

Hersch Schooley, Phi Kappa, served in government public relations

By Tom Cunning
Editor Emeritus

¶ As one who was born in 1900, the year the "Garnet and White" began publication, Brother C. Herschel (Hersch) Schooley, Phi Kappa '22, just missed the final World War I registration for the draft by five days. The registration date was Sept. 12, 1918, and he turned 18 on Sept. 17.

Determined to participate voluntarily, Hersch Schooley enrolled at the University of Illinois as a volunteer in the ranks of the Student Army Training Corps. (He is presently a Navy Captain, USN Ret.) He pledged Alpha Chi Rho that fall and, as Uncle Sam had taken over the fraternity Houses for military houses, was Initiated with classmate pledges in an upper bedroom at the home of Dr. Fred Tanner, Phi Theta, then on the Illinois faculty.

Hersch held various Chapter posts, was a member of the Chapter bowling team, and played a lefthanded first base on the sometimes winning interfraternity baseball team. He fired the furnace for his Chapter room at 104 East John. He was Chapter treasurer during the third year when the Chapter rented a rooming house for the interim while financial arrangements were made to build the new home at 311 Chalmers, the Chapter base from 1922 until now.

In his Senior year, he was Chapter President and recalls trips without count on the electric line to Danville, where the Building and Loan that financed the new Chapter home doled out the payments for the weekly construction bills, payrolls, and materials. Moving days from the frame rooming-house on Fourth Street to the new home at 311 Chalmers some blocks away, with the "frosh" carrying most of the lighter pieces were in the spring of 1922.

The best thing about being born in 1900, according to Hersch, is never having any trouble remembering how



President Harry S. Truman, seated left, scans a volume on Missouri presented by Brother Schooley, seated right. Watching are John T. Baker; left, from the Justice Dept., and Congressman Clarence Cannon.

old you are in any particular year. He shouldn't have any trouble remembering what he looked like either. His walls and scrapbooks are filled with pictures from his career as a newspaperman and Assistant Secretary (director of information) at the Departments of Defense and Interior.

His wall reads like a lesson in American history: Nixon, Truman, Ike, LBJ, Jack and Jackie . . . all smiling and shaking hands with Schooley. The photos mark the passage of time for a nation and a man . . . a Brother in Alpha Chi Rho.

During Hersch's tour as Assistant Secretary of the Interior under Ike and Secretary Fred A. Seaton, Tom Cunning, editor Emeritus of the "Garnet and White," was serving as Assistant Governor of the Virgin Islands. It was then that the two Brothers first worked together and became close friends.

As a veteran of years in Washington, Schooley might be suspected of engineering more than his share of coverups, particularly during his years at Defense. But one quickly senses that the thought never occurred to him.

"I tried to present the positive side," he admitted, "but I never tried to maneuver (the news)." His integrity sometimes caused him problems, as veteran broadcaster Frank McGee once reported. The open reporting of the failure of our first attempt to orbit a satellite elicited howls of derision from government officials "demanding this country cease advertising its failures and act like Russia which publicizes only its successes," McGee said. And suddenly Schooley, who had coordinated the press coverage as a government information specialist, was left standing "naked, on the sands of Cape Canaveral."