



Theta Arrives At Florida

by **Barbara Erickson Hoehn**
Alpha Psi, Lawrence

◆ What better place for another brand new and wonderful Theta chapter to bloom than on the beautiful and fast growing campus of the University of Florida at Gainesville! On April 28, 1962, Delta Theta chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta, our 87th, was officially installed.

In picturesque surroundings of enormous pine, oak, and dogwood trees, the University of Florida, founded in 1853, now numbers 14,000 students and its physical facilities have more than kept pace with its rapidly expanding population. Ranging from law and engineering to agriculture, its departments are excellent and varied, and the school has acquired an especially fine reputation for its modern teaching hospital.

Under the strong leadership of Claire Williams Stryker, Beta Nu, Florida, installation chairman and active member of the Gainesville Alumnae Club, preparations for the new chapter were under way for months before the arrival of our two outstanding colonizers, Julia Freeman, who transferred to the University of Florida from Gamma Deuteron at Ohio Wesleyan and Sue Waite, from Alpha Omega, University of Pittsburgh. Our hardworking Advisory Board consisted of Betsy Stephens Schnell, Beta Iota, Colorado; Bette McKee

Eggert, Alpha Mu, Missouri; Louise Voelker Roberts, Alpha Theta, Texas; Ann Chillingworth Wright, Ann Laird Spain, Jane Shropshire Taylor, Beta Nu; Ginny Koch Nagle, Rho, Nebraska; and Claire Stryker, with Louise Davitt Summerlin, Beta Nu, as chairman.

And from Florida State at Tallahassee came 35 willing and enthusiastic Beta Nu Thetas, who assisted ably in rushing during the weekend of October 13-15, 1961. Gainesville alums took over as big sisters for the new pledges at the luncheon and pledging on October 15.

Less than two weeks later, our pledges pleased us all but surprised no one when they carried off first prize with their clever Homecoming float. In February, under the leadership of the House Corporation, headed by Lula May Brandt, Beta Epsilon, Oregon State, our alumnae worked diligently on redecorating and furnishing a house to serve as a temporary lodge for the new chapter. Other members of the House Corporation were Christa Sykes, Mary N. Gibson Reeves, Alpha Theta, Texas; Janet Little Rodeheaver, Greta Sims Clark, Virginia Baxley Whidden, Beta Nu; Barbara Stevenson Probert, Alpha Xi, Oregon; and Marian Ruff Sheehan, Alpha Tau, Cincinnati.



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Workers behind the scenes and in front, too, were (to left) "Flivver" Little and Claire Stryker, Grand Council and local installation chairmen; (to right) Helen Schupp, CDP XI, and Florence Wylie, Grand Council member in charge of rushing program.



◀ Two weeks after pledging on the University of Florida campus, the Thetas walked off with top sorority Homecoming honors with this float, a black and gold modern interpretation of space. Riding in the lead car, as though epitomizing Theta's successful entry into sorority life at Florida, are the Theta colonizers, Sue Waite (l.) and Julia Freeman.

The busy months flew by so fast that before we knew it installation weekend was upon us. And what an exciting and thrilling weekend it was for the new chapter and all Gainesville alums! We welcomed Hazel Lease, Virginia Edwards, Florence Wylie, and "Flivver" Little from Grand Council; Dorothy Vaaler from Central Office; Helen Schupp, our district president from Atlanta; and Jean Bechtolt, alumnae district president from Miami. "Flivver" was the able Council installation chairman while Florence Wylie conducted our most successful rush in October.

Activities for the weekend began on April 27, with the Loyalty Service at the home of Bette Eggert, followed by an open house at the Theta Lodge, with Gainesville Mothers' Club members as hostesses. On the following day, 25 girls had the honor of being initiated by our Grand President, Hazel Lease. Attending the banquet that evening were many notables of the University, including Doctor J. Wayne Reitz, president, and Mrs. Reitz, dean of women, Marna Brady, an Alpha Tau Theta, and Vice President and Mrs. Harry Philpot (Polly Morgan, Iota, Cornell). The evening's activities were climaxed with the charter presentation ceremony, Hazel Lease presiding.

On Sunday morning, new initiates attended church as a group and in the afternoon, a tea in honor of new actives, visiting alumnae, and friends, was held at the home of Louise Roberts. Installation officers assisting Claire Stryker as chairman were Bette Eggert, Louise Roberts, Betsy Schnell, Ann Spain, Mary N. Reeves, Barbara Erickson Hoehn, Alpha Psi, Lawrence, Nancy Wehner, Beta Nu, Janet Rodeheaver, and Marian Sheehan.

A big "thank you" goes to Gamma Gamma of Rollins, who traveled up the state from Winter Park to assist with the initiation and with all of the weekend's activities.

Delta Theta's installation brought these people together: Above, Grand President Hazel Lease reviews events of the weekend with new actives Virginia Sims, Margaret Chandler, Rosemary Francis. Below, Nancy Wehner, president of the Gainesville Alumnae Club, shores initiation excitement with Marjorie Carr, Meredith Johnson, Susan Ballard.

Charter members of Delta Theta are:

All from Florida: April W. Blassingame, Anna Maria; Nancy K. Huff, Ann H. Lewis, Linda Ann Reed, Fort Lauderdale; Mary Susan E. Ballard, Margaret S. Chandler, Rosemary S. Francis, Meredith H. Johnson, Virginia L. Sims, Gainesville; Judith Ann Smith, Lake Worth; Linda J. Schmidt, Maitland; Marie Annette Alexander, Kathleen S. O'Donnell, Miami; Marjorie Carr, Micanopy; Lynn Madison, Orlando; Carolyn Coll, Pompano Beach; Penny C. Johnson, Rockledge; Molly Mazey O'Neill, Sarasota; Sally Woodward Moore, Windermere; Helen K. Wobie, Winter Park. Also, Kathleen M. Durham, Fort Benning, Ga.; Jane M. Weitekamp, Madison, Wis.; Lois K. Harvey, Raleigh, N.C.; Diana D. Behm, Seattle; Norma Irene Curry, Smyrna, Ga.

Julia Freeman, colonizer, current chapter president, is serving as counselor as well.

If the first year on campus is any indication of years to come, Delta Theta will fast make its mark at the University of Florida. Merri Johnson has had her name engraved on our scholarship plaque, and Molly O'Neill, Linda Schmidt, and Judy Smith were elected to Alpha Lambda Delta, with Judy being elected treasurer. Molly O'Neill was elected treasurer of Women's Students Association. The Delta Thetas have collected cups from the Homecoming parade float, the Sigma Chi Derby, the Gator Gras, the Theta Chi Court, and Kappa Alpha Weekend. A very good start!

