

## **OUR FOUNDING HISTORY**

**THE BETA UPSILON CHAPTER OF  
THETA XI NATIONAL FRATERNITY**

**AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY**



## THETA XI NATIONAL FRATERNITY



PETER H. FOX.

As all true men come to know from their earliest days after receiving their new member shield and pledging a commitment to the Fraternity, Theta Xi was founded at Rensselaer Polytechnic University on April 29, 1864. Brother Peter Fox, Alpha 1, and the other Founding Fathers established a Brotherhood based on the belief of certain cardinal principles that are taught when a new member is ritually initiated into the Bonds of Theta Xi. Brother Fox was a Pennsylvania man of strong faith, having been active in the Presbyterian Church throughout his life. As an undergraduate at RPI during the American Civil War, unity and fellowship were on the minds of our Founding Fathers, both on campus, and especially throughout the country during those turbulent times. As college men of the Engineering Sciences who supported the union cause of freedom and justice, those of us fortunate enough to have been members of Theta Xi have much to thank to those eight men who will be forever known at the Founding Fathers of America's great college fraternity.

## SLIPPERY ROCK STATE COLLEGE

Approximately 35 years later, Slippery Rock State Normal School was established in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century as a teacher training school to educate young people in Butler County, Pennsylvania. It was in 1887 that a group of fine American citizens gathered in a local Presbyterian Church to discuss the establishment of an institution of higher learning for the advanced education of their sons and daughters. Proud of their town, they knew well the history of General George Washington traveling through their community in the year 1753 with guide Christopher Gist, and of his writings that described their crossing of what was then called Beaver Creek. Christopher wrote in his journal that there were slippery rocks in that Creek, and by 1778 the name of Beaver Creek was changed to what is today connected to the well-loved name of those that matriculated at Slippery Rock University call our alma mater.

In 1889 the first students enrolled at the Normal School established by members of that Presbyterian Church, and the community hired James E. Morrow, grandfather of Anne Morrow Lindbergh (wife of famous American aviator Charles Lindbergh), followed within a year by Dr. Albert Maltby as the first Principal in 1890. Dr. Maltby was a well-respected engineer and scientist, and was admired and revered by those early 168 new undergraduate scholars for his dedication to students and school. His leadership made the difference in the success of the students in those early years of our history.

It was in 1960 when the school name changed to Slippery Rock State College. Supported and owned by the people of Pennsylvania, our school offered not just degrees in education, but issued a multitude of undergraduate and graduate degrees in the liberal arts.

Having an active and vibrant student life throughout its history, it was in the natural course of events that witnessed the first collegiate fraternal organizations obtain national charters during that time period. Five years later in 1965, four fine national sororities were active on campus: Alpha Xi Delta, Delta Zeta, Kappa Delta, and Sigma Sigma Sigma. These four sororities have had a strong presence at the Rock for decades, and many Theta Xi men have fond memories of those undergraduate sorority women who were their friends and fellow collegians.

During those early years in the 1960's, five (5) men's groups were recognized and active at the Rock: Alpha Chi Rho, Sigma Pi, Sigma Tau Gamma, Theta Chi, and Tau Kappa Epsilon. Although each of these groups had within its membership some fine students, the Founding Fathers of the Beta Upsilon Chapter of Theta Xi Fraternity were seeking a different membership experience. The young men who would become our founding fathers followed the traditional campus practice of forming a local fraternity for the purpose of petitioning a national organization.

## OMEGA XI LOCAL FRATERNITY

Omega Xi Local Fraternity was established on November 15, 1965 when the first group of friends who lived on the second floor of Sentinel Residence Hall held a formal meeting for the purpose of planning and beginning a new national fraternity. Student Ed Woolcock specifically remembers Matt Kowalczyk asking him in those early days of the spring 1965 semester to organize Omega Xi. Ed and Matt had conversations with many other friends with shared values, including values of a fraternity membership free from hazing practices, who wanted to join a national fraternity, including Brad Walker, Jim Gimiliano, and Bob Barnes. By the time the founders made a commitment to become fraternity men, the interest group reached out to Dr. Lewis Prine, Dean of Men in 1965, who enthusiastically supported the students, knowing of their good campus reputation and scholastic prowess. With the Dean's support, the Student Government Association unanimously passed the interest group's local constitution, paving the way for the petition to the Interfraternity Council who granted official recognition of Omega Xi Local on Monday, February 7, 1966.

