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Omega Psi Phi

In November 17, 1911, at Howard University, Washington, D.C., the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity was founded by three men—Brothers Oscar J. Cooper, Edgar A. Love, and Frank Coleman—in company with Professor E. E. Just. These three men, having thoroughly gone over the situation, saw keenly the necessity of such a movement, and decided to plant the first “mother” chapter of a Greek letter fraternity to be founded in a Negro institution at Howard University.

Today the fraternity numbers eighty-three chapters, located in the leading college and university centers of this country and Canada.

More than three thousand stalwart “Sons of the Shield” bear Omega’s standard onward to a future made brighter by the glorious reflection of a fadeless past.

OFFICERS

DARNELL JOHNSON ........................................ Basileus
HARRY LANDERS ........................................ Keeper of Records
MAURICE COATES ........................................ Keeper of Finance
EARL SHAMWELL ........................................ Chaplain

ninety-six
Jonathan Matthews, Editor
JaSun Frone, cover design

Content Contributors:
Michael Adams, James Brown III, Harold Cook, Samuel DeVonish, Kevin Greene, Keltric Goff, Chaz Hicks, E. Newton Jackson, Kenneth Joe, Kermit Mallette, Dwayne Moore, Jamal Parker (Centennial Photographer), Rohulamin Quander, G. Dewey Stanyard, Generique Stewart and Steven Walker.

Special Thanks to:
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Kenneth Barnes, Executive Director, International Headquarters, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

Ms. JoEllen ElBashir, Curator of Manuscripts, and the Reading Room staff, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.

Barry and Robyn Hudson for their hospitality and support.

ALPHA CHAPTER CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Jonathan Matthews, 7-83-A (Chair)
Darryl Shelton, 3-80-A
Kevin Greene, 23-80-A
Dwayne Moore, 9-81-A
Barry Hudson, 1-83-A
Michael Adams, 2-83-A
G. Dewey Stanyard, 10-84-A
Frank Wright, Jr., 1-86-A
Martavius Jones, 1-90-Psi Nu
Chaz Hicks, 13-93-A
JaSun Frone, 5-94-A
Duane Foster, 7-94-A
Generique Stewart, 6-95-A
Stephon Senegal, 8-95-A
Shannon Ridley, 10-96-A
Andre Samuels, 2-97-A
Keltric Goff, 8-00-A
Steven Walker, 10-00-A
Russell Drake, 6-02-A
Byron Hughes, 3-04-A
Scott Thomas, 5-10-A, Basileus
Alpha Chapter “Undergraduate Chapter of the Year”

WASHINGTON, DC—The Brothers of Alpha, “The Mother Pearl,” have been very busy, working at long hours to accomplish our noble projects. On July 30, 1996 at the 69th Grand Conclave in Los Angeles, Alpha was awarded the National Undergraduate Chapter of the Year Award.

This was accomplished under the leadership of the past Basileus Brother Cecil Brown and past Vice Basileus Brother Kory Wilson with the advisement of Graduate Faculty Advisor Brother E. Newton Jackson. The Brothers’ hard work and perseverance enabled the chapter to accomplish over 51 social action programs.

Social Action Chairman G. Stewart stated, “Completing over 51 social action programs is an amazing feat even to us. It simply shows the initiative and dedication of the chapter. It feels great to be recognized with such a prestigious award.” The programs ranged from an introduction to the Internet to feeding the homeless. Currently, Alpha Chapter has 22 brothers “on the yard” helping to carry on the search for new and creative ways to serve Howard University and the surrounding community.

Members of Alpha Chapter, Howard University, Washington, DC

The Oracle, Winter/Spring 1997
November 1, 1946

Dear Brothers:

I take this time to extend greetings to you upon your observance of National Negro Achievement Week this year. This is the year of action. We must not sit by for all of the planning of the postwar period to be thought out for us and handed down. In this changing world there is a demand for training, demand for leadership and inventive genius. Oliver Wendell Holmes said: "The world wants leaders, thinkers, doers, men of power and action, men who can step out from the crowd and lead instead of follow."

Those of us who have been in the fraternity for many years and have passed from the status of undergraduate to graduate, and then have had the opportunity to look back upon both types of chapters are definitely of the opinion that the undergraduate chapters are the backbone of the fraternity. The membership of these chapters represent the new life blood which is being fed into the organization from year to year and keeps it alive and growing. We are fully cognizant of the important place you hold, and realize that the great vision of the future rests with the undergraduate brothers.

Again I greet you and ask your full support of the Fraternity's new National Social Action Program.

Fraternally yours,

[Signature]

Grand Basileus
December 15-18, 2011

GREETINGS

To

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

I am pleased to extend greetings to all attending The Omega Psi Phi Alpha Chapter Centennial Celebration.

