

A Guide to the Phi Mu. Gamma Theta Chapter Scrapbooks, 1958-1984 UA 0054

Phi Mu. Gamma Theta Chapter scrapbooks
1958-1984



Title Statement

A Guide to the Phi Mu. Gamma Theta Chapter Scrapbooks, 1958-1984 UA 0054

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

UA 0054

Unit ID

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Unit Date

1958-1984

Language

English

Abstract

The Phi Mu Gamma Theta Chapter Scrapbooks, 1958-1984, comprise 23 scrapbooks created by Phi Mu members that document the activities of the women's fraternity and include photographs with captions and printed ephemera.

Creator

Phi Mu. Gamma Theta Chapter

source

Oliver, Diane M.

Extent

8.61 cubic feet 11 boxes

Extent

3.78 Gigabytes 1433 files

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Twenty-two of the twenty-three scrapbooks are open to research. At the donor's request and per the donor agreement, the 1981 scrapbook is restricted until August 25, 2041.

Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collection Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated to Special Collections in August 2021 by Diane M. Oliver, Phi Mu alum.

Processing Information

Files containing digitized images of the scrapbooks were securely copied from the USB drives supplied by the donor. The USB drives were subsequently discarded.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Phi Mu. Gamma Theta Chapter Scrapbooks, 1958-1984, UA 0054, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Administrative History

The Gamma Theta chapter of Phi Mu was officially installed on October 4, 1959. Members were initiated on January 1, 1960 and the group received its charter as the 82nd chapter of Phi Mu. Prior to that, beginning in the spring of 1958, the organization was a local fraternity, Delta Tau Alpha. Fraternity members resided in Lincoln House beginning in the fall of 1959 through circa 1963. Hoffman Hall opened in 1964 as the Panhellenic Dormitory and housed 164 fraternity members including Phi Mu. Phi Mu took up residence in Eagle Hall in the fall of 1973. Linda Silver of Suffolk, Virginia was a member of the spring 1973 pledge class and was likely the first African American woman to join Phi Mu, Gamma Theta Chapter. The character Pink Panther was the fraternity's unofficial mascot for a time as was a lion. Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity were big brothers to Phi Mu and are also documented in the scrapbooks. The chapter disbanded in 1987 due to a lack of members to occupy the Phi Mu house on Greek Row. The chapter was recolonized in 2010. While a women's organization, Phi Mu is officially designated as a fraternity, and not a sorority. Researchers will find that the two terms are used interchangeably throughout the collection material.

Scope and Content

The Phi Mu Gamma Theta Chapter Scrapbooks, 1958-1984, comprise 23 scrapbooks created by Phi Mu members that document the activities of the women's fraternity and include photographs with captions and printed ephemera. Each scrapbook is compiled according to either the academic or calendar year and is further arranged by month. Digital scans of the scrapbooks were created by a member of the Phi Mu alumni

group prior to Special Collections taking custody of the materials.

The scrapbooks largely comprise captioned photographs of events, activities, members, rushees, general campus views, and student housing. Additional material include newspaper clippings documenting chapter and members news (Phi Mu in the News and engagement, wedding, and birth announcements), printed ephemera, Christmas cards, concert and theater programs, rush week calendars, Panhellenic handbooks (1967-1968, 1968-1969), bid invitation acceptances, and select issues of Phi Mu's monthly newsletter "The Carnation."

The scrapbooks document all aspects of Phi Mu activities including membership, social events and parties, holiday gatherings, service projects and community outreach (Easter basket project, Hike for Hope, car washes, care packages), annual Founder's Day events (held in March), rush and initiation events ("walking" ceremonies), activities associated with pledging, senior parties, open house, slumber parties, Panhellenic picnics, banquets, national conventions, summer vacations and trips (Virginia Beach), Greek Week, Greek Sing, Parents Weekend, and Homecoming festivities. Among other local establishments, Phi Mu held off-campus events at Massanetta Springs, Belle Meade, Sheraton, Lloyd's Steak House, Ingelside, and Skatetown.

