

*Would you please tell me more about the Founders lives?* To celebrate Founders Day 2007, I'm pleased to share this information about the women who founded Kappa Kappa Gamma. It was researched and drafted by Virginia Anding La Charité, *William and Mary*, Fraternity History Chairman 1984-1990. Dr. La Charité is a retired professor emerita of contemporary French studies at University of Kentucky and a 1990 Kappa Kappa Gamma Alumnae Achievement Award recipient. She served as chapter adviser and a House Board member for the William and Mary, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Kentucky chapters as well as Nu Province Director of Chapters 1974-79.

Louise Lauder Roos, *Monmouth*, has done additional research and verified the information. She has lived in Monmouth most of her life. She has been an active member of both the Alpha Deuteron Advisory and House Boards, the Monmouth Alumnae Association, The Stewart House Foundation and now serves as a member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma Foundation Museums Committee.

We hope this in depth research will help you learn more about our Founders and the history of the early years of our Fraternity. May you find this resource useful today and in the future.

## **Founding and Early Years of Kappa Kappa Gamma**

- 1869: First pow-wow was held in A.B.L.Hall of Old Main on the Monmouth College Campus. Lou Bennett, Jennie Boyd and Minnie Stewart were in attendance. Later Anna Willits was added, making a group of four.
- March 1870: Sue Walker was added to the original group.
- April 1870: Lou Stevenson was initiated.
- April/May 1870: Four of the six members signed the charter in the parlor of Minnie Stewart's home.
- October 13, 1870: Six members identified as wearing golden keys appeared in Monmouth College Chapel.
- 1930 General Convention declared all six women the Fraternity Founders.

These six women laid the foundation of Kappa Kappa Gamma. They determined the name, the motto, the badge and the oath of membership. They selected the colors, wrote the first *Constitution, Bylaws* and the charter. They served as the first officers, conducted the first rush (recruitment) and the first initiation, held the first social, began the Fraternity extension program and processed the first dismissal.

## **KAPPA'S FIRST LISTED MEMBER.....ALPHA 1.... Lou (Mary Louise) Bennett (Boyd)**

From the beginning, initiated members of the Fraternity have been listed by the chapter Greek name and the chronological order in which the member was initiated.

Family: Born May 25, 1852, in Pittsburgh, Pa. Guardian was her uncle, Dr. Alexander Young, professor of Greek & Hebrew at Monmouth College; her home is now the site of the Monmouth College Admissions/College Relations Building. (Lou's guardian, Dr. Alexander Young, owned the property in 1870 that was later subdivided and sold to John Burroughs Brown, who built the Tudor-style house that stands there today.

Education & Career: Entered Monmouth College in 1868; was active in A.B.L. (Amateur des Belles Lettres) Literary Society as a debater; received her AB-AM from Monmouth College in 1872. She became a teacher.

Kappa Record: One of the four original organizers who began as early as 1869 and signed the charter in the Spring 1870. She has always been listed as Alpha 1, the first name on the permanent Fraternity roll of membership. Co-

founder with Minnie Stewart of the second chapter, Beta, *St. Mary's Seminary*, Knoxville, Ill., 1871, which marks the beginning of the Fraternity extension program; first Kappa rush (recruitment) captain. She attended the Alpha reinstatement in 1934. Dedicated to her are *The History of Kappa Kappa Gamma Fraternity 1870-1930* and the Boyd Hearthstone, 1938. She is credited with the phrase that “the Fraternity was the mighty oak that sprang from the little acorn of Alpha.”

Personal Data: Described as “helpful.” Married Rev. M. Joseph Newton Boyd in 1876, brother of Founder Jennie Boyd. Widowed in 1932. No children. She lived in Jacksonville, Fla. Assisted with efforts to reconstruct the Alpha history. She died January 17, 1947, at age 95. She was the longest surviving Founder. She is buried with her husband and Jennie Boyd, her sister-in-law, in Hickory Grove Cemetery, Green Cove Springs, Fla.

### **KAPPA'S FIRST SCRIBE.....Jennie (Hannah Jeannette) Boyd**

Family: Born December 20, 1849, in Pennsylvania. Her home was a large farmstead in Monmouth on 12<sup>th</sup> St. N. (off Broadway, near Highway 34).