100 years later "the Mother Pearl" Chapter of Omega Psi Phi continues to uphold the founding principles of Friendship, Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift in young men across the nation. Your organization is not only a great asset to those living here in the District of Columbia, but to the nation as well.

You have my best wishes for a wonderful event and continued success.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Holmes Norton

Eleanor Holmes Norton
The District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor

Proclamation

OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC.
ALPHA CHAPTER DAY

December 15, 2011

WHEREAS, on December 15, 1911, twenty-eight days after the founding of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., on Howard University’s campus, the first chapter (Alpha) also known as “The Mother Pearl” was founded; and

WHEREAS, today, the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Alpha Chapter is celebrating its 100th anniversary with the theme: “A Legacy of Friendship: Yesterday, Today and Beyond”; and

WHEREAS, during this celebration, events and activities have been organized to the reflect the rich history of the Alpha Chapter and to recognize the achievements of its Brothers; and

WHEREAS, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Alpha Chapter continue to be a testament of the dedication and strength of brotherhood;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, do hereby proclaim December 15, 2011, as “OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC. ALPHA CHAPTER DAY” in Washington, D.C., and call upon all the residents of this great city to join me in recognizing this fraternity for their contributions and wish them continued success.

Vincent C. Gray

[Signature]
WHEREAS, On Friday evening, November 17, 1911, three Howard University undergraduate students, with the assistance of their faculty adviser, gave birth to the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in the office of biology Professor Dr. Ernest Everett Just; and

WHEREAS, Edgar A. Love, Oscar J. Cooper and Frank Coleman, derived the name Omega Psi Phi from the initials of the Greek phrase meaning "friendship is essential to the soul" and made it the fraternity motto; and

WHEREAS, manhood, scholarship, perseverance and uplift were adopted as the fraternity’s cardinal principles and the design for the pin and emblem were determined during the first meeting of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; and

WHEREAS, Alpha Chapter was organized with fourteen charter members on December 15, 1911 and for 100 years, Alpha Chapter has been a beacon of leadership cultivating hundreds of leaders in business, medicine, education, religion, law, science, sports, entertainment, public service and community service; and

WHEREAS, I was initiated into the fraternity through the Mother Pearl in the spring of 1981 and have tremendous love and appreciation for the birthplace of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and consider it the crown jewel of the greatest fraternity in the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RUSHERN L. BAKER, III, COUNTY EXECUTIVE FOR PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY do hereby recognize and proclaim December 15th – 17th Alpha Chapter Charter Day Weekend in Prince George’s County. FURTHER, I call upon the citizens and residents of this great County and its 27 municipalities to join me in observing this weekend and to congratulate the Brothers of Alpha Chapter Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. as they celebrate 100 years of outstanding service and friendship.
December 15, 2011

Greetings:

The Howard University family extends a warm welcome to Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., as it celebrates the Alpha Chapter Centennial.

A century ago, Edgar Amos Love, Oscar James Cooper, Frank Coleman, and Dr. Ernest Everett Just founded the Alpha Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., right here on the Howard University yard. Since that historic moment in time, this internationally known fraternal organization has been inextricably linked to Howard University and its motto: *Veritas et Utilitas* (truth and service).

United by the belief that "friendship is essential to the soul," the men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., have displayed an unerring commitment to the advancement of four cardinal principles: manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift. They have made stellar contributions to politics, science, business, social activism, the arts, education, and sports; as such, I can think of no more appropriate theme than "A Legacy of Friendship: Yesterday, Today, and Beyond" to frame Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and its contributions to the nation and the world.

Howard University is certainly proud to have played an integral role in inspiring greatness in the members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and, on behalf of the entire university community, I offer heartfelt congratulations to all assembled to commemorate this momentous occasion. I am quite confident that your impact on the world will continue to be felt for many years to come. A job well done, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.!

Sincerely,

_Sidney A. Ribeau_
President
December 14, 2011

My Brothers,

I extend Royal Purple and Old Gold wishes for a great celebration on December 15, 2011 on the campus of Howard University. When you assemble at the Blackburn Center, you will be completing a full year of Omega Men remembering our past, enhancing our present and sharing our vision for the future.

In your role as the Mother Chapter, there is a special designation and a concomitant responsibility to lead and live by example. What you do on the campus and in life will be weighed as a measure of the mettle of Omega. Recall the standing on the campus of those who established this great Fraternity. Rooted in Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift, our Founders were able to sway the administration and anchor the Omega presence on the campus and indeed the world for over 100 years.

May the Supreme Basileus of the Universe be with you as you give honor to this historic moment in time. All of Omega celebrates with you as we launch our second century.

