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January 1939

THE ARCHI

Official Exoteric Publication of Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity
MEMBER OF PROFESSIONAL INTERFRATERNITY CONFERENCE

Alpha Rho Chi fraternity was founded at the Universities of Illinois and Michigan on April 11, 1914. It is a social undergraduate fraternity limiting its membership to students of architecture, architectural engineering, landscape architecture, or the allied arts enrolled in the departments leading to a bachelor's degree. The name Alpha Rho Chi is derived from the first five letters in Architecture. The title of the magazine is derived from the same source.

WILLARD E. FRASER, Managing Editor

On Leave in Guatemala

By VERLE L. ANNIS, Theron

It is not always that a second visit improves a first impression, but Guatemala was no disappointment. It was more enjoyable. As weeks lengthened into months I found that its charm never diminished. And as the time approached for my return to the States I discovered that I was violently homesick for GUATEMALA. I hated to leave, and I began even then to plan another return. I only hope that the intervening time will not be too long.

In my first visit to Guatemala in 1934 I had about seven weeks to sample its delightful climate, natural beauties, picturesque life, and historic sites. In planning a second visit for 1938 I knew what I would see, where I wanted to go, and especially what I wanted to do. I thought that approximately six months would be ample time. Now I wish I had allowed myself a year. Probably I still would not have been satisfied.

But I doubt if you would agree with me in my feelings toward Guatemala. And why should I try to sell you the idea? Many visitors to Guatemala have wondered how I could spend more than a week in Antigua. These individuals do not believe me when I say that I found five months in Antigua too brief. It is hard to account for such likes or dislikes. Everyone enjoys a bit of vacation travel through this delightful country but they do not agree in the amount of the doses to be taken. But if you go there I hope that you will enjoy it as I have. In the meantime, perhaps I had better tell you why I was there and what I did.

To start at the beginning I will merely give a few facts. Guatemala is my subject but I need to account for my prolonged absence from Los Angeles and my method of arriving in Antigua. After ten years of work at U. S. C. the administration decided that I might have a sabbatical leave for one semester to follow up my two major hobbies—Colonial Spanish architecture and photography. So in February I packed the lightest bag I could find—it had to be under fifty-five pounds total weight, including nearly twenty pounds of photographic equipment—and boarded a plane for Mexico City.

The flight from Mexico to Guatemala is certainly one of the most magnificent on this continent, an easy hop of but five hours as compared to nearly four days by train. In these few

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OF ALPHA RHO CHI

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hours the plane passes by Ixtaccihuatl and Popocatepetl and over continuous ranges of mountains to the Gulf of Tehuantepec.

After following the coast for a time it swings in through the volcano studded Guatemalan Highlands. The entire geography of this area unrolls beneath the plane like a great relief map. During the months that followed I made four more flights over several parts of the Guatemalan Highlands and to Copan, Honduras. Each furnished their own particular enjoyment, but time will not permit a description of these experiences. I had seen most of this area from the ground on my former visit to Guatemala and the view from the clouds was doubly fascinating as a result. I could recognize the many towns and villages as they came within our broad range of vision. And one of the greatest thrills of my life came and went in the few minutes we circled the rim of Santa Maria volcano which is still decidedly active. To look down into that angry, tumbling mass of smoke in the crater was a sight I shall never forget. And the contrast a few moments later of looking down upon that gorgeously serene body of water, Lake Atitlan, which is also in a crater-like setting, was another unforgettable picture.

After my arrival in Guatemala I immediately established my residence at the pleasant little Hotel Manchen in Antigua. Sr. and Sra. Mann, who own the hotel, were more than hosts. They were friends dating from my former visit. And their flower filled patio is one of the loveliest spots in Central America. Certainly it was no hardship to face five months in such a setting. And I might add that the food was not only plentiful but excellent in quality.

