

The Kappa Beta Afterglow

Many Kappa Beta brothers have fond memories of their active days in the fraternity and have kept in touch with each other individually after graduating from Albany. In addition, a surprisingly large number have gotten together at reunions and at other gatherings, feasting and fondly recalling the good times they had when they were active members of KB. Often in connection with and as outgrowths of or in preparation for reunions and gatherings, newsletters and directories have emerged, enabling KB brothers to keep in touch with each other.

Nahum Lewis '38 notes that in the Summer of 1947, approximately 26 people held a Kappa Beta reunion picnic in Thacher Park, the first World War II get-together, followed by a second picnic reunion in May 1950 held on the farm of Phil Malofsky '51, to which 25 people came. Nahum further notes that other reunions of early Kappa Beta brothers were held in the 1960s at Jack's Restaurant and Howard Johnson's Restaurant in Albany and three more in the Catskills, arranged by Joseph K. Schwartz '40. One of these, held in August 1964 at the Swan Lake Hotel, attracted 30 adults and 21 children. Schwartz, who owned an insurance agency in Ellenville, New York and had business connections with the Catskill resorts, assisted KB members in making arrangements with the Swan Lake and the Nevele Hotels.

From Spring 1954 through Spring 1956, Ron Ferguson '54 and then Arnold Newman '56 produced a simple newsletter and directory that was distributed to current members of KB and alumni, which helped to keep KB brothers in touch with each other. This newsletter and directory continued to be produced in the late 1950s, and in 1960 and for some years afterwards, more extensive newsletters and a comprehensive directory were produced and circulated. Under the leadership of Dominick DeCecco '57, the Incorporated Alumni of Kappa Beta was formed, which attempted to improve communication between current members and alumni and do some modest fundraising.

The fortieth anniversary of the Old Kappa Beta Group, which was celebrated on the new Uptown campus, October 15-17, 1976, attracted 68 people. It was a gala, nostalgic weekend for everyone who attended. The Group recalled the tragic loss of six brothers: Saul Ikler '39, Gadlin Bodlin '41, Paul Sapolsky '40, Jack Shapiro '41, Baird Poskanzer '42, and Harold Feigenbaum '43 and established The Kappa Beta Memorial Fund in their honor which would be used to provide books for the Alumni House Library. This was followed by a forty-fifth anniversary celebration of the Old Kappa Beta Group, attended by 50 people from as far away as Venezuela. The Group memorialized those brothers who had died in the preceding five years: Dan Preston '41, A. Abba Koblenz '44, Saul Stolboff '44, and Harvey Milk '51 by collecting enough money to purchase a handsome bulletin board for the Alumni House.

In 1988, Kappa Beta brothers, mainly from the 1960s, organized a reunion. And in 1997, the Old Kappa Beta Group held a sixtieth anniversary reunion. On June 6, 1997, KB brothers and their spouses attended Temple Beth Emeth's Friday evening service and publicly thanked the Beth Emeth members who had given them the interest-free loan in 1937 which had been used to purchase furniture and had enabled the fraternity to get started. The loan had long since been repaid, but as a special gesture, the brothers raised \$400 which was presented to Congregation

Beth Emeth for its Youth Scholarship Fund.

Ron Coslick '62 with help from Don Fear '63 and others organized summer reunions in 2002, 2003, and 2004 for brothers from the Classes of 1960-1965. These gatherings were held in Ron's home and in the home of Alden Pierce '64. In the first two years, 12 brothers attended, but in the third year, 23 brothers attended from as far away as San Antonio, Chicago, and Atlanta.

In 2002, Kappa Beta celebrated its 65th anniversary year with two reunions.

The Kappa Beta brothers, mainly from the Classes of 1938-1959, celebrated the event during Alumni Weekend with an informal reception on June 7th in the Patroon Room of the Campus Center and a reunion dinner on June 8th in the Assembly Hall with a dinner and speaker, Dr. Mark A. Raider, Chair of the Department of Judaic Studies and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at UAlbany. More than 75 Kappa Beta brothers attended both events and thoroughly enjoyed meeting new people and reconnecting with old friends. All brothers managed to sing their way through the Kappa Beta Drinking Song without staggering. Haskell Rosenberg '40 was the chief organizer of this highly successful event with much assistance from Ken "Schoony" Schoonmaker '54.

The Kappa Beta brothers, mainly from the Classes of 1960-1972, held a big reunion in October. More than 100 brothers attended this reunion, which was held at the Marriott on Wolf Road outside of Albany. In preparation for this reunion, Igor Koroluk '68 and others set up an excellent website (<http://www.kappabetasunyalbany.com/>) which not only listed the names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of KB brothers, 1959-1975, but also provided information, photos, and a means for brothers to connect and reconnect with each other before and after the reunion. Mike Zimmerman '68, with help from others, organized the reunion., which was a huge success.

And so the spirit of Kappa Beta has lived and continues to live on in the hearts and minds, the friendships and reunions of brothers from all time periods in KB's existence, underlining the motto of the fraternity: B'nai Chaim, Brothers for Life.