Fraternally,

Dr. Andrew A. Ray
Centennial Grand Basileus

“The Best Grand Basileus is one who never forgets what it is to be a Grand Brother”
December 1, 2011

Greetings Brothers:

It is an honor to greet you on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of ALPHA CHAPTER, the Mother Pearl, established at Howard University on December 15, 1911 and in the memory of the fourteen charter members.

Alpha Chapter has a century of dedicated leadership and service that has enhanced the progress and achievement of the fraternity and the world wide community at-large. Thousands of outstanding brothers such as Z. Alexander Lobby, Former Grand Basileus, Harold Cook, 2nd National Executive Secretary, Melvin J. Washington, Former Grand Counselor and Former 3rd District Representative, B. Thomas Garnett, Former 3rd District Representative, Frank Patterson, 3rd District KRS Emeritus, and others has their beginning in Alpha Chapter.

I wish to congratulate and commend you for your continued service to Omega and to the world.

Please continue your efforts with Omega to achieve in accordance with the four cardinal principles, Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift.

Fraternally,

Anthony R. Knight
Anthony R. Knight
3rd District Representative
"Yes we can"
December 15, 2011

Congratulations & Greetings brothers,

As the current Basileus of Alpha chapter, it is with great honor that I congratulate you on 100 years of Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift. Words cannot explain the joy we as members should be feeling as we watch our beloved Fraternity grow not only in numbers, but in wisdom as well. To make it through our first 100 years is a testament not only to our strength, but to our endurance as Omega men and the vision of our beloved Founders.

My enthusiasm has been renewed as we continue to reach for the top and flourish as a Fraternity. As we enter into our second century of existence let us continue to serve our communities, and lift as we climb as we progress in reaching all of our endeavors. Let us not forget our Founders who began this journey over 100 years ago because it is our duty to continue the success of this Fraternity which we hold dear to our hearts.

May God bless and guide us as we look toward our next 100 years.

Yours in Omega,

[Signature]

Hansford Scott Thomas
Basileus, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. Alpha Chapter

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Chapter Officers

Hansford Scott Thomas
Basileus

Shaquille Najee Turner
Vice Basileus

Kenneth James Harris, Jr.
Keeper of Records And Seal

William Perry Davis II
Keeper of Finance

Theodore Roosevelt Graham IV
Chaplain

Brent Anthony Gossett
Keeper of Peace
The Founders
Bishop Edgar Amos Love
September 10, 1891-May 1, 1974
reprint from The Oracle, Spring 1964

Edgar Amos Love was born in a Methodist parsonage at Harrisonburg, Virginia on September 10, 1891. He was the son of Methodist ministers. His father, the Reverend Julius C. Love, was an honored member of the Washington Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church until his death in 1927. His mother, nee Susie Cornwall, a licensed minister in her own right, was the first woman graduate of Morgan College.

Brother Love graduated from the academy of Morgan College in 1903. He received from Howard University a bachelor of arts degree in 1913 and a bachelor of divinity degree in 1916. He was awarded a bachelor of sacred theology degree at Boston University in 1918. He did graduate work at the University of Chicago and received honorary doctorates from Morgan College (1925), Gammon Theological Seminary (1946) and Boston University (1956).

While a student at Howard University, young Love with two inseparable undergraduate friends, Frank Coleman and Oscar J. Cooper, and a faculty advisor, Dr. Ernest E. Just, founded the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in 1911. This was the first black Greek-letter fraternity to be established on a black college campus. Brother Love was the last survivor of the four founders who bound themselves together for 63 years under a pledge, "Friendship is essential to the Soul." As the last survivor founder, Brother Love devoted more time than usual in the last two years and the fraternity reciprocated by appointing a special committee including his family physician, a Brother, to be ever on the alert. Founder Love lived long enough to see Omega Psi Phi grow from one to more than 300 chapters scattered throughout the United States, in the West Indies, and across the ocean in Africa and West Germany. The present membership of more than 40,000 is a living testimonial to the solid planning and direction provided by the founders as they built a brotherhood based on Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift.

Brother Bishop Love’s career as a minister and a pastor in the Methodist Church had few interruptions since leaving the divinity school. He left his first charge at Grace in Fairmont, MD, to become a chaplain in World War I (1917-1919) and to teach at Morgan State College, 1919-1921. His pastorates include John Wesley, Washington, PPA, Ashbury, Annapolis, MD, Simpson, WVA and John Wesley, Baltimore. From 1933 to 1940 he served as Superintendent of the Washington District of the Washington Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1940, following the elevation of the late Dr. A. A. C. Hughes to the bishopric of the Methodist Board of Missions, Bishop Love was appointed to succeed him in a key post with the Methodist Board of Missions. Thus for 12 years he was Superintendent of the Department of Special Fields in the Division of National Missions, New York City. This led to his election to the episcopacy on June 22, 1952,