Antigua is unique in the New World. It was one of the three great centers of the Conquest after the year 1524. For several centuries it was only surpassed by two other Spanish Colonial cities—Mexico City and Lima, Peru. In unchanged colonial interest it can be compared only to Cuzco, Peru, and yet it is so different from Cuzco that they are not rivals in my mind. Antigua is but six years younger than Lima, and yet it is the third Capital of Guatemala. It will celebrate its four hundredth anniversary in 1941. But it is unique in the fact that it was almost completely abandoned after the great earthquake of 1773, and as a result remains a perfect example of Colonial Spanish architecture at the climax of its development.

This city had grown large and powerful during its history of more than 230 years. It was the seat of government for all Central America, the headquarters of a long line of Captains-General sent from Spain to rule over this area. It was the home
of many noble families, colonists to the New World, as well as the proud descendants of the Conquistadores. It was a great religious center, nearly sixty ecclesiastical institutions having been founded within its city limits and suburbs. There were eight powerful monasteries, six large convents, and hospitals, schools, and orphanages under the guidance of religious organizations. In addition to the great monastic churches there were numerous other churches, hermitages, chapels and shrines. And, of course, there was a great Cathedral with its adjacent Palace of the Archbishops. The University was second only to the one in Mexico City in age. There were other colleges and seminaries. In every way it was a great Colonial city, having a population of sixty or seventy thousand at the time of the great catastrophe of 1773.

The location of Antigua is unusually beautiful. The site was well chosen in the middle of the fertile Valley of Panchon. On one side the majestic Volcan de Agua rises to about 12,400 feet. And on the other side of the valley are the Volcanos de Fuego and Acatenango of over 13,000 feet. The valley itself is just a little over 5,000 feet above sea level and therefore has a perfect climate for the tropics. It is never hot or cold, and the plants of the temperate zone and the tropics thrive equally well. Antigua is now the center of the coffee culture of Guatemala. The people of Guatemala tell the World that their coffee is the finest grown. It is not hard for me to agree with them.

Beautiful as the volcanoes are, and serene as the setting seems, the history of the valley has been a long series of calamities. Most of the trouble has originated in the Fire Volcano which is still active. Since the Spaniards chose this valley as their capital in 1526 the Volcan de Fuego has erupted fifty-two times, the last time in 1932. It smokes continuously, and earthquakes are frequent. There have been many heavy earthquakes, and the city was badly damaged and restored several times prior to the year 1773. Since that date the city has been left in ruin for the most part. Only a few thousand inhabitants now occupy the site. By order of the King of Spain the Capital was moved about twenty-five miles to the present location of Guatemala City.

In the 165 years since its abandonment Antigua has slowly aged, mellowed, and fallen further into ruin, but it remains a museum of unadulterated Colonial Spanish architecture. Twenty years ago the new Guatemala City was destroyed by earthquake, and rebuilt anew. Antigua remains the one and only magnificent link with the past. If one has any interest in bygone days it would be impossible to elude the charm of this venerable background. Only in Cuzco, Peru, and in Antigua have I felt that I could actually be in contact with the real Colonial period. Here it is tangible and vivid. It isn't necessarily a surface appearance. Many visitors only see piles of stone where monasteries, convents, churches, government palaces and the residences of nobles once stood. And there are more magnificent piles of stone in the Old World, they say. But these are unimaginative souls, I say. I love to read a living history in this debris of the old period. I think archaeologists and architects are privileged to be able to see what others have to be told. Perhaps that is why I liked Antigua, and never tired of it, where the average tourist is bored in a few hours with the sight of but two or three of these ruins.

It is a miracle that these badly damaged buildings have withstood repeated earthquakes, torrential rains, the growth of heavy tropical vegetation, and damage at the hands of humans. Yet many great structures still stand in magnificent dignity, and fair state of preservation. But most of these great buildings would not survive another great earthquake. Many have fallen year by year as it is. Sooner or later the Colonial picture, which can be read now, will be erased. It may be another half century of weathering, or it may be an earthquake of tomorrow. The city was well built and would have stood for many centuries under normal conditions, but with the neglect of man and the ravages of the elements it is fast disappearing now. How I wish I could have seen it fifty years ago!

