug tests as they are have been accepted by the Chapter as a part of the fabric of our fraternity. Obviously, a fraternity can never expect drugs to be totally removed from every member; however, the culture of drug use that was prevalent, as recently as my freshman year, has been totally removed. All alumni should be proud.

While the intangible improvements have been an important aspect of my time as Brother Beta, there have also been tangible improvements. Our Chapter has an overall GPA above 3.0 and is in the top three of IFC fraternities. This increase has been the result of new academic standards added to the code of laws, as well as an active effort by the officers to remind members of the benefits that our Chapter receives as a result of good grades. In addition, last semester we managed to have money left in the bank account at the end of the term. We had a record number of 41 pledges this past recruitment cycle and expect to easily get our pick of the litter this time around. I have all the confidence in the world of the job **Sayre Kearley '16** is doing. I encourage everyone who comes to football



*The new Moulton Cook Study Lounge provides a great place for our brothers to focus on academics.*

games next year to check out the new Moulton Cook Study Lounge. We have transformed an abandoned room that had become a trash room into a new study room.

I truly enjoyed my time as Brother Beta. I believe the brand name of DKE on campus has improved drastically. I can see this in the improved turnout and quality of our parties, particularly the recruitment parties. I can also see this in the improved view that sororities have of our fraternity. Dr. Hebson told me that we were one of the few fraternities that the sororities took the time to call and compliment our pledges. In addition, DKE has achieved an esteemed position in the eyes of the university.

On a side note, Brother Sigma should be applauded for the job he did during pledgship. Not only did we receive zero hazing allegations, but the quality of this pledge program was the best I've seen during my time here.

I want all alumni to know how serious the officers take jobs and how hard we work at our positions. What is required to run a fraternity in this day and age is simply astounding. I expect the new Brother Beta to continue the mutual respect between the alumni and Chapter officers. I thank everyone for the opportunity that DKE has given me and hope that I did an adequate job in keeping this fraternity moving in the right direction. I know these experiences will be invaluable as I move on to law school and the rest of my life.

ITB,  
**Brother Beta**

## Psi Leaders on Campus

The spring semester of 2013 at the University of Alabama has been a prosperous one for the DKEs of Psi, both in and out of the class room. With outstanding achievement in organizations by individuals and as a brotherhood, we have again strengthened DKEs stellar reputation among the campus and the Greek Community.

**Lee Pittman '10** was recently inducted in the Capstone Men and Women of Alabama to represent the university to visiting families.

**Davis Vaughn '10** has been again aiding the Alabama forensics team to defend their 19 national titles, and looks to achieve another championship before his swan song of bittersweet graduation next year.

**Bill Rosato '11** has been active in the non-Greek outreach program, linking non-Greeks and Greeks in an attempt to thin the divide between the two, provide connections to Brothers, and strengthen allies across campus for our philanthropic success.

**Evans Delchamps '10** has been inducted to the science senate of SGA

**Stephen Keller '12** has been inducted into the Business senate seat of SGA.

Eight of our brothers have been selected to the Order of Omega for initiation this spring. This is a Greek leadership organization on campus that recognizes achievement, leadership, and service to the university and campus.

## ALUMNI NEWS

## DKE—A Galloway Family Legacy

**J**oe Galloway '79, a native of Mobile, received a bachelor of science degree in biology from The University of Alabama and graduated from the University of Alabama School of Medicine in Birmingham in 1984. Joe completed his surgical residency at the Oschner Clinic in New Orleans. He is board certified in general surgery and is a fellow in the American College of Surgeons. He is a past-president of Providence Hospital Medical Staff, a member of the Country Club of Mobile, a Mardi Gras Mystic Society, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, and the Senior Bowl committee.

Joe remembers his first visit to the DKE house for Psi Day Tea and Homecoming festivities with his parents as a fifth grader visiting his older brother, **Tom '70**. "I would go up to his room and sit on his bunk bed and try to imagine what living there would be like. Nine years later, I moved into that same room, not by coincidence."

His brother, **Bob '73**, was in his third year of law school when Joe came to the University as a freshman. "Having him in town was a big help. He never gave away DKE secrets during my pledgeship, though I wish he had told me to get a haircut; my composite picture was awful."

Joe worked at the Alabama Book Store at the beginning of each semester and served the fraternity as treasurer his senior year. "As any of the treasurers that preceded me would tell you, it's a thankless job. As I remember there are a couple of guys who still haven't paid all their fines. I think I'll send them another house bill!"



Joe says he had a very close-knit pledge class and was especially close to his rotating roommates: **Andy Terry '79**, **Gary Garstecki '80**, **John McNeil '79**, **Ken Huffstutler '78**, and **Sam Adams '79**. He has many memories of his time in the house, like eating DKE dogs. "The most memorable, but not in a good way, was setting the raw egg eating record, a family tradition I'm told."

