

# Theta Tradition Returns

## Beta Eta

When Beta Eta Chapter was re-installed at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, the new members each had their own way of expressing the "true worth and merit of Kappa Alpha Theta."

"When I look back on college, the first thing that will come to my mind is Theta because Theta represents college to me," said one Beta Eta member.

"I helped start the original group, that is now Theta, and I'm really proud of it. Theta is very close to my heart, and its memories will be with me for a lifetime," commented one of the two women who pioneered a local organization into the new Theta chapter.

Others commented: "It's a main focus for me for a lot of reasons, in a lot of ways."

"It's a network of close friends."

"A place I turn if I need someone to listen."

The women who voiced these thoughts began learning about the significance of being a Theta when they pledged in November 1987. But that wasn't the beginning of Beta Eta Chapter.

The original Beta Eta Chapter was founded in 1919 at Penn, but because of lagging membership, ended its stay in 1970. The chapter got a fresh start 18 years later with 61 charter members and 31 new pledges.

The re-established Beta Eta Chapter's charter members were originally part of a group called Nu Delta, which was founded by Laura Carriker and Toria Emery during their freshman year at Penn. Nu Delta was founded as an alternative to sorority life; the group had no national aid and was considered more of a social club—an answer to men's fraternities.

Carriker and Emery are now seniors. They were able to watch

Nu Delta grow from its original 20 members to the final count of 72 before becoming a Theta chapter.

"Fraternities had the bonding and spirit that wasn't available to women who didn't want to join a sorority. When I look back on Nu Delta, I get the feeling that we created something new for people who were such individuals and who had so much to add to a group. Nu Delta was an outlet for their talents and individuality," says Emery. "I'm excited about Theta because it meshed so well with Nu Delta's values and because we know there is a place for us always at Penn."

After Nu Delta accepted Theta's bid to become a chapter, members began pledging November 19 at Penn Towers, a hotel near campus. Some of the fondest memories sisters hold are of that evening when they were initially introduced to the strength of Theta sisterhood.

After the three months of pledging ended, the chapter was installed February 26. The weekend began with the Loyalty Service, at which the chapter received many special gifts from alumnae, and the idea of

Theta became much more real to the members.

Saturday morning 72 women were initiated into Beta Eta Chapter.

"I remember walking to the Faculty Club and passing sisters who had just experienced the ceremony, and they could do nothing but smile and admit that initiation was amazing," says Beta Eta member Alexandra Heyman.

That evening at the charter service, the newly initiated members of Beta Eta signed the chapter's charter. Then, they were off to the banquet, where family and friends, as well as some very special Thetas awaited their arrival.

The chapter was very honored to have enjoyed the presence of Grand President Sue Supple, Grand Vice President College Helen Woodward, Grand Vice President Finance Sue Blair-Sheets, College District President Ann Varey, Alumnae District President Lyn Simensen, Music Director Joyce Ann Vitelli, Associate Executive Director Nancy Frick, Director of Chapter Services Betsy Sierk and Chapter Consultants Kelley Galbreath and Amy Hayner. Special thanks go to the Thetas from Epsilon Xi Chapter at Villanova and other chapters, and especially to Amy Hayner, without whose help the chapter could not have made it.

"We established ourselves as a very strong and positive force at Penn," comments Heyman. "In a school of 9,000 undergraduates, I can honestly say that Theta is a very real entity to many, if not most, of the students."

Grand Vice President Finance Sue Blair-Sheets (now GVP Development) welcomes Beta Eta charter members to Kappa Alpha Theta. A local group, Nu Delta, accepted Theta's invitation to become the reestablished Beta Eta Chapter in November, 1987.