Education & Career: Entered Monmouth College in 1868. She was active in A.B.L. Literary Society; received an AB-AM from Monmouth College in 1872. She was the first Kappa career woman. She was a teacher in the East Ward School in Monmouth 1874-75. She taught for many years in the Omaha and Kansas public schools.

Kappa Record: Oldest Founder (age 20); one of the four organizers in late 1869. She is listed as Alpha 2 and signed the charter in the Spring 1870. She was the first Alpha Scribe in 1870 and presided over the first Alpha business meeting, which made the badge orders in the Spring 1870. She was the first Grand Secretary of Kappa Kappa Gamma in 1871. She is credited with selecting the colors, blue and blue, and the statement: “How rich we are in daughters.”

Personal Data: Described as the “balance wheel” of the group with “executive ability...a keen and analytical mind” and considered a major force in the early planning of Alpha. Her brother, Rev. Joseph Newton Boyd, married Founder Lou Bennett. Jennie never married. Two nieces, Helen Boyd Whiteman and Katherine Boyd Graham, were initiated as alumnae by Alpha Deuteron in 1934 when Alpha Chapter was reinstated. The event was attended by her sister-in-law, Founder Lou Bennett Boyd. Jennie died in September 26, 1937, in Jacksonville, Fla. She is buried next to Lou Bennett Boyd in Hickory Grove Cemetery, Green Cove Springs, Fla.

Note: Lou Bennett maintained that Minnie Stewart, first president of Alpha Chapter, did not make the trip to Bloomington, Ind., to found Delta Chapter and that only Jennie Boyd as Scribe went. The Fraternity history states that a group of young women at Indiana University petitioned Alpha in the Fall 1872. All arrangements for the initiation were made by correspondence, but the first business meeting of Delta did not take place until January 2, 1873, which is the first date in the Delta Red Book. As the first Kappa Kappa Gamma secretary, it is probable that Jennie Boyd was the one in contact with the Founders of Delta Chapter and it is possible that she did visit sometime that year. There are no records of the Fraternity before January 1873 (Delta Red Book). Delta tradition maintains that no member of Alpha came for the initiation, but there is no statement to the effect that no member of Alpha visited during the formative fall months 1872.

Lou Bennett's recollection of Jennie Boyd's visit refers to Delta as the second chapter. At the time of her remarks, the original Beta and Gamma Chapters no longer existed. It is interesting how Lou's mind continued to view extension from the perspective of 1870, that is, by chapters that were still in existence. Therefore, in this early Alpha view, Delta, *Indiana*, is the second chapter.

Lou Bennett and Minnie Stewart went to found Beta. Gamma was founded by an initiated member of Alpha, Minnie Kendall, initiated November 16, 1871, who then transferred to Smithson College (Logansport, Ind.). It is logical that a member of Alpha went to Bloomington, Ind., at some point and it was probably Jennie Boyd. Epsilon, *Illinois Wesleyan*, the fifth chapter, was founded by Millie Clark, pledged for the sole purpose of founding Epsilon. Fraternity extension always took the form of personal contact.

## **KAPPA'S FIRST SOCIAL CHAIRMAN.....Lou (Martha Louisa) Stevenson (Miller)**

Family: Born September 23, 1854, in Peoria, Ill. Daughter of a wealthy family, originally from Tarkio, Mo.: Joseph Stevenson and Mary Jane Patton; home at 120 North C St. in Monmouth is still standing.

Education: Attended Monmouth Academy, 1869-71. Entered Monmouth College as sub-freshman 1871; received BS 1874. Member A.B.L. Literary Society.

Kappa Record: Officially listed as Alpha 6, the sixth member added to the original group at Kappa's first formal initiation that took place at Sue Walker's home with Minnie Stewart presiding (April 1, 1870). First Alpha business meeting to discuss the badge and select a jeweler was held in Lou Stevenson's home. She did not sign the charter because she had lost her galoshes and it was a rainy night. First Alpha social ("real party") took place in her home on Halloween 1872. The parlor had folding doors that could be closed to safeguard the secrets. She attended three Kappa Conventions (1930, 1932, 1936) and the reinstallation of Alpha in 1934. She was actively involved in Fraternity research about Alpha. She was a member of Kansas City Alumnae Association, which gave her a ruby and diamond badge that had belonged to Bertha Starr McIntire, a founder of Omega Chapter, Kansas.