He still maintains close ties with DKE and his brothers. He attends most of the home football games and always stops by the house. "An e-mail just came in from one of my pledge brothers telling a story about another. A picture was included showing several of them goofing off at a hunting camp. All of these guys are my friends for life."

Joe acknowledges that the university has changed from when he was an undergraduate. "There were 16,000 students in the '70s, now there are over 30,000. That is a lot more women that would have told me 'no!'"

He encourages the undergraduates to study hard, play hard, and remember that the real world is just ahead. "Everything is chicken, but the gravy."

In his free time he enjoys cycling, yard work, raising kids and pets, and Alabama football. He is married to Lee Ann, whom he met while in medical school. They have four children: Kathleen (23), Ann Stewart (20), Charlotte (18), and Joseph (16). Joe and Lee Ann live in Mobile. Last fall his youngest daughter, Charlotte, moved into Tutwiler, just as her two older sisters had done, all three are Kappa Deltas. "The cycle repeats."

## PATRIOTISM AND DKE BROTHERHOOD

**T**hese brotherhoods are more similar than you imagine, especially with what man comes out in the end." These words are from an enterprising individual named Sgt. Evan Van Nostrand talking about brotherhood. This young man is far more than just a friend of the Psi DKEs, but a seasoned military veteran and a noble American who served overseas from 2006-11 alongside our own **Robert McNeil '06**.

Evan is a freshman at the University of Alabama and a recently retired service member of the U.S. Marine Corp. Evan enlisted in the Marines in 2005 immediately out of high school, and in 2006, at the age of 18, deployed to Iraq. Evan redeployed to Iraq again in 2007, and after a successful second tour, went on ship, serving as battalion landing team for marine expeditionary team in 2009. Awarded two Purple Hearts for being wounded in action twice in 2006, three Navy achievement medals, one with combat distinguishing device, Evan quickly and nobly became a decorated service member, honoring his country.

After those fast three years in service, Evan was re-deployed to Afghanistan in 2010, where fate drew his path to cross with Mobile's finest, **Robert McNeil '06**. "I met him in Afghanistan actually. I was a combat replacement for his unit, and he was responsible for the section that picked me up from main base. Over time, we worked with each other and hit it off." In that same year, Robert and Evan faced combat in Afghanistan, following each other's lead into safety. In 2012, Evan followed his gut into Tuscaloosa with more academic and docile intentions. "Did Robert talk you into coming down here?" a Psi DKE asked Evan eagerly. "Well, I went to Mardi Gras in 2011, and that was about the end of the discussion." Perfect answer. In jest, Evan laughs about the reason for his enrollment to Alabama but goes on to explain the very moving moments that drew him to our university and to our Chapter.

In 2011, Robert was honored in front of over 100,000 fans in Bryant-Denny Stadium for his service to our country. He dedicated an Alabama flag to the University, which read: "Rolling with the Tide, where ever we fight." The flag was given to the DKE house by the University later that year. The individual who fought by Robert's side and for our country was in the stands for that game, and Evan recalled the moments he felt. "I

decided to come down after my first game and seeing the national anthem, and the whole stadium cheered 'USA, USA, USA,' I realized this place respects their liberties and will never take its freedom for granted. It's rare to find a place so heavily devoted to the protection and prosperity of their country and the freedom we have all been granted. It is a welcoming place and an extremely American place." We like it that way. This sense of strong camaraderie comes from the foundations this university was founded upon. One of those foundations was a strong Greek community. Initiating this long line of Greek excellence was the first fraternity on campus, our Psi Chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon in 1847.

We asked Evan about his transition to his new home and how he fared with going from his 100mph lifestyle in the services down to the normality of college. "Easy," he responded simply, crediting the ease of his transition to DKE. Evan remarked how great he feels DKE is for the University, but more importantly the members. It provides structure, regiment, and devotion, all things he compared to his experience in the Marines and how he feels at comfort being surrounded by the DKEs because of what we stand for and seek to accomplish. Evan is Robert's brother in the Marine Corps and acknowledges the duality of Robert's brotherhood to both the DKEs and the Marines. "The two brotherhoods come together at an even ground. I can relate to this brotherhood being from the Marine Corps because it's not all about self; it is much more. It's like our boot camp. With your pledgeship, it's about buying into something bigger than yourself for the greater good no matter what, and that takes a special individual. I see that attribute in both DKE and the Marines. I know what this means to Robert and you guys, so I know what it means to me."

On September 11, 2012, Evan retired from the Marines honorably with decoration, and in January Robert retired, as well. Evan and Marine Corps reservist **Peter Trice '10** held the surprise retirement ceremony at the Mansion on the Hill, sealing their brotherhood in the service at the place of his brotherhood from the heart.

