



The Muse

MU CHAPTER OF SIGMA PI FRATERNITY - CORNELL UNIVERSITY

ITHACA, NEW YORK

SUMMER 2002

The McGraw Place Project: A Post-Project Report

There have been many references to the McGraw Place Project in *Muse* articles as the construction proceeded. Now that the work is finished, here is a complete report on the project.

The total work cost approximately \$250,000 and was a joint project of Mu Chapter and Cornell University. It is a fine example of the high level of cooperation that exists between Sigma Pi Fraternity and the university!

The property on which our house is built was once a part of the McGraw estate. Over time the estate was subdivided into building sites. Our house, as well as Theta Delta Chi, Watermargin, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, and Phi Gamma Delta, were built on these subdivided sites. Our house and Theta Delta Chi front on University Avenue, but the other sites needed access from University Avenue, so a private road, named McGraw Place, was created. This road belongs to Theta Delta Chi and Sigma Pi (half and half). Access over the road is guaranteed by easements granted in the 19th century and inherited by Sigma Pi (Omega Delta) when we purchased the property in 1912.

In 1993 we built a new house that is significantly deeper than the old one. It is also several feet wider. The new house sits on the property quite differently from the old. We did not anticipate the problems with drainage that loss of the back yard and alley would create. Water that collected on McGraw Place flowed toward University Avenue across our front yard! The resulting mess was not only a drainage problem but also unsightly.

Over the years all of the property to which McGraw Place leads has become university-owned. Modern expectations and codes made it necessary to improve the

roadway to allow for emergency vehicle access as well as better and safer vehicle access in general. In order to achieve this, Cornell came up with a plan to widen the roadway, realign it, and provide better access to the Watermargin property. Cornell was also mindful that the water problem at Sigma Pi could become worse if we did not jointly preclude such problems. In order for Cornell to do what it needed to do, it was necessary for Sigma Pi to cede certain land to Cornell. Cornell in turn ceded some land to us, which allowed us to square off our



Sigma Pi: Standing true and proud.

property and significantly increase the size of our back yard and lower parking lot.

For this land to be usable by Cornell or us, a retaining wall had to be built along the east and north sides of our property. Cornell did not have the funds to do the work that affected Sigma Pi. Our alumni board approached a small group of our major alumni supporters and asked if they would help bring the project to fruition. They did so by contributing the funds to Cornell needed to do the work. In addition, several alumni made contributions directly to the house

for work associated with the McGraw Place work but which did not directly benefit Cornell. Cornell contracted with Sigma Pi to arrange to do the work, plans were drawn up in conjunction with Cornell's engineering department, bids were taken, and a contract was let. The construction is now complete.

Here are the things that benefit Sigma Pi:

- The drainage problem is gone!
- We have added nine parking spaces along McGraw Place.
- We have added six parking spaces to our lower parking lot.
- We have added stairs to the lower parking lot in the rear to access the trash dumpsters.
- We have added a sidewalk leading from the front of the house to the rear on both sides.
- We have added a railing along the west side of the house.
- We have increased the size of our back yard to the point that it is usable.
- We have added a double sleeping room to the house.

We'd like to thank the following brothers, whose generous support helped make the project possible:

Leo J. Chamberlain '52	Benjamin F. Kellogg '40
Donald E. Clark '53	William P. Mathers '41
Richard G. Clark '51	Lorenz K. Muller '46
Louis J. Conti '41	Robert A. Nafis '49
Francis R. Fowler '36	James W. Palmer '60
H. Laurance Fuller '60	Michael R. Sfat '43
Thomas M. Garr '76	Kent G. Sheng '78
Howard W. Hulford '44	Harlan R. Wengert '49
James H. Keene III '57	

Active Members Welcome Alumni Visits At All Times Of The Year

Mu Chapter has had the pleasure of several alumni visits this spring and early summer. Alumni Weekend in early April was a success, with a great showing of support from many recent alums who made the trip back to Ithaca. As always, it was great to see the range in graduation years of those who came back.