She gave the Fraternity the furniture used in her home for the first formal Kappa Kappa Gamma meeting 1870, including the table on which the first minutes were written and the chair in which First Scribe Jennie Boyd sat. These two pieces are on exhibit in the Morning Room at the Fraternity's Heritage Museum at Headquarters. She also furnished one bedroom and much of the dining room at the Boyd Hearthstone in 1938. Her autograph book is the only document from the early Alpha Chapter years. It lists the first member dismissed from Kappa Kappa Gamma, initiated with Lou on April 1, 1870, and dismissed shortly thereafter.

Personal Data: Married William Oliver Miller in 1874. Her husband was a member of Phi Delta Theta and a founder of Tarkio College, Mo. They had three sons and one daughter. Niece Annabelle Stevenson McClanahan and Cousin Louise M. Patton were initiated as alumnae by Alpha Deuteron in 1934. She died on December 3, 1937, in Kansas City, Mo., and is buried in Tarkio, Mo.

Note: Lou always insisted that there were 12 members who appeared in chapel on October 13, 1870. There were six members at the first business meeting although the group had seven members at the time; the seventh may have been the one who was dismissed. Six members were immediately added to the group because the jeweler insisted that the order be for 12 badges.

According to Lou, Minnie Stewart and Sue Walker had the first idea for a women's fraternity in Summer 1869. These two then asked Lou Bennett and Jennie Boyd to join them and in turn, they asked Anna Willits to join.

Lou's letters and autograph book differ from the recollections of other Founders. Still, her autograph book, *Album of Memory*, is the only written document of and from the early Alpha Chapter's years. It contains on the inside back cover a listing of the first members of Alpha. It is now on loan from Alpha Deuteron Chapter to The Stewart House, where it is on exhibit.

## **KAPPA'S FIRST PRESIDENT.....Minnie (Mary Moore) Stewart (Nelson, Field)**

Family: Born October 19, 1852, in Oquawka, Ill. Parents were Isabella C. and James H. Stewart, a prominent lawyer, county lawyer and early acquaintance and supporter of Abraham Lincoln. Moved to Monmouth in 1861 and built their home across from Monmouth College at 1015 Euclid.

Education & Career: Graduated from Monmouth Academy 1869; entered Monmouth College, 1869; active in A.B.L. Literary Society as reciter; received AB, 1872. Teacher in Monmouth public schools 1882-89; high school principal in Eustis, Fla., 1890-93.

Kappa Record: Originated the idea of KΚΓ in 1869 after leading suffragette, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, visited Monmouth. She became an honorary member of I.C. Sororis (later Pi Beta Phi). Invited Lou Bennett, Jennie Boyd, and Anna Willits to organize what she thought was the first Greek fraternity for women. Listed on Fraternity rolls as Alpha 3. Home was the site of many early meetings, especially for writing the first constitution and signing the charter Spring 1870. Said to have selected the iris as the official flower. Presided over the first KΚΓ initiation. First KΚΓ President and first KΚΓ Grand President, 1870-72 (Alpha was Grand Chapter 1870-75). First extension chairman: co-founded Beta, *St. Mary's School* (Knoxville, Ill.), 1871. Alpha delegate to 1882 Convention (Madison, Wis.). Signed with two others the 1883 letter to Monmouth College stating that Alpha was an alumna chapter only.

Personal Data: Described as popular, having “sunny, warm-hearted disposition”; enjoyed singing and painting. Married first William W. Nelson in 1873 and had two children: Harvey, 1873, was the first Kappa baby, given a silver cup engraved “Kappa” by Alpha (cup is on loan from Alpha Deuteron Chapter to The Stewart House, where it is on display); Isabella, 1875; both children died in 1881, five months apart; divorced in 1878; married second Lucius A. Field in 1889; no children. Brother, William, graduated from Monmouth College (AM 1863, AB 1867) and was member of Delta Tau Delta. Younger sister, Lucretia (Crissie), initiated by Alpha, December 1877, as sub-freshman, age 15, after Monmouth College banned Greek fraternities; died 1878, probably of typhoid fever. Older sister, Isabella (Belle), received AB 1869 from Monmouth College; initiated at age 80 by Gamma XI, *UCLA*, October 25, 1930, as the last KKG honorary member, so voted by the 1930 Convention; letter of August 18, 1928, states that she helped Minnie with details of KΚΓ, including creation of the motto because Minnie was too busy studying. Minnie spent her final six months trying to trace and locate all members of Alpha for Fraternity historical records. Died June 21, 1898, Cincinnati, Ohio; buried in Stewart family plot with her two children in Monmouth Cemetery on September 21, 1898; tombstone reads, “If I am bereft of my children! I am bereft.”