No record had ever been made of these Colonial buildings in Antigua. When I was there four years ago I decided it would be interesting to start the work. In fact I started it then, but time was limited and I merely took photographs—about two thousand of them. This trip I added nearly four thousand more photographs, many in color, and a considerable footage of color motion pictures as well. But pictures were not enough and I spent a large part of the months from March to the end of July in measuring all that I could of this material. Although I worked alone, or with only the help of an Indian boy, I know that I have the cream of the architectural remains now recorded. There is much more that I would like to add to the collection, and I will do so when I can return, but I am satisfied that I did not waste my time on this trip.

In collecting my material I attempted to get a cross section through the Colonial period. And so my drawings included complete plans of two of the largest monasteries, two convents, the Cathedral and Archbishop's Palace, the University, and a half dozen typical old residences both large and small. Of these plans I might mention that one—San Francisco Monastery—was a building that covered about six acres of ground, or approximately four of Antigua's city blocks. A large portion of this great monastic establishment was two and three stories in height. No plan record exists for any of these large institutions. And the written accounts are meager.

The remainder of my measured drawings included about fifty panelled doors and shutters, wood grilled windows, ceilings, patios, residential details, ironwork and hardware, and a variety of furniture. And, of course, my photographs not only include all these details but hundreds more that I did not have time to measure.

By now you are fed up with my story, but before I stop I must add that it was not all work and no play. In all Latin American countries there are many fiesta days. One can not avoid the spirit of the country, and so I saw many interesting Indian ceremonials, religious processions, and fiestas. Of the religious events the outstanding was the several weeks of pageantry preceding Easter. I was particularly fortunate to have the opportunity to be in Antigua during that period. Then, too, I travelled about over most of the highlands of Guatemala, hunting the scattered Colonial remains and at the same time enjoying the scenic beauties, the picturesque Indian villages, and native markets between work periods in Antigua. On one occasion I joined a group in chartering a special plane to fly over to the Mayan ruins of Copan, Honduras. And, of course, I climbed the Volcan de Agua, an interesting story in itself. But if I started to elaborate on these items of personal interest you would never reach the end. The whole was a grand experience. It had to come to an end, and, though that time arrived too soon, it was properly climaxed by flying back to Los Angeles. Only a day and a half in the air separated scenes that belong two centuries apart.
**ALUMNI NEWS**

**Mnesicles**
*By Wayne Kieff, W. S.*

Active Chapter

From the *Northwest Architect*, where some of the alumni have broken into print and direct from the alumni who seem to be more “active” than the chapter (this month) we find that Fabian Redmond is managing an office recently opened in Madison, Wisconsin which is a branch office of Nairn Fischer of St. Cloud. Hal Fridland is working in a branch of the same office located in St. Paul when he is not purging politicians. Fridland has been a member of the Minnesota State Association of Architects Committee where he investigated contracts let by the state office in Minnesota.

Robert G. Cerny is father to a son, Robert Leon Cerny, who was born on October 26. Junior is named after his father and professor Arnal. Professor and Mrs. Arnal are godfather and godmother respectively. Consequently, he was given an architectural baptism and membership to the A.I.A. (American Institute of Architects). Mnesicles again takes the pleasure of congratulating Mr. Cerny.

Sig Stolte was just appointed second in command in W. P.A. in the state of Minnesota. Sid has always been impressive but now behind an enormous mahogany desk, he looks like the next governor.

Professor Arnal is planning a sabbatical. Portfolios advertising round the world cruises have been seen on his desk. All brothers in China, Bali, India, Greece, etc., take notice!

Russel Williams, who has been working on world fair buildings, has returned from New York. He sputters a great deal about surrealism and big city architecture but gets down to eight hours of work a day with Ellerbe & Co.

Frank Skillman has roamed far from Mnesicles finally settling in the beautiful San Jose valley in California. Frank is in the construction industry but nourishes his architectural background by constructing his own home. Professor Richardson reports that it is the real McCoy with hand hewn timbers and is a real showplace in the valley.