Working with the college administration and the Interfraternity Council, Ed and the Sentinel Hall friends found success in meeting all requirements necessary to petition a national collegiate fraternal organization. In their search for a national men's fraternity, it was clear from the start that the values of Omega Xi matched closely that of Theta Xi. Communication was made to the National Headquarters in St. Louis, and a petition was requested.



*Constructed in 1893, Old Main as it was in 1966*

## THE PETITION

The founding fathers of Beta Upsilon took the process seriously, as their desire to join Theta Xi was strong. It was Executive Secretary Elmer Blumenkamp, Alpha Beta 162, who was leading the National Headquarters in 1965 that had the initial communication with Omega Xi Local and the college administration. The Petition to the National Organization stated that the men at Slippery Rock wanted their college fraternity to be based on three honorable principles: Brotherhood, Scholarship, and Discipline. The Omega Xi Petition to Theta Xi emphasized the following:

***"The building blocks of this foundation are Brotherhood. . . for Brotherhood is the forerunner of peace; Scholarship. . . the purpose of college and the goal of man; and Discipline. . . that breeds responsibility in the individual."***

National President Joseph F. Wolff, Rho 149, and the Grand Lodge received the Petition from Omega Xi in the spring semester and were pleased with the character of the young men, the recommendations of the Interfraternity Council and the support of the college administration, who expressed strong interest in expansion and strengthening the campus Greek system. When the Grand Lodge met to consider the Omega Xi Petition, the vote was in favor of supporting and accepting the new group into the Bonds of Theta Xi National Fraternity.

## 1966

President Lyndon Johnson was in the White House, Chief Justice Earl Warren was in the Supreme Court, and Governor William Scranton was at the Pennsylvania State Capitol in 1966 when Beta Upsilon was chartered. The students at Slippery Rock State College had an eventful year filled with many unique memories.

In January at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Rose Bowl, #5 UCLA beat #1 Michigan State, 14 to 12. In February, the National Hockey League awarded the City of Pittsburgh with the Pittsburgh Penguins franchise. The Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi made a historic visit to Washington, D.C. and at the 38<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards, Bob Hope hosted the ceremony where the Sound of Music won the Best Picture Award. The groundbreaking of the World Trade Center in New York City happened, and the Beach Boys released the album *Pet Sounds*, considered today to be among the greatest and most influential albums in music history.

The Baltimore Orioles defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers in Game 4 of the World Series, and Frank Sinatra won Grammy Awards for Best Record of the Year and Best Male Vocal Performer. Ronald Reagan was elected Governor of California in November, and Roberto Clemente of the Pittsburgh Pirates was named the National League MVP. *Bonanza* was America's favorite television program, and on May 14, 1966, the day that Ed Woolcock received the Beta Upsilon Charter from National President Joe Wolff, the #1 song in the country was "When A Man Loves A Woman" by Percy Sledge.

Students from across the country were fully aware of the War in Vietnam, and the continued escalation by President Johnson. Many young men from Slippery Rock served in the War with great distinction and honor. Student Carey McGriffen decided after graduation to join the Marines and served in combat in Vietnam. He earned a Bronze Star, the Navy Achievement Medal, a Combat Action Award, a Purple Heart, and a Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. But before his Vietnam service, McGriffen was one of three students who chose to pledge the new Theta Xi Chapter on campus and has the distinction of serving in the very first Associate Member Class. There have been many other Brothers of the Beta Upsilon Chapter who have served their country over the years with great distinction. We will forever be proud of their patriotism and thank them for their service.

There were approximately 2,750 student scholars on the campus in 1966, and thirty of those undergraduates made history by working to charter Theta Xi National Fraternity, where the slippery rock creek wonders with its sparkling falls. Beta Upsilon was fortunate to have supportive and encouraging campus administrators who supported our cause.



**Dr. Robert S. Carter**  
College President

President Bob Carter moved to Slippery Rock in 1964 to begin his tenure to lead our school with a focus on academic excellence and growth. During his four years as President, enrollment grew at a rapid pace, the campus expanded with new programs, and student life continued to flourish with wonderful campus traditions and a high level of school spirit.