Reunion Weekend was also a hit. Many Pi men from the class of '77 (including Charlie Clark, Chris Garavente, and Craig Binetti, to name a few) made it back, and alums from other years stopped in for a

cocktail hour on Saturday afternoon. Everyone had a great time, and even Dolly Hailstork made a guest appearance and charmed the crowd.

We hope many of you will be returning to Ithaca for Homecoming on the weekend of September 28. With all of the improvements made recently to 730 University Avenue and 24 outstanding new brothers living in the house, it will be readily apparent what a tremendous organization Mu Chapter is again. I and the rest of the undergrads certainly hope to see many of you

here for the weekend.

Even if Homecoming doesn't fit into your plans this year, I invite anyone to stop by at any time during the year, as Jarrett Wait '79 did in late April and many other alums have done in the past. Also, I'd like to wish good luck to our recently graduated seniors. I hope everyone is doing well.

Fraternally,
Evan Gilbert '03
Alumni Secretary

Mu Chapter Contributes Significantly To Cornell's Crew Squads

One of the jokes often heard during rush week is that Sigma Pi at Cornell is the ex-crew house. We have five brothers who at one point in their Cornell careers were members of the Cornell crew. However, at the close of this semester there are four actives who are also very much active on the Cornell rowing team. Gijs de Boer '02, James Stangeland '02, and I are all members of the Cornell varsity heavyweight squad, while Kevin Dinstell '05 is a rower for the lightweight freshman crew.

James and Gijs have been teammates longer than they have been fraternity brothers. The seniors' last two seasons with the team have also been their most successful. Both James and Gijs are undefeated in dual races in the last two years. Kevin Dinstell '05 rowed in Oakland before joining the Cornell lightweights and winning racing shirts from competitive lightweight rivals Dartmouth, Columbia, Harvard, and Rutgers.

I have been a coxswain with the heavyweight team for the last two seasons. Many people have misconceptions about the role of the coxswain. My primary responsibilities are the steering and instruction of the

crew, but intangible jobs like motivation and race strategy also fall into my lap at times.

This year I find myself extremely fortunate to be sitting in the stern of an exceptionally fast shell, the Cornell second varsity heavyweight eight. As a member of Sigma Pi Fraternity, I consider this crew even more exceptional because my fraternity brothers, James and Gijs, occupy seats in the bow of this boat. The second varsity eight is undefeated in dual races this season, notching impressive victories over Cornell crew rivals Princeton, Yale, Navy, Syracuse, Georgetown, Michigan, and Rutgers.

The highlight of the season has been our performance at the Eastern Association of Rowing College championships, the Eastern Sprints. Among some of the fastest crews in the nation, our crew shined as one of the fastest in the second varsity event. In the grand finale, our Cornell 2V won silver right behind Harvard University and right in front of last year's 2V champ, the University of Wisconsin.

The silver medal was the best result that any Cornell heavyweight crew had notched at Eastern Sprints since 1981, and our effort

stands as a measurement of how far this program has come since James and Gijs began rowing here and also of how much more I believe it can achieve before I graduate. As I write this, the Cornell crew team continues to train hard in hopes of victory at the upcoming Intercollegiate Rowing Association Championships regatta in Camden, New Jersey.

Fraternally yours,
Mark Harrison '04



Enjoyment And Innovation Mark Sigma Pi's Philanthropy Efforts

The spring semester opened a new chapter in philanthropy for our house. Building on an increased interest in philanthropy among the brothers, we participated in several well-established events as well as some new events that we hope will lead to some new traditions.

To start with, in March our brotherhood took part in the Cornell Fund phonathon. Fifteen brothers raised several thousand dollars in the span of three hours by contacting alumni and asking them to donate money to the university.

The month of April was the debut of a new philanthropic event. Organized and

cosponsored by the sisters of Pi Beta Phi, "Murder Mystery Night" raised funds for the Center for Crime Victims of Sexual Assault as well as the Children's Brittle Bone Foundation. Our brothers and the sisters of Pi Beta Phi wrote and acted out the script for the murder mystery, which was accompanied by a lovely dinner prepared by our own brothers. Guests included Pi Beta Phi's house parents as well as Dean of Students Suzy Nelson from the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs. Approximately \$1,000 was raised for both organizations.