Marvin Johnson is working for William J. Gage in Beverly Hills, California. His business address is 468 North Camden Drive, In Los Angeles, 674 Crenshaw.

Because of unintentional neglect in the November issue of the *ARCHI*, I hereby give mention of the fact that brother Bob Calrow is now an alumnus of Mnesicles. Bob works for the Hutchinson Advertising Co. located at 1000 Hodgson Bldg., Minneapolis, but gets around to our parties at the house.

Brother Tom Frederickson (Mnes. ex.) is now working with Lang and Rangland (correcting the last issue) also in Minneapolis. Arnold I. Rangland is of the 1920 graduating class of Alpha Rho Chi.

**Dinocrates**
*By Clifford James, W. G. E.*

Zeb W. Rike, Jr., '37, and Miss Dorothy Dial Riley were married November 19, 1938 in Saint Mark's Episcopal Church, San Antonio, Texas. Zeb is with an architect in the lower Rio Grande valley.

Karl Kamrath, '34, will move into his new, ultra-modern home soon. He has just completed the new Houston Central Fire Alarm Building, part of the new civic center group. Karl is practicing in Houston.

Harold (Bubi) Jessen, '28, and Charles Millhouse, '30, designed the new Alpha Chi Omega Sorority house at the University of Texas. In early Texas ranch-house style, it will be completed about February, 1939. Bubi is also the architect for three of the new Austin, Texas school buildings.

Dan J. Driscoll, '31, and his partner, Delmar Groos, are designing schools all over Central Texas. They are architects for two of the new Austin school buildings.

J. Roy White, '29, junior partner with H. F. Kuehne, is also designing two of the new Austin school buildings.

Carl H. Stautz, '34, who has just moved into his new home in Austin, has been appointed P. W. A. inspector on several large Central Texas projects.

Paul E. (Pep) Pressler, '32, and Robt. J. (Jim) Hammond, '29, are doing nice work with the Texas State Park Board.

Clifford James, '34, has been made Vice-President of Texans, Inc., a group organized to make the United States more Texas conscious.

**25**

From the Bay City (Mich.) Times

Jefferson City, Mo.—(U.P.)—Proposed Federal flood control dams on Ozark rivers will ruin Missouri’s greatest recreational assets by destroying fishing resources, William Anderson, secretary of the state planning board, has warned.

Anderson said the water resources committee of the planning board agreed that the proposed dams would create problems of sanitation, destroy fish and generally ruin the Ozark area for recreation, one of the few things which “keep the region from being a useless burden to taxpayers.”

“The conservation commission estimated that dams like these in the Ozarks will completely destroy the fishing resources within three years,” Anderson said.

William Anderson is a member of Anthel'mios Chapter, Class of 1933, and has made a very rapid advance in his particular field.

**25**

From Los Angeles comes the well-executed greeting of A. doronicus’ two Carleton Winslows.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM HELEN CARLETON AND CARLETON WINSLOW
CHAPTER NEWS

Anthemios
By Bernard Kinsock

The biggest news item in the house at this date is the forthcoming national convention of Alpha Rho Chi. The delegate from Anthemios is the W. A., Dick Binfield, and it is with anticipation that he awaits the journey to the so-called sunny State of California.

Now back up a couple of months to Homecoming time at Illinois. The football game is passed but that huge silver cup reposing on the center table in our lounge is not passed. By simply building a bigger and better homecoming decoration, Alpha Rho Chi captured the Kiwanis cup, presented annually to that organized house with the winning decoration, and it became a threetime winner of the cup and the only house to have ever annexed the cup more than once. The decoration itself stood some twenty-five feet in height and stretched out for forty feet in width. It used an heroic sized figure of Chief Illiniwek, the Indian symbol of Illinois, as the central feature. Incorporated in the design was a fountain and cascade which was surprisingly successful though it did threaten to wash us out of Champaign when our sump failed to keep up with the drainage.