In the bonds,  
**Mike Ravenfeld '14**



## ALUMNI NEWS

## 1972 PLEDGE CLASS REUNION

Celebrating 40 Years of Brotherhood

Once in a while, an event occurs that tends to make one stop, take notice of the surroundings and reflect on life. You can never go back in time, but to be among old friends who together shared exciting youthful times at The University of Alabama is close to turning back the clock.

The 1972 DKE pledge class gathered October 13 for a reunion at Bullpen Hunting Lodge in Sunflower, Alabama. The 1972 composite was displayed prominently over the camp's fireplace. Thanks to the active DKEs in Tuscaloosa for allowing the Chapter picture to travel and thanks to **Tom Lavender '76** for making the arrangements. Also, thanks to **Mark Collinsworth '76** for bringing "Songs of DKE." During the weekend, the old familiar tunes drifted through the lodge and stirred fond memories of the Psi Day Tea Banquet. A special thanks to **Andy Gearhart '76**, who produced the 1972 picture time photo of the pledge class on the front steps of the old DKE house. Andy also arranged the latest photo of members on the front steps at Bullpen.

A cool, clear fall morning in the great south Alabama swamp gave way to a beautiful warm day. Perfect for old friends pushing 60 to visit and re-tell their memories at the Mansion on the Hill. They watched and cheered the Tide as they trounced Missouri, all the while sharing stories of bus trips to Legion Field to watch Coach Bryant's teams defend and add to the school's celebrated winning tradition.

Of the 23 class members initiated, 20 were able to make the reunion. Unfortunately, dear brother **Marty Sullivan '76** died December 8, 2006. We remembered Marty with a toast at dinner and sorely regret his absence. Two other members were unable to be with us, so we chastised them for not coming around anymore. Hopefully, we'll enjoy their company at a future reunion.

Of course, good food and adult beverages were plentiful and every man had his fill. Several brothers stayed up late into the night laughing while reminiscing of old times. Sunday morning, amongst God's glory of the deep woods, several members enjoyed time on the lodge's front porch and nurtured more fellowship while watching the Tombigbee River in the foreground slowly finding its way south. At last, after reaffirming old friendships, our brotherhood strengthened evermore, with smiles in our hearts, it was time to part and travel back home.

Forty years later, a bunch of seasoned guys bound by the bonds of DKE heeded the call to gather with their brothers, to go back one more time to revisit our college days. Our occasion at The University of Alabama was fabulous, beautiful girls were everywhere, Coach Bryant had the team on top, and Lionel Richey and the Commodores played at our house on Sunday evening—they were so good, we had them back the next Sunday. Many of us met and married the dear future mothers' of our children, and even now, most of those mothers still allow us to come home at night. Some of us even got a good education.

DKE is the common thread that binds us all. The brotherhood we formed during our college days was honorable and lives on enough to cause a band of brothers to join together again and share a laugh while recalling our time at BAMA...ROLL TIDE ROLL!



(Front row, from left) John Hunter, Mark Collinsworth, Kerry Payne, Ladd Brown holding picture of Louie DeShields, famed loyal fixture at the DKE house for forty years, Dudley Dawson, Sage Smith. (Second row) William Bell, Jeff Anderson, Mike Peterson, Rayford Smith, Brad Wash. (Third row) Harris Brown, Dan Haas, Oliver Delchamps, Tom Lavander, Keith Gann. (Top row) Andy Gearhart, Richard McAlpin, Brook Knapp, David Newell.

## 1972 Pledge Class Roster

**Jeff Anderson '76**  
**William Bell '75**  
**Steve Brooks '76**  
**Harris Brown '76**  
**Ladd Brown '76**  
**Mark Collinsworth '76**  
**Dudley Dawson '76**  
**Oliver Delchamps '76**  
**Keith Gann '76**  
**Andy Gearhart '76**  
**Dan Haas '76**  
**John Hunter '76**  
**Brooks Knapp '76**  
**Tom Lavender '76**  
**Richard McAlpin '76**  
**Bucky McMillan '76**  
**David Newell '76**  
**Kerry Payne '76**  
**Mike Peterson '75**  
**Rayford Smith '75**  
**Sage Smith '76**  
**Marty Sullivan '76**  
**Brad Wash '76**



# FROM THE HISTORIAN

George David Shortridge, Jr.

