



*Jefferson designed area of campus provides historical overtones to modern educational facility.
Photo by Ed Roseberry.*

THETA COMES TO VIRGINIA

By Tori Butler and Lynn Yerges

Thomas Jefferson's dream of an academic village was realized in 1819 with the founding of the University of Virginia. The original buildings that he designed are still in use and remain the center of University activities. The beautiful and historic features of the campus combined with the fine academic reputation have long attracted both men and women. Although Jefferson intended the school to remain small and to be exclusively for men, it has since changed in both aspects. With the admission of women in 1970, the total student enrollment has now reached 14,000.

The fraternity system has existed at the University for over one hundred years, and so sorority development seems natural. The Greek system now consists of thirty-six fraternities and seven sororities. The recolonization of Zeta Tau Alpha in 1974, marked the beginning of sorority growth at Virginia. Shortly thereafter Pi Beta Phi was colonized, (April, 1975), followed by Delta Delta Delta (September, 1975), Kappa Alpha Theta installed in April 1976, and Kappa Gamma, a colony of Kappa Kappa Gamma is to be installed in November, 1976. In addition, there are two black service sororities which were both founded in 1973, Delta Sigma Theta and Alpha Kappa Alpha. Five years ago, sororities were rejected by both men and women as an idea foreign to Jefferson's concept of an academic village. But the women's recent positive response to them has proved that student trends and needs do change; furthermore the men have also acknowledged the virtues of sororities. At first, men were as strongly opposed to having sororities as they had been to having women admitted to the University. However, many now realize the benefits of sororities and have become supportive.

With the help from local Charlottesville alumnae, the first twelve girls were pledged to Kappa Alpha Theta in April, 1975. At the same time, Tori Butler was selected by Grand Council to be the resident counselor for the new colony. A 1974 graduate of Albion College, she came to Virginia in August with officer experience from Pi chapter, a year's work as treasurer of her Corporation Board, and summer training at Leadership Conference. With her guidance and the sorority apartment as the meeting place, a great deal of time and effort was put into internal organization and increasing membership. By January and the completion of formal rush, the original colony had nearly tripled in size. During the remainder of the year, the girls became involved with university and community projects. There is little doubt that the highlight of the year was initiation and installation in April when the pledges became members of Delta Chi chapter.



Delta Chi Colony pledges have become charter members of Kappa Alpha Theta at the University of Virginia.

Members of Delta Chi include three legacies: Marinda Elliott, from Dallas whose twin sister is a Theta at Sophie Newcomb; Sissy Best, also from Dallas, whose sister pledged Theta at Vanderbilt; and Margot Kepper, from New Orleans, whose mother, Adrienne Earrell Kepper was a Theta at Sophie Newcomb. Other members and their hometowns are: Mary Bear, Charlottesville, VA; Claudia Beebe, Muncie, IN; Barbara Bernard, McLean, VA; Anne Colmery, Jacksonville, FL; Jan deRegt, Alexandria, VA; Mary Jo Freeman, Nashville, TN; Mary Gambel, New Orleans; Jean Hudson, Susan Novak, Betsy Woefel, Philadelphia; Frances Humphreys, Charleston, SC; Meg Jemison, Terry Maguire, Memphis; Anne Macon, Andy and Kimbel Price, and Terri Vetter, Richmond, VA; Anne Palasthy, Martinsville, VA; Lynn Peddy, Baltimore; Carla Peyton, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Susan Pierson, West Orange, NJ; Margaret Sawyer, Lynchburg, VA; Betsy Vandeventer, Virginia Beach, VA; Betty Waring, Dunnsville, VA; Ellen Witscher and Lynn Yerges, St. Louis.



A provision of Kappa Alpha Theta membership eligibility regulations which permits, with Grand Council approval, the initiation of local townswomen who are college women, gained for Delta Chi two outstanding alumnae members at the time of the chapter installation. Both women have strong and direct Theta ties.

We know of no precedent for the mother of a Theta becoming a member as an alumnae initiate, but perhaps Delta Chi has set an example for the future. Mrs. George Spence of Charlottesville is the mother of Sallie Spence, an undergraduate member of Alpha Eta at Vanderbilt. Ann Spence could be our first reverse legacy.

Eddie Hofstead Cabaniss (Mrs. Robert) of Richmond who attended a college where there are no sororities, was also initiated as a charter member of Delta Chi. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Hofstead of Nashville and her mother, Ellen Bowers Hofstead, is Theta's NPC Delegate and former Grand President.



At right, Tori Butler, Delta Chi's Resident Counselor.