To return to news of the day. News of tomorrow in fact for on the morrow Anthemos of Alpha Rho Chi is presenting in the magnificent splendor of its annual Beaux Arts Ball—"A Revel in The City of Sultans." Together with the chosen women of their court the architects, costumed in every drapery in the house, will wine and dine in true oriental manner—on the floor—with oriental food heaped before them, and surrounded by all the glamour and grandeur that is symbolical of the East. Entertainment will be by the Chief Sultan's personal dancing girls. Then for three hours of dancing amid the draperies and decorations, oriental rugs and more drapes. Allah!

Gargoyles have again reached into the ranks of Alpha Rho Chi to honor students in Architecture. They have singled out for merit Russ Amdal, W. E., Don Honn and Don Grieb. This makes a total of seven Gargoyles men in the house.

This morning brought a surprise visit from Johnny Combs, Andronicus alum. With two traveling companions, Johnny is on his way back to California after sojourn in Europe for five months and just slipped in on us for dinner. A brief but pleasant visit ensued.

Andronicus
By James W. Rice

Just at present all of us here at Andronicus are thinking about the convention. We are expecting it to be a big event in the Fraternity's history and hope it will have proved so by the time this article is published. At least we are determined to see that the delegates enjoy themselves.

The biggest and best news at S. C. this semester has been about our Rose Bowl bound Trojan football team. Following the season opener against Alabama (S. C.—7 Alabama—19) hopes around the campus were pretty low, but after skinning the California Bear and burying the U. C. L. A. Bruin we rather think that we have the best team in the country. At least we expect it to be good enough to take Duke on January 2nd.

The homecoming decoration here at Andronicus was not as fortunate as last year's and as a result we have no gold cup to show for our work. This year's decoration was a pair of beautiful Greek Doric columns about 16 feet high, crowned with a broken entablature, and set on a raised platform. Between the columns was an eternal flame burning in a copper urn. Probably the idea was too architectural for the layman minds of the jury.

Along the athletic line Alpha Rho Chi has been steadily rising in the interfraternity bowling league. Starting at the bottom we have now climbed into a three way tie for fifth place with sixteen houses competing in the league and several weeks yet to go.

Demetrios
By Bill Rule

The homecoming celebration was quite a success for us this year.

The theme of our decorations was a huge dragon that covered the entire front of the house. The "skin" of the dragon, or "Scarlet Scourage," was made of about 250 yards of unbleached muslin that had to be dyed. Many a weary hour was spent over a boiling tub of a rather anemic pink dye. But with the aid of a battery of study lamps with red bulbs and with green eyes and with streamers blowing out of the nostrils the monster didn't look so bad—we thought. Anyway we won first place for homecoming decorations.

Two radio dances were held during the Fall Quarter with Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Schramm and Mr. and Mrs. Chas. McGruder as chaperons. The ideal chaperons have been found at last and a good time was had by all.

Tom Hardman is our delegate to the Convention this year. Thank goodness for railroad passes. We hope that the Convention is a big success and that they all have a good time.

Mnesicles
By Wayne Kieff

Conventions are always indications of progress whether they be Pan-American or Alpha Rho Chi. With our hands in our pockets and our thoughts on the west coast, we of Mnesicles are looking forward to an important event on the shores of the Pacific. It is unfortunate that we cannot all meet out there in California; however, brother Gene Flynn is representing our chapter here in Minneapolis.

In order that we can become better acquainted with the faculty of the school of architecture we have arranged faculty lunches at the house every week. I see very clearly that I made a mistake in having a 12:30 class every Thursday during the fall quarter as everyone enjoyed these informal gatherings.

Mnesicles is planning for initiation during the winter quarter which will take place immediately following the first major problem. Brother Fred Segerstrom, the rushing chairman, has conducted a successful campaign and by that time we expect a large pledge class.

Now that the term is about over and examinations are upon us there is less bridge playing and so forth around and about, but by next Saturday night those who are still around can cut loose again.