Pursuant to tradition, the month of May brought our annual Delta Gamma and

Sigma Pi car wash. The brothers and sisters of both houses washed over 65 cars in three hours, raising about \$400 for the American Red Cross and Guiding Eyes for the Blind. This represents about double last year's revenue.

In the fall of 2002, the flame of philanthropy will be passed to two very ambitious and talented new brothers: Sean Burke '05 and Michael Glicker '05, who will continue to raise the bar for philanthropy even higher.

Fraternally yours,
Paul El-Meouchy '03
Philanthropy Chair

THE MCGRAW PLACE PROJECT



1. The view as one approaches the front of the house. The retaining wall rises to its maximum height at the rear of this picture. It then tapers down along the rear or north property line. The parked car is on the area that has been developed into parallel parking spaces. The new sidewalk allows for easy access and delivery to the kitchen from the front of the house. Boston ivy has been planted and will climb and cover the wall. Hanging and blooming wisteria has been planted along the top of the wall and will hang over the ivy. In a few years, anticipating the blooming of the wisteria will be a rite of spring. **2.** The wall continues along the north property line toward the expanded lower parking lot leading to a new set of concrete stairs that lead to the trash dumpsters. **3.** This view gives a good idea of how much bigger the back yard is. Look closely at the sidewalk in the foreground and notice the second concrete joint from the left of the picture. This "joint" is where the property line was before the land swap! You see the end of the sidewalk leading to the new concrete stairs and also you see the railing along the west side of the property. **4.** The new concrete stair leading to the parking lot. The lower parking lot has been expanded to accommodate the trash dumpsters and six additional cars. **5.** The view of the new safety railing along the west edge of the upper lot. The railing is set in an underground retaining wall that stabilizes the existing sidewalk to the west of the house. **6.** Note the two windows at grade. These windows lead to a new sleeping room for two men. Before the project this room was a storage room, as it was underground. You can see from the coloration on the wall how much the grade was lowered. Final completion included stucco and paint of the exposed wall. **7.** Cornell's contractor is completing the final utilities and paving at the entrance to McGraw Place. The backhoe in the picture is sitting on the new Sigma Pi parking area. **8.** Another view of the stairwell in which you can see the full extent of the north retaining wall.

The Mu Chapter Of Sigma Pi Fraternity Wishes Its 2002

The members of Mu Chapter of Sigma Pi Fraternity, class of 2002, are as follows:

Steve Cerritelli: Steve was sage of Sigma Pi for 2001 and treasurer for 2000. He is the only member of the senior class to have served two years on the executive board. Under his leadership, the house took great initiatives in rush and pledging. The first fall pledge class in five years was initiated in the fall, and this spring we attracted the greatest crop of freshman pledges the house has seen to date.

Steve graduates from the Hotel School and will return home to Colorado, where he will be a district manager for a string of Subway franchises. Steve will be remembered for his dedication and loyalty to Mu Chapter over the years.

Max Jaeger: Max has held a variety of positions in the house, from steward to intramural chair. His greatest contribution to the house was as treasurer for the year 2001. As a member of the executive board for Mu Chapter, Max was always levelheaded—the voice of reason.

Max graduated in December with a bachelor's in economics from the College of Arts and Sciences and will begin graduate work at Cornell in the fall. He will work toward a master's degree in operations and research in the College of Engineering.

Mike Greeley: Mike has given many years of service to Mu Chapter as rush chair and pledge educator. Mike was the only sophomore pledge educator the house has seen. Mike has always been a loyal brother and is always willing to cut back for a little bit of fun. Whether he's partying late at night or waking up early to hit the golf course, Mike is always good company.

Next year Mike will join many other brothers at Cornell's College of Engineering, where he will pursue a master's degree in civil engineering.