Dr. Lewis Prine was appointed to serve as the Dean of Men in 1965 and began a concerted effort to grow the Greek System. Working with Assistant Dean Michael Stramiello, students interested in joining a national fraternity or sorority were supported. Both the Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils were active in providing leadership to the fraternity and sorority campus community.

The Founding Fathers of the Chapter were active leaders in student life. Ed was a good runner for the Cross Country Team and Jim Bickford excelled on the Soccer Team. Richard Paszek was President of the Newman Club, and Dennis Hillwig was President of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Bob Barnes and Charles Donaldson had great voices and sang in the Slippery Rock Choir. Terry Buckwalter, Charles Donaldson, Pete Macko, and Drum Major Paul Mihalic were the first of many Brothers over the years who were loyal and talented members of the Marching Rockets. Brad Walker excelled in Biology and was selected to join the prestigious Alpha Delta Nu Honor Society. Jeff Blass and John Hull were the first Theta Xi representatives on the Interfraternity Council. And Keith Alford was no stranger to many groups including active membership in the Aphobians, the Philosophy Club, and was also a member of the campus radio station, WNFT. The campus administration was fully aware of the quality of membership that Omega Xi local had throughout campus life, and thus the college support for Theta Xi was encouraged to further promote leadership development among the new group.



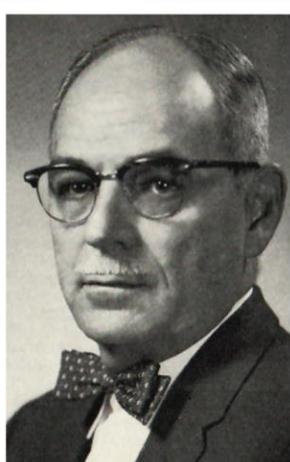
**Dr. Lewis Prine**  
Dean of Men



**Michael Stramiello**  
Assistant Dean of Men

## ELMER F. BLUMENKAMP AND JOSEPH F. WOLFF

Key figures in Theta Xi and Beta Upsilon in 1966 were Executive Director Elmer Blumenkamp and National President Joe Wolff. Both men had long and distinguished service to the Brotherhood, and provided the important support for the students at Slippery Rock that resulted with the establishment of the Beta Upsilon Chapter.



**Joseph F. Wolff, Rho 149**  
National President 1964-66

A soft-spoken Texas businessman, Brother Wolff attended the University of Texas and received his law degree from the University of Houston in 1933. A leader in the Texas Oil Industry, he was an executive at the Houston National Gas Corporation and the Corporation in Corpus Christi. Joe was a member of the Board of Directors of the Houston National Gas Production Company, and was Chairman of the Boards of Statistical Service Corporation of Shreveport, Louisiana, and the Southwest Statistical Corporation of Houston. A life-long volunteer who believed strongly in serving his community and country, he provided leadership for multiple civic organizations in Texas, and he served the fraternity for decades, culminating in his election to the Grand Lodge in 1959. When elected National President in 1964, his zeal and loyalty to Theta Xi resulted in a successful term of office, partnering with his Theta Xi Brothers across the country to support values based recruitment practices.



**Elmer Blumenkamp**  
**Alpha Beta 162**  
*Executive Secretary 1964-67*

Brother Elmer Blumenkamp had tremendous shoes to fill when he was selected to replace legendary Brother Jack Davison, Iota 149, who retired as the first Executive Secretary of the Fraternity, having served from 1925 until 1964. As the second full-time Executive Secretary in the Fraternity's history, Elmer had a very long and distinguished commitment of service to the Fraternity for decades. Brother Blumenkamp served on the Grand Lodge for 17 consecutive years, culminating in being elected National President in 1959. As a young man he was initiated by Iota Chapter at Washington University, and then transferred to Illinois State where he affiliated with the Alpha Beta Chapter. He graduated in 1931 and received membership in the Order of the Unicorn for his loyal and unwavering dedication to Theta Xi in 1981.

In his short four-years as Executive Secretary, Brother Blumenkamp guided four (4) Colonies into the Bonds of Theta Xi, one of them being Beta Upsilon Chapter. The other three groups to join the National Fraternity were the Beta Sigma Chapter at California State College on May 28, 1965, the Beta Tau Chapter at Southwest Texas State College on December 12, 1965, and the Beta Phi Chapter at West Liberty State College on November 5, 1966.