Note: Minnie maintained that the first KΚΓ Convention was held in Monmouth in 1871, an assertion disputed by two other Founders but supported by Ida Woodburn McMillan, charter member of Delta, *Indiana*, 1872, and organizer in 1900 in Monmouth of the local Kappa Alpha Sigma, which in 1934 became Alpha Deuteron Chapter.

The Stewart House in Monmouth was purchased in 1989 from the estate of Mary Huff, a member of Pi Beta Phi and great-niece of Minnie Stewart, by Kappas throughout the Fraternity. As the Fraternity Founders had been leaders, alumnae of Alpha Deuteron Chapter took the lead in raising enough money to purchase the house, established The Stewart House Foundation, applied for and received approval, which placed the property on the National Historic Register. In 2000, The Stewart House Foundation merged with the Kappa Kappa Gamma Foundation.

### **KAPPA'S FIRST ALUMNA..... Sue (Susan Burley) Walker (Vincent)**

Family: Born June 27, 1855, in Virginia. Her family moved to Monmouth in 1863; home was on the corner of Broadway and North C Street. Parents were William Walker, M.D., and Elizabeth Burley.

Education: Attended Monmouth College 1870-71, most likely as a sub-freshman; only Founder to follow the scientific course of study instead of the classical course.

Kappa Record: Youngest Founder (age 14); the first member added to the group of the original four organizers March 1870; listed as Alpha 5. Unable to sign the charter because her mother was giving a formal dinner party and she was needed at home to help. First Alpha initiation held in her home (April 1, 1870).

Personal Data: Considered “the beauty” of the first Alphas. Married in 1876 Rev. Alvan Stuart Vincent. Had two daughters and one son; remembered for playing “The Kappa Waltz,” written and published by S. H. Price, a member

of the Monmouth College Music Department, 1873. First Founder to die: May 1, 1897, age 42; buried in the Monmouth Cemetery.

Note: Fraternity history contains the least information on Sue. Josie Thompson (Brown), who was Anna Willits's cousin, initiated at Sue Walker's home (January 1871), also seems to have left college in 1871 and could possibly share the distinction with Sue of being the first **ΚΚΓ** alumna. Monmouth College records show no trace of Josie as a student, but do show that Sue left in 1871. Josie's obituary states that she married soon after she left college; she married Rev. Isaac Brown in 1872; if 1872 is also the date she left Monmouth, then Sue is indeed the first alumna member. Sue was the only Founder who did not receive her college degree. All Fraternity histories agree that she is the first alumna.

Of the six Founders, only Lou Stevenson was formally initiated into membership. Before that, Anna Willits and then Sue Walker were only asked to join.

### **KAPPA'S FIRST BADGE....Anna (Elizabeth) Willits (Pattee)**

Family: Born May 22, 1853, in Monmouth Ill. Daughter of Judge Elias Willits and Elizabeth Fish. Willits home is said to have been at the corner of South D St. and West 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Pattee home was at 316 E. Broadway.

Education: Attended Monmouth Academy; entered Monmouth College in 1870; received AB-AM degree 1874; member of A.B.L. Literary Society.

Kappa Record: Founder as a sub-freshman, one of the original four organizers and listed as Alpha 4; signed the charter in 1870. Many early meetings were held in her home, where the design of the badge was determined: golden key with the Greek letters **ΚΚΓ** and **ΑΩΟ**; legend is that her mother helped the Founders select a proper sort of pin and suggested a key "for a key usually stands for something secret." Anna later confirmed the fact that her mother had suggested the use of a key for the badge, but that the Founders actually designed it, including the placement of the two sets of Greek letters. Was an adviser to the local sorority Kappa Alpha Sigma formed at Monmouth College in 1900 (KAΣ became Alpha Deuteron Chapter in 1934). Her badge is the only known original key in existence.