Paul Germain: Perhaps one of the most brilliant minds to be graduating this year, Paul has contributed much to Sigma Pi and to the Cornell community at large. Under Paul's leadership as house manager, the plans for the new dining room were put into action.

Paul has been the leader of the Odysseus Project in the College of Engineering for the past few years. He and his team, which includes a number of Sigma Pi brothers, have competed nationally for the Odysseus Project.

Next year, Paul will be seeking a master's degree in aerospace engineering in the College of Engineering.

Mike Polcari: Mike has been a great influence to our chapter and to the Greek system over the past four years. He was the vice president of fraternity recruitment for the Interfraternity Council and is a member of the Greek honor society Order of Omega.

Mike graduates from the College of Engineering with a degree in computer science. He will be one of the few graduates of this class to join the "real world" as he begins work at Merrill Lynch in New York City.

Eric Arinsburg: Eric will also be joining the job force this fall. He will be living in Philadelphia and working as a bond researcher for Vanguard. He graduates with honors from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. His degree is in Applied Economics and Management.

John Scagnelli: John has held a position every semester he has been in the house. He has been social chair, philanthropy chair, alumni secretary, and, most recently, pledge educator. On campus he has been on various planning boards for the College of Human Ecology and is a counselor for EARS, a crisis hotline.

John graduated in December and spent the spring semester working for Stewart Howe Alumni Service, which

produces newsletters like the one you are now reading. John will continue his education in sunny Florida at the University of Miami School of Medicine.

Adam Silver: Adam will move out of Sigma Pi for the first time in three years in August. He has not been away from 730 University for more than three weeks at a time since the beginning of his sophomore year. He has held a variety of positions, from philanthropy chair to academic chair. He was the pledge educator for the fall 2001 pledge class and is a vice president of the Cornell class of 2002.

Adam graduates with a bachelor's from the College of Arts and Sciences with a double major in economics and history. He will attend law school next year but is still undecided where. He holds one acceptance from the University of Texas and is on a number of waiting lists.

James Stangeland: James has spent four years on the varsity crew team and recently won a silver medal at Eastern Sprints, the best Cornell has placed at this event in 20 years. He graduates from the College of Engineering in aerospace engineering and has deferred his acceptance in the master of engineering program for a year while he bikes around Europe. He spent this year as a resident adviser in the new freshman dormitory, Court Hall.

Dominik Utama: Dom completed his undergraduate work in three years and will be staying for a master of engineering degree next year in electrical engineering. He is an Indonesian and German citizen. He has spent his years in Sigma Pi adding a little culture to our lives.

Gijs DeBoer: Gijs is a Danish citizen, although he resides in Gilford, Connecticut. He has also spent the last

Graduating Seniors Best Wishes As They Press Onward

four years on the varsity crew team and, along with James, becomes the first Sigma Pi brother in recent years to remain a varsity athlete his entire tenure at Cornell. Gijs graduates from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences with a degree in astronomy. He will seek a PhD at the University of Wisconsin.

Brian Weisenthal: Brian has been an extremely dedicated brother these past four years. He has held numerous house positions, most notably herald and pledge educator. Brian graduated from the College of Engineering in operations research and industrial engineering and will go west to California next year, where he will work in a start-up with brother Morgan Lang '98.

Brian's fun-loving attitude has been an asset to the house over the years. He has organized the annual Sigma Pi ski trips and is always available to kick back and enjoy life.

Andrew Janis: Andrew is an Ithacan, but we don't hold that against him. He has been rush chair and vice president of the house. He graduates from the College of Arts and Sciences with honors as he just completed a thesis on election protocol.

Andrew spent a semester in Washington, DC, as an intern for the Supreme Court. This most coveted internship is awarded to only two students each year! After taking a year off, Andrew plans to attend law school.

Greg Glickman: Greg is from Marlboro, New Jersey. A graduate from the School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Greg spent a semester in Washington, DC, during his junior year. He is currently awaiting acceptances for law school and plans to begin in September.