## THE CHARTERING

Theta Xi installed its ninth chapter in Pennsylvania on Saturday, May 14, 1966, making the Keystone State the most populous with active chapters in the National Fraternity at that time. Conducting the ceremony into the bonds was National President Wolff, who was assisted by Roger F. Aiello, Jr., Beta Lambda 27, Chairman of the National Final Inspection Committee, Executive Secretary Elmer Blumenkamp, Assistant Secretary Jerry A. Lilly, Eugene A. Seely, Director of Region 3, and President Richard H. Zabrowski of the Beta Omicron Chapter at Clarion State College. The Ritual Initiation Ceremony for 23 of the Founding Fathers took place on the Clarion State College campus the previous day on Friday, May 13, 1966.

Another key figure in our history was Brother Jerry Lilly, Kappa Epsilon 34. A 1964 Graduate of Concord State College in West Virginia, Jerry was hired and joined the Headquarters Staff in 1964. As the Assistant Secretary, Jerry served as the traveling Fraternity Consultant, visiting dozens of Theta Xi Chapters across the country, and in addition was tasked with supporting the Colonies. One group he gave particular attention to was Beta Upsilon, and was there at the beginning to help work with the college administration when we received the Charter. Brother Lilly became a successful higher education administrator working to advance the American Fraternity Movement for many years, and his loyalty and devotion to Theta Xi was so strong that he was inducted into the Order of the Unicorn in 1982.

Following the formal ceremony in Sheehy Theatre of Maltby Library on the Slippery Rock campus, Brothers and guests traveled to the installation banquet that was held at Kerr's Town & Country Restaurant, east of Meadville, Pennsylvania.



**Jerry A. Lilly**  
**Kappa Epsilon 34**  
*Assistant Secretary*

Participating in the program on Saturday evening were Dr. Robert Carter, President of Slippery Rock State College, Dr. Lewis Prine, Dean of Men, and Theta Xi National President Wolff. Other special guests included Dr. Lawrence L. Penny, Beta Omicron Advisor, and Mrs. Penny, and Assistant Dean of Men Michael A. Stramiello and Mrs. Stramiello, along with other installation officials. Receiving the National Charter on behalf of the new Chapter was Ed Woolcock, Beta Upsilon 1 and first Chapter President. Other Chapter Officers installed that evening included: Bradley Walker, Vice-President; Robert Barnes, Treasurer; Kenneth Munro, Senior Steward; John Hoffman, Junior Steward; James Gimiliano, Secretary, and John Lawler, Scholarship Chairman. After the installation banquet, the new chapter held a formal dance with their dates and guests in celebration of their achievement of chartering Beta Upsilon.

Members of the initiation team on Friday at Clarion State included Beta Omicron Brothers Harry Whysong, Robert E. Peters, David R. Swaney, Gabriel J. Kissel, Terry J. Moore, Robert A. Jannone, Roger Eichenmiller, Thomas G. Waring, Craig J. Conroy, David P. Schussler, Keith Rosser, Francis J. Winkler, and Harold E. Andrews, Jr. The Theta Xi Bonds between Beta Upsilon Chapter and the nearby Beta Omicron Chapter at Clarion began in 1966, and have continued throughout the decades.



*Left to Right*, Dr. Lewis E. Prine, Dean of Men, and President Joe Wolff, Rho 149, talk with Dr. Robert Carter, President of Slippery Rock State College, and Chapter President Ed Woolcock, Beta Upsilon 1. President Wolff traveled from his home in Texas to oversee the instillation ceremony and chartering of Beta Upsilon. There was a strong partnership with the National Fraternity and the College from the beginning. Many Brothers have worked closely with both the university administration and national fraternity leadership to support the values and principles of Theta Xi at the Rock. The Founding Fathers set the example of how those partnerships are important for a positive and healthy fraternity and university experience.



Eight members of Omega Xi were not at Clarion State College on May 13<sup>th</sup> for the Ritual Initiation Ceremony: Doug Houseknecht, Pete Macko, Bob Read, Bob Fascano, Harold Daum, Wesley Clinger, and Walter Merriman. Houseknecht, Macko, Read, and Fascano were the first men ever initiated by Beta Upsilon Chapter in the Fall 1966 