Photographs capturing incidents of blackface and other racist imagery are scattered throughout the scrapbooks, particularly in the context of rush events and social gatherings (Phi Mu Plantation, Old South, Native American, and Hawaiian luau themed parties). This type of imagery and corresponding descriptive captions are found in the following scrapbooks: 1961-1962, 1962-1963, 1965-1966, 1967-1968, 1968-1969, 1969-1970, 1978, 1979, and 1981 and potentially others.

Some scrapbooks exhibit evidence of adhesive failure where photographs or other pasted-in items are loose or have fallen out and are not extant. In other cases, photographs and pasted-in items appear to have been intentionally removed. Researchers should consult the digital scans of these scrapbooks as they are occasionally more complete than the physical scrapbooks.

The exterior covers of the scrapbooks are decorated variously with felt, miscellaneous cloth, wood, construction paper, terry, corduroy, and velvet/velour with a recurring theme of pink. The most recent scrapbooks are bound in magnetic page photograph albums. The contents of the 1978 scrapbook appear to have been rebound in a modern photo album.

Scrapbooks not represented in the collection are 1959-1960, 1975-1976, and 1980. The last and most recent scrapbook in the collection is 1984. It is unknown if the chapter produced scrapbooks between 1985 and 1987, when it disbanded.

Keywords

Scrapbooks

Photographs

Printed Ephemera

Greek letter societies -- Virginia -- Harrisonburg

Student activities -- Virginia -- Harrisonburg

Blackface entertainers -- Virginia -- Harrisonburg -- History -- 20th century

Oliver, Diane M.

Phi Mu. Gamma Theta Chapter

Phi Mu Fraternity

Madison College -- History

James Madison University -- History

Madison College -- Students

James Madison University -- Students

Other Formats Available

Digital scans of the scrapbooks were created by a member of the Phi Mu alumni group prior to Special Collections taking custody of the materials. With the exception of the 1981 scrapbook which is restricted per the donor agreement, these scans are available to researchers upon request.

Bibliography

The Schoolma'am, 1960. Harrisonburg (Va.): Madison College. Cremins, Ann, "Disbanded: Phi Mu sorority decides to end university recognition," *The Breeze*, April 16, 1987, vol. 64, no. 51, pg. 3.

Arrangement

The scrapbooks are bound and are arranged chronologically.

Description of Subordinate Components

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25746

Unit Date 1958-1959

Mixed Materials [1000898329] 1 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25747

Unit Date 1960-1961

Mixed Materials [1000898329] 1 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25748

Unit Date 1961-1962

Mixed Materials [1000898435] OV 1 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25749

Unit Date 1962-1963

Mixed Materials [1000898436] OV 2 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25750

Unit Date 1963-1964

Mixed Materials [1000898329] 1 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25751

Unit Date 1964-1965

Mixed Materials [1000898329] 1 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25752

Unit Date 1965-1966

Mixed Materials [1000898329] 1 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25755

Unit Date 1966-1967

Mixed Materials [1000898437] OV 3 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25756

Unit Date 1967-1968

Mixed Materials [1000898330] 2 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25757

Unit Date 1968-1969

Mixed Materials [1000898438] OV 4 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25758

Unit Date 1969-1970

Mixed Materials [1000898439] OV 5 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25759

Unit Date 1970-1971

Mixed Materials [1000898330] 2 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25760

Unit Date 1971-1972

Mixed Materials [1000898330] 2 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25761

Unit Date 1972-1973

Mixed Materials [1000898441] OV 6 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25762

Unit Date 1973-1974

Mixed Materials [1000898442] OV 7 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25763

Unit Date 1974-1975

Mixed Materials [1000898330] 2 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25773

Unit Date 1976-1977

Mixed Materials [1000898439] OV 5 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25774

Unit Date 1978

Mixed Materials [1000898331] 3 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25775

Unit Date 1979

Mixed Materials [1000898331] 3 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25776

Unit Date 1981

Mixed Materials [1000898440] OV 8 (box)

Access Restrictions

At the donor's request and per the donor agreement, the 1981 scrapbook is restricted until August 25, 2041.

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25777

Unit Date 1982

Mixed Materials [1000898331] 3 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25778

Unit Date 1983

Mixed Materials [1000898331] 3 (box)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/25779

Unit Date 1984

Mixed Materials [1000898331] 3 (box)