Jeff Walwyn: Jeff returned to

the hill this year after being abroad for an entire year. He first went to Australia to study for a semester and then spent a Semester at Sea, visiting countries around the world. Jeff is a distinguished graduate, graduating first in his major, applied economics and management, in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Next year Jeff will be in San Francisco working for J.P. Morgan in investment banking.

Zack Foster: Zack is from Clinton, New York. He has spent four years at Cornell studying chemical engineering, one of the most rigorous majors at Cornell. He will continue his studies next year as a master's of engineering student at Cornell.

Mark Iwanicki: Mark returned to Cornell this fall after being abroad in Spain for a semester. He graduates in applied economics and management and is ready to hit the job force. He will move home to Brooklyn, New York, and will be seeking employment in New York City. In Sigma Pi, Mark served as the social chair for a year.

John Szczepanski: John transferred to Cornell his sophomore year from Virginia Tech, where he was a Corps Cadet for a year. He was recently commissioned as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force out of the Air Force ROTC program at Cornell. He spent three busy years here as an active brother, house manager for Sigma Pi, wing commander for the Air Force ROTC, new member educator for the ROTC honors fraternity Scabbard and Blade, and a coxswain for the men's crew team.

John graduates from the ILR school and is the distinguished graduate from the Air Force ROTC program. He will be an aircraft maintenance officer at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida starting this fall.

This senior class has seen four years of

positive change at Sigma Pi, as we have climbed our way to the top of the fraternity system at Cornell. We are very proud of Mu Chapter and all of its accomplishments. There is a bright future ahead for the current undergraduates, and this year's class has trained them well to deal with anything that arises. On behalf of the senior class, I would like to thank the following people:

To Jim Keene, Dave Lefevre, Jim Palmer, the other members of the alumni board, and the alumni group at large: Thank you for all of your support throughout these years. We could not have survived without your generous donations of time, money, and energy. We are eager to join the distinguished ranks of Sigma Pi alumni.

To Tom Owens: Thank you for stopping by, flying over, and hanging out with a bunch of undergraduates. Your presence on campus for the year was a blessing to all of us, and we are grateful for all the time you have invested in us.

To Patrick Spirawk: Thank you for all of the hard work you have put into the house. You have become a great friend to all of us over the past four years. Thank you for helping out in all fashions; whether it was cooking food for 60 guys, helping us with our cars, or keeping an eye on the functioning of the house, you were always there for us.

To Bob Nafis: Thank you for being the chapter director and for keeping an eye on the house. Thanks especially for all of your hard work on the McGraw Place Project.

To Suzy Nelson, the associate dean of students in charge of fraternity and sorority affairs: Thank you for being a supporter of Sigma Pi, a friend, and a mentor. You have helped bring about positive change within our chapter and provided excellent advice to the Sigma Pi men throughout our time at Cornell.

To the classes of 2001, 2000, and 1999: Thank you for inviting us to share in Sigma Pi, for training us to run an effective chapter, for being great role models of brotherhood, and for great friendships that we will carry with us next year and for many years to come.

And finally, to the classes of 2003, 2004, and 2005: We wish you luck in the years to come. May whatever time you have left at Cornell and in Sigma Pi be as enjoyable as our four years have been. Thank you for a great time, and don't ask us for money just yet!

Alumni Mailbag

"I have been keeping busy with nine children and 15 grandchildren," reports WILLIAM R. BROCKWAY '50 (12907 The Terrace, Hagerstown, MD 21742; billb51949@aol.com). He keeps in touch with WARREN LEACH '53. "I still play baseball about four weeks a year. Not bad for 74."

ΣΠ ΣΠ ΣΠ

VINCENT G. CRANE '52 invites brothers visiting Florida in the winter or any living there year-round to contact him for a possible get-together (1279 Buena Vista Dr., North Fort Myers, FL 33903; gelsecrane@cs.com).

ΣΠ ΣΠ ΣΠ

Keep in touch with JOHN C. SHEARER '52 at 51 Kendal Dr., Oberlin, OH 44074; ryska2@juno.com.