Personal Data: Known for sociability, hospitality, and community service; member Monmouth Board of Education and P.E.O. Lifelong resident of Monmouth. Married in 1881 Henry Howard Pattee, prominent businessman. Son: Allan. Granddaughter Frances Pattee was initiated with her badge when Alpha was reestablished 1934. Died August 11, 1908, in Chicago, Ill., following surgery; buried in Pattee family plot, Monmouth Cemetery.

Note: It is a Fraternity oddity that only Anna's badge out of an order of 12 (Spring 1870) has been found. It seems to have been a practice among the first Alphas to pass their badges to new members. Jennie Boyd and Lou Stevenson were given new badges by alumnae associations. Minnie Stewart went to three Conventions and must have worn a key; it is possible that her younger sister Crissie (Lucretia) was initiated with her badge (December 1877). The Alpha badges of Margaret Pogue (March 1871) and Anna Armsby (Fall 1874) were used at the 1934 installation and described in *The Key* as being part of the original order of 12 keys; also used was the key that belonged to Carolyn (Carrie) Smith (Fall 1872) and it could easily be an original. The badges worn by the presidents of the Monmouth, Ill., and Peoria, Ill., **ΚΚΓ** Alumnae Associations seem to be original; the Monmouth one has the name "Alice" on the back and must have belonged to Alice Pillsbury (September 1871). The Peoria badge has no name on the back. It is not known when it became a practice to have a name engraved on the back.

Of interest is the fact that the Founders of I.C. Sorosis (Pi Beta Phi) also had to order 12 badges, so they promptly added two more members. Accordingly, they delayed their first public appearance in the Monmouth College Chapel until the pins arrived, but only 11 of the original 12 appeared in chapel in April 1867. At some point, the first I.C.s (Alphas of **ΠΒΦ**) also began to have their names engraved on the back of the badge.

The “Ivories,” reproductions of the Founders taken from small oil portraits and hand-painted on ivory, are on loan from Alpha Deuteron Chapter to The Stewart House and contain what is supposedly Georgie Pillsbury’s key. It is said to be an original, but there is no name on the back. Georgie was initiated Fall 1877 when the chapter was sub-rosa and it is unlikely that the group ordered pins at that time, making it is more than possible that she was initiated with an original badge. In 1877, several Alpha alumnae were living in Monmouth. Alpha Deuteron also claims to have Mabel Pillsbury’s badge (Fall 1872) and it too may be an original. (Mabel was the first KKT legacy to be initiated).

Lou Bennett and Anna Willets maintained that there were four original founders/organizers and that this group added three more at the first initiation. The first badges cost \$5.00 each.

## **FOUNDER’S HOME**

This original poem was written by Louise Lauder Roos, *Monmouth*, and presented at the 1992 General Convention.

There is a place in Illinois  
That beckons from the heart;  
And bids us come and tarry there  
And reaffirm the start  
Of a tapestry of grand design  
Crafted on native plains;  
The gift of six young women  
Of purpose, ideals and aims.

With intellects unfettered  
And spirits soaring free  
These visionary pioneers  
Won early victory  
For women’s hopes and dreams and rights  
They crushed the walls of doubt  
And cried to women everywhere:  
“You’re free! Break out! Break out!”

The freedom to associate  
On equal terms with all.  
The right to a fraternity  
Was their courageous call.  
Their claim to seek their own ideals  
For all of womankind –  
“The finer feelings of the heart,  
The nobler qualities of mind.”

Through the mists of history  
We hear their voices yet:  
Minnie, Martha, gentle Lou,  
Anna, Sue, Jeannette  
Inspired by goals of excellence  
They draw us to that test  
Which challenges through all of time  
And binds us to the quest.

In solitary majesty  
The Stewart House proclaims  
The birth of dreams, now reified,  
The crumbling of the chains  
This Founder’s home, this symbol  
Calls us still to seek and find  
“The finer feelings of the heart,  
The nobler qualities of mind.”

**Best wishes for a meaningful 2007 Founders Day!**