## HOME FROM THE WAR, TO A VERY DIFFERENT WORLD

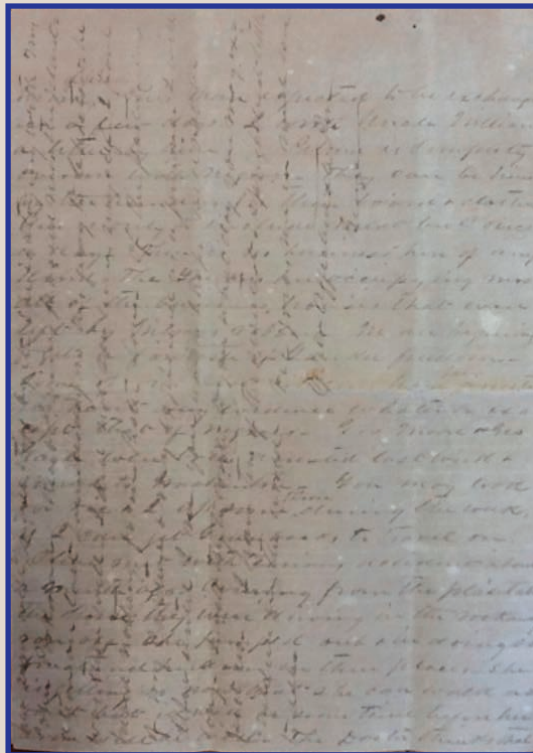
Following up on our article in the Fall 2012 issue of *Sighs of Psi*, we present to you another letter written by fellow Psi brother **George David Shortridge, Jr. (1837-1868)**, a member of the DKE class of 1857. George grew up in Montevallo, Alabama, practiced law in Selma after leaving the University of Alabama, and saw extensive Confederate service in the Civil War, serving from early in the war to the bitter end. Please see the previous *Sighs of Psi* for further information on George's background and military service.

When we left George previously, he had been captured at the Battle of Blakely on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay on April 9, 1865, sent as a prisoner of war to Ship Island, Mississippi, then to New Orleans and then on to Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he was released on May 5, 1865, as part of a prisoner exchange. While he technically then returned to active duty in the Confederate army, the war was then all but over, Robert E. Lee having surrendered a month earlier, on the same day on which George was captured, and General Joe Johnston having surrendered the last remaining Confederate army in the East shortly thereafter. Thus, the only major Confederate forces still remaining in the field at the time of George's release in Vicksburg were those of the Confederate Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, of which George's unit was a part, and those of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department, comprised of all troops west of the Mississippi River. While there was some sentiment for continuing the struggle, most sober Confederate minds realized that the cause was lost, and that the further effusion of blood would be not only pointless but also morally unjustifiable. Thus, six days after his release from Yankee custody, on May 11, 1865, George and thousands of other Confederate soldiers were surrendered and paroled once and for all at Meridian, Mississippi, as part of the surrender by General Richard Taylor, commander of the Department of Alabama, Mississippi and East Louisiana.

Our next encounter with George takes place on May 28, 1865, seventeen days after he was surrendered and "nearly two weeks" after he returned home to Selma. The letter copied here, written to his mother on that date, is an interesting portrait of life in the defeated South immediately after the end of the war. Most accounts of the Civil War end with the cessation of formal hostilities, or continue on to the Reconstruction struggles which followed

later. Much less is generally heard about the experiences of the immediate post-war period. George's present letter shows that the pain and difficulty of the war period by no means ended when the guns fell silent. George's certain joy at being reunited with his wife and children was tempered by finding a distraught and frightened family, facing economic ruin, and the radical social changes brought on by emancipation and the end of slavery. George's letter expresses sadness, fear, indignation and anxiety for the future, yet some joy and hope for the future also comes through.

Selma, Alabama, at the time of this letter, was under Union occupation, and the citizens of the town were only beginning to adjust to painful new realities. Selma had fallen to the Union forces of General James H. Wilson at the Battle of Selma several weeks earlier, on April 2, 1865, one week to the day before George was captured at the Battle of Blakely. Jubilant Union troops had looted the city that night, and many businesses and private residences were burned. Two days later, on April 4, one of Wilson's brigades under the command of General John T. Croxton also burned the University of Alabama campus. (In an interesting footnote to DKE and university history, Croxton was himself a DKE-Phi Yale, Class of 1857.)



*Photo of last page of George Shortridge's letter of May 28, 1865, showing the final lines written perpendicular to previous ones, likely reflecting the scarcity of paper in the wartime South.*

For anyone who may have fallen into the politically correct trap of believing that, because the Confederate states were slaveholding, and the Union states were mostly (but not entirely) non-slaveholding, all virtue in the Civil War lay on the Union side, and all vice on the Confederate, George's letter paints a very different picture. The letter relates some of the unpleasant "adventures" the ladies of Selma had to deal with after the arrival of the Union army. The letter speaks for itself in this regard, but it seems clear that at least at one point George's wife and other named ladies were in genuine fear of sexual assault at the hands of Yankee soldiers, at one point fleeing in terror into the woods in the dark of night with their small children to escape what they later learned was a "plot which was of the most atrocious character." The brutality and barbarism of these Union soldiers cannot be attributed to any Northern moral indignation over slavery or a desire to inflict retribution on "evil slave owners," as George noted that the Yankees "spared neither black or white in their pillaging." George's account might be subject to skepticism as being wartime exaggeration



# FROM THE HISTORIAN

if it had been written for public consumption, but the fact that it is contained in a private letter to his mother seems to enhance its credibility. If anything, it seems that George would have downplayed the Yankees' excesses in order to not overly upset his aged mother.

George's letter does reflect the racial attitudes typical of mid-19th century Americans (note that I intentionally said Americans, and not Southerners), and should be read in that context. However, it also reflects certain positive attitudes which might seem surprising to some. Apparently correctly realizing, or at least fearing, that the Yankees were about to embark on an orgy of looting and pillaging, George's wife, Vic, and her lady friends "distributed most of their valuable clothing among some of the Negroes, supposing that the Yanks would not molest anything in their possession." Unfortunately, this supposition proved incorrect.

There are also some intriguing, but ambiguous, signs of the vastly altered racial relationships resulting from the war and its outcome. When Vic and the other ladies with her refused to extinguish a light due to the presence of small children, despite threats and abusive language from the Yankee soldiers, "one of Mrs. Waugh's servant girls ran into the house and commenced putting out the light." Was this an act of defiance on the part of a newly freed slave, or was the girl simply acting on orders from the soldiers? After fleeing from the soldiers into the night, "They at first attempted to take refuge in the Negro cabins, but the Negroes drove them off." Were they driven off by former slaves who had no interest in sheltering their former slave-owners, or were the black neighbors fearful of incurring the wrath of the Yankees if they gave shelter to these terrified women and children? Whatever the reasons, these incidents reflect profound social changes.

The last page of this letter suffers from some serious illegibility, resulting from the fact that George apparently ran out of paper before he was finished writing and continued by rotating the last page and continuing

to write across and perpendicular to the lines he had already written. (See accompanying photo). This may reflect the scarcity of paper in the South at the time; this method of writing was not uncommon during this period.

I hope this letter gives you some sense of what our many Psi brethren who served the Southern cause endured, even after the war was over. I also hope you've gotten a glimpse of some of the injustice engendered by the Civil War beyond what you typically hear or read about in popular culture. "To the victor goes the spoils," including the opportunity to present the victors' perspective at the expense of the vanquished. As in most cases, however, such historical truth is generally more complex and nuanced than the simplistic versions which were all too often led to believe, where Union Civil War soldiers are almost invariably portrayed as "good guys," and their Confederate counterparts as the personification of evil. Keep George Shortridge's narrative in mind the next time you hear someone trying to point the finger of guilt at the South.

This letter, like Brother Shortridge's previous one, is located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. A debt of gratitude is again owed to the staff of the Briscoe Center for their assistance. Other than minor changes to punctuation, spelling and abbreviations in the interest of clarity, and a few omissions in the interest of brevity, this letter appears as originally written.

Finally, if anyone finds this article too full of my own personal opinions, so be it; but, hey, one of the benefits of writing this column is getting to "call it like I see it!"

In the Bonds,  
**T. Semmes Favrot '82**  
 Alumni Historian  
 sfavrot@cox.net

## Endnotes to George David Shortridge, Jr.'s Letter *(see letter page 8)*

- 1 "Vic" is George's wife, Victoria Echols Shortridge; their two children were Eli and Elizabeth.
- 2 George is referring to the Union troops of General James H. Wilson, who captured Selma, Alabama on April 2, 1865. See accompanying article for more information.
- 3 "Randle" was mentioned in George's earlier letter of March 24, 1865; see Fall 2012 Sighs of Psi. He appears to have been a servant, likely a slave who accompanied George while he served in the army.
- 4 William Woodson King (1813-1881) and Thomas King (1832-?).
- 5 Shreveport, Louisiana, was the capitol of Confederate Louisiana from 1863 until the end of the war, and was also the headquarters of the Trans-Mississippi Department of the Confederate army.
- 6 The Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department encompassed all Confederate territory west of the Mississippi River.
- 7 Andrew Barry Moore (1807-1873) was Governor of Alabama from 1857-1861, and presided over Alabama's secession from the Union. Following the surrender, Moore was arrested by Federal troops and imprisoned at Fort Pulaski in Savannah, Georgia, with other Confederate leaders. Released in August 1865, he returned to Marion, Alabama, where he resumed his law practice.
- 8 Louisa Shortridge, George's sister, was married to **Reuben Reid Gaines**, another Psi DKE, Class of 1855. Reuben Gaines also served the Confederate cause, and later served as Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court from 1886-1911.

# FROM THE HISTORIAN

## George David Shortridge Jr.'s Letter of May 28, 1865

My Dear Ma,

Aunt [illegible] called to see us this morning, & as she expects to leave tomorrow I have availed myself the opportunity of writing to you. I have been home for nearly two weeks. I found Vic and the children <sup>1</sup>looking badly but they are improving. We spent most of last week at the plantation, which improved the health of them all considerably. Vic has not been well for some time. She is looking worse than I ever saw her, caused principally by the nursing of the baby, & the treatment she received from Wilson's raiders.<sup>2</sup>

I cannot here relate all the adventures that Becca and Aline had with the Yankees. After one visit from them they all left home & stayed with their neighbors. One night while she & Becca were staying with Mrs. Waugh, a party of Yankees & negroes came there about 1 o'clock at night, fired into one of the windows & then demanded that the light they had burning should be put out or they would show them a "frightful one." They sternly refused to put out the light, stating, however, that they had little children with them & that it was necessary to keep the light burning on their account. They still persisted in their threats, using all kinds of abusive and insulting language, when one of Mrs. Waugh's servant girls ran into the house and commenced putting out the light. As soon as the servant commenced this, Vic picked up her children & ran out at the back door. Becca, Mrs. Waugh & Hennie followed. They at first attempted to take refuge in the negro cabins, but the negroes drove them off. They then ran through a ploughed field to a swamp some two hundred yards from the house. The Yankees, as soon as they found out that they had gone, went immediately to our house & searched for them. They then returned to Mrs. Waugh's & threatened to blow Ba-[illegible name]'s brains out if she did not reveal where they were. Fortunately, Ba----- did not know or they would have found them & carried out their fiendish purposes. They carried Ba----- along with them in their search until daylight. The night was quite cool at the time & Vic was barefooted.

The next morning about sun up, they arrived at Mrs. Honeycut's with their hands, faces & feet well scratched & bruised, & their dresses torn almost into shreds. The next night some of my neighbors disguised themselves as Negro Yankees [and] went to a negro of Mrs. Waugh's that they suspected implicated in the affair, & he revealed to them the whole plot, which was of the most atrocious character. Fortunately, Aline went to a different house to stay & they did not find her. They seemed from this negro's developments to have a special spite against her. Why it is that God Almighty will allow such people to prosper in the dispensations of his goodness & justice is beyond my comprehension. They all left their trunks at home, having distributed most of their valuable clothing among some of the negroes, supposing that the Yanks would not molest anything in their possession, but they spared neither black or white in their pillaging. They took nearly everything Vic had.

One day while she was at Mrs. Waugh's, she heard that the Yankees were at our house. Her and Becca [sic] went immediately over there, when they got there, they found all their things strewn on the ground. They had made a horse trough of Vic's trunk. They even took Vic's bonnet. As for myself, they have hardly left me a vestige of clothing. Randle<sup>3</sup> had a trunk of mine in town that he had a few days before brought from Mobile. He saved nothing in it but my new uniform, which he had hid under Mrs. Purnell's carpet in the parlor. Most of the clothing I had with me at Blakely I lost. All I have had to wear since I came home was one pair of drawers, 2 shirts & my uniform.

They got my horse & every mule we had on the plantation... We have managed to buy enough broken down stock to carry on the cultivation of our farm. They took none of our meat, only our horses. We may have enough to do us for the year, if we are not further molested & are economical in its use.

When I came home I found them all living in town. We have rented Mrs. [illegible]'s two-story house. I myself had much rather live in the country, but Vic objected so strongly to going back there that I have yielded my consent to remain here until fall.

While in prison in New Orleans, I met with a fellow prisoner who lived in the same Parish with Uncle Tom, & who said he knew Uncles William & Tom well<sup>4</sup>. He said he had seen Uncle Tom about two weeks before. He was then well & was still in command of his company. Some time during the winter, the Yankees went to their plantation [and] burnt their sugar mill... The Yankees stated that they committed these outrages in retaliation for the damage Uncle Tom and his company had done as guerillas in St. Mary Parish. Uncle Tom, when this man saw him last, was near Shreveport<sup>5</sup> with his command. He says there is not a more inveterate fighter in the Trans Miss. Dept.<sup>6</sup> than Uncle Tom. Uncle William was still on the plantation when he last heard of him. This man expected to be exchanged in a few days. I wrote Uncle William a letter by him....

There is no business here of any kind. The Yankees are occupying most all of the business houses that were left by Wilson's robbers. We are beginning to get a foretaste of Yankee freedom. Some of our best citizens have been arrested without any evidence whatever.... Gov. Moore<sup>7</sup> & [illegible] were both arrested last week & sent to Washington.

You may look for Vic & I up some time during the week, if I can get greenbacks to travel on. Aline met with a serious accident about a month ago. Coming from the plantation the horse they were driving in the [illegible] ran off. She jumped out & in doing so fractured her ankle in three places. [Illegible] it will be some time before her ankle will be well. The Doctor thinks that her arms will be made stiff by it. She is staying with Mrs. [illegible]. [Illegible] passed near the plantation on last Wednesday on his way to Choctaw. He was then well. I did not see him [illegible]. I have heard nothing from Sister Louisa.<sup>8</sup> [Illegible] of my capture & my experience as a prisoner.

I will [illegible] until I see you which I hope will not be long. I will try to write again what day you might expect us. I have two of the sweetest and sprightliest little children in the world. Vic joins me in much love to all.

Your affectionate son,  
George

(See endnotes on page 7)



# ASKING, SEEKING, KNOCKING

I was a new DKE pledge the first time I heard the phrase “long and arduous journey.” As I look back 30 years, I can say that it hasn’t seemed long, but it has seemed arduous, at times. Career, marriage, births, deaths, the economics of living, and a thousand forms of change required a faith I’d not sought during the years I was preparing for those exact things.

Great men, especially DKEs, are prone to journeys and exploration. Robert Peary went to the North Pole, Alan Bean went to the moon, and Theodore Roosevelt went anywhere he could find a fight, or a good hunt. All three of those men somewhere, somehow, developed a spirit, an internal compass which took them to greatness. The DKE traditions and the choices they made in college were a part of their journey. Greatness starts with vision. Vision comes from the spirit. Right now, all students at the University of Alabama are making personal choices, but there are DKEs taking spiritual journeys and making discoveries about themselves. I spoke to a few of them for this piece. This will not be a DKEs go to Sunday School article. There are plenty of better qualified people to write that. This is an article about unprecedented challenges, real preparation, and vision.

As a father of college students, I have gotten a look at what colleges have to offer. There are degrees, student facilities, activities, technology, and social opportunities we never dreamed of in my years at the university. Sounds good, doesn’t it? A fellow college dad said to me recently, “They’ve got it better than we ever thought about.” I am not sure that’s so.

There is a dark side to what our students face. The Internet and 24-hour media provide more and faster access to information than ever before. This deluge of information can bend our view of what is normal. It feeds psychological addictions from gambling to porn. There were drugs and alcohol in college in the 1980s, but we didn’t face the intensity, addictiveness, and sophistication of the substances that today’s students can, and do, obtain. Traditional media is so competitive for college students’ attention that it finds, or creates, a freakish side of society, and sells it as reality. At one time the only real relationships were personal. Now they can be totally virtual. If one makes it through all the clutter, a fresh diploma does not guarantee quick employment. Every generation faces change, but the

spiritual challenges faced by young men and women are different and more dramatic.

There are a group of active DKEs who have committed themselves to their Christian, spiritual growth. They are doing it in the midst of a very material, virtual, detached culture. They’re among students, all over, who are picking a different kind of college experience. The DKEs I spoke to were self-assured and unfiltered in our talks. They openly said they had a mix of personal victories and personal failures. They emphasized a determination not to live in “the world.” What they described to me was an exploration of themselves, their sense of dedication to seek something infinitely bigger than they are.

Those of us who parked our faith on the outskirts of Tuscaloosa, during our college years, sold ourselves short. Degrees were gotten. Social lives ensued. Invaluable lifelong friends and bonds were made. None of those things, though, prepare one for the moral clarity, and the comfort, that is needed for life after college. A friend of mine told me that real, abiding faith is not taught, it’s sought.

Our shared bonds, our history, show that DKEs will fight, and die, for things they believe in. Our brothers have given themselves over to ideals, beliefs and efforts which made our world better. They factored future generations of DKEs into their work. The idea that DKE actives are bold enough, forward looking enough, and sturdy enough to actively develop their faith, in an environment of unchecked freedom, is a testament to what is possible.

A man, at a table, in a dark room, at the top of some stairs, read a verse to me and my pledge brothers: “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you.”

The “you” in those verses has to be for all of us. It’s about that mystical bond young men, old men, and even dead men share with each other. We have to keep our DKE traditions, seek to be exceptional, and we have to seek a higher plane. That bold search is why DKE exists. The men of Psi Chapter should lay claim to those promises. They are there for the taking.

In the bonds,  
**John Nielsen ’83**

## From the Archives:

The DKE house on University Boulevard in the 1930s.



# ALUMNI UPDATE



## Sighs of Psi

### MYSTIC CIRCLE

**Blaine Brownell Jr. '36** entered Mystic Circle February 5, 2012. While a student in Tuscaloosa, he met his wife, Nancy, whom he married in 1938 and cherished 70 years, until her death in 2008. He began his married life in Homewood, employed by the New York Life Insurance Company. In 1942, he joined the U.S. Army, eventually reaching the rank of second lieutenant and served in a variety of posts, primarily in medical services and in supervising arrangements aboard various U.S. Navy ships in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. Following the conflict, he tried farming in Greensboro, Ala., and then eagerly accepted his father's invitation in 1948 to join him in the family automobile dealership in Birmingham. He became president of Brownell Pontiac Co. in Ensley, where he expanded a family tradition for honesty, integrity, and community service. He encouraged and supported many charitable and community organizations. In 1961, he served as president of the Alabama Automobile Dealers Association. He sold his company and retired in 1983.



**Walker R. Greaves '51** entered Mystic Circle September 15, 2012. During World War II he joined the U.S. Navy and served as a flight instructor in Corpus Christi, Texas. After the war, he returned to Alabama, graduated from the University of Alabama Business School, and more importantly he met his wife of 50 years, Elsie. His career started in sales with Sherwin-Williams, and he retired as owner of the Gleem Paint Center.

**Edward J. Vulevich Jr. '55** entered Mystic Circle in Belle Fontaine April 15, 2012. He was a graduate of McGill Institute, the University of Alabama, and the University of Alabama Law School. Upon graduation, he served in the U.S. Air Force as a judge advocate general in Itazuke, Japan. When he returned to Mobile, he worked as a law clerk for Judge Daniel Thomas and then went to the Tonsmeire McFadden law firm. In 1969, he joined the U.S. Attorney's Office until he retired in January 2006.

**Harry A. Luscher '72** entered Mystic Circle January 13, 2012. He was a surgeon with The Orthopedic Group for 25 years.

### ALUMNI NEWS

**Robert P. Denniston '41** retired in October 2012 as a lawyer in Mobile, Ala. He lives with his wife, Juanita, in Mobile and has one son, Michael. E-mail: bodbenniston@wrightgren.com

**Edwin J. Curran '53** regrets that he was not able to attend the Homecoming celebrations as he was out of the country. He lives in Mobile, Ala., and has three children. E-mail: jcurran@vickersriis.com

**Waights M. Taylor Jr. '59** is the owner and president of McCaa Books. His book, *Our Southern Home: Scottsboro to Montgomery to Birmingham-The Transformation of the South in the 20th Century*, was awarded the independent

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publisher silver medal in New York City on June 4, 2012. He lives in Santa Rosa, Calif., with his wife, Liz, and has three children. E-mail: waights@sonic.net

**Tommy Blankenship Jr. '64** is proud his grandson, Pete, is a new pledge at DKE. He and his daughter, Jeanne, attended the Cowboy Classic and had a great time. E-mail: blankenshipsuniversalsupply@gmail.com

**Winston G. Lovvorn '69** retired from 40 years of banking on January 31, 2012. He worked for Regions Bank and Union Planters for 34 years and Bank Independent for six years. He manages family farms in the Tennessee Valley of north Alabama and the Mississippi Delta. He lives in Athens, Ala., with his wife, Linda, and has two children. E-mail: garthlovvorn@gmail.com

**K. David Gray '71** retired in 2010 from Hewlett-Packard Company and works as an independent representative in medical equipment sales. He and his wife, Lisa, live in Columbia, S.C., and have three children. E-mail: davidgray@sc.rr.com

**Vivian G. Johnston III '73** is an attorney and lives in Mobile, Ala., with his wife, Lenore. They have two children, Gaines and Lisa. E-mail: limbhanger@aol.com

**John W. Calhoun III '82** is CEO of Ardent Natural Gas LLC. He lives in Atlanta, Ga., with his wife, Mary, and has two children, Jack and Doug. E-mail: jwcalhouniii@yahoo.com

**Paul A. Connolly '89** works at MK Resources in Dallas, Texas, where he lives his wife, Carroll. E-mail: pconnolly@mkresources.com

**Norman M. McInnis IV '97** and his wife, Celie, live in Mobile, Ala. He is a district manager for Felder Services. E-mail: ssystem1x1@yahoo.com

**J. Prentice Fuselier '00** lives in New Orleans, La., with his wife, Melissa, and their two children, John and Stella. John works at Merrill Lynch. E-mail: prenticefuselier@gmail.com

**Frank Smith III '04** is an accountant at Wilkins Miller Hieronymus. He lives in Fairhope, Ala., with his wife, Mary, and their son, Frank IV. E-mail: fsmith@wilkinsmiller.com

**Robert L. Fleming III '06** is a DPT for Fleming Rehab and Sports Medicine and is the owner of Fleming Firearms and Outdoor Supply/Moondance Enterprises LLC. He serves on the board for the Red Shoe Society and on the advisory board for Providence Hospital Foundation. E-mail: flemi026@yahoo.com

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