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Writes DONALD E. CLARK '53, "Marge and I had a reunion lunch with Dee and VINNY CRANE '52 and Marilyn and DON CASE '54 in late February. We are hoping we might muster some other Sigma Pis next year if they are in Florida or want to travel to meet with us." Send best wishes to Don Clark at 9 Hickory Lane, Cazenovia, NY 13035.

ΣΠ ΣΠ ΣΠ

"I'm still working full-time managing a small manufacturing business that I started nine years ago," writes JAMES H. KEENE III '57 (720 N. 57th Ave., Omaha, NE 68132; jkeeneiii@aol.com). "It keeps me off the street along with duties on the volunteer boards of a year-round concert series, of Doane College in Nebraska, and as president of our alumni group. Ruth and I are looking forward to bicycling through Germany and Austria with a group, including brother PETE KENNEL '61 and his wife, Margaret."

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The president of Alleran Financial Services, KENNETH R. RAND JR. '59

receives mail at 9 Locust Dr., Bernardsville, NJ 07924.

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Send greetings to GEORGE L. REEVES '63 at 2017 Mount Olive Rd., Toms Brook, VA 22660.

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Writes THOMAS E. CAYTEN '67, "My children and I continue to meet new challenges as we enter our fifth year living as a family of three after my wife's untimely death. My home remains open for Pi (Mu) visitors to New Hampshire (21 Carroll St., Exeter, NH 03833; e-mail: tcayten@attbi.com). I spoke to LEE PINNEY '63 some time ago. He is very involved in youth lacrosse and actively supports the Cornell lacrosse program."

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Drop WILLIAM H. AHRENS '76 a line at 1718 12th St. S., Moorhead, MN 56560. He is a scientist with the Shenyang Chemical Institute.

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Pens JOHN A. CHRISTOFORO '77, "Great mini-reunion for the Doll in Boston. Good to reconnect with some Pi men!" He adds that he is doing well and that their three children keep them busy. He keeps in touch with STEVE BOOTH '74 and BOB BERNSTEIN '77. Write John at 51R School St., Andover, MA 01810; christoforo@attbi.com.

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STEVEN M. ROBIN '78 works at the Crazy Gator and resides at 14407 Lake Junietta Dr., Tavares, FL 32778.

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Keep in touch with JAMES M. HORN '79 at 265 Prospect Ave., West Orange, NJ 07052. He keeps in touch with BRIAN FINNERAN '81.

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When he wrote, JOHN J. SACCO '80 penned, "2002 is off to a great start. I spend most of my time racing sailboats." For details about his wins and competition, write him at 7205 Holly Fern Cove, Austin, TX 78750; jaysacco@ev1.net.

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Drop a line to THEON C. SMITH '80 at 265 Sumption Dr., Gahanna, OH 43230; jrtes@hotmail.com.

ΣΠ ΣΠ ΣΠ

JARRETT F. WAIT '80 works for Lehman Brothers, Inc., and resides at 28 E. 70th St., #5B, New York, NY 10021 (e-mail: jwait@lehman.com).

ΣΠ ΣΠ ΣΠ

"The Derck clan recently moved from Reno, Nevada, to Durango, Colorado," reports GARY S. DERCK '81 (34 Tanglewood Dr., Durango, CO 81301; e-mail: ajgderck@aol.com). "We now manage the operation and development of two mountain resorts, one in Lake Tahoe (Kirkwood) and one in the San Juan Mountains (Durango Mountain Resort). Big brother LUC CHABOT '80 and his family came to visit last spring for a ski vacation. I'm hoping to see more Ziggy Poo alums in the coming years."

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Pens JOSHUA A. WEINREICH '82, "Roby and I are building a summer home on Cayuga Lake about a mile from the Pines. Visitors will be welcomed (1011 Taughannock Boulevard)." Josh is global head of Absolute Return Strategies and resides at 123 Hobart Ave., Summit, NJ 07901 (e-mail: josh.weinreich@db.com).

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DECEASED

We regret to report the death of WALTER R. BUERGER '36 on March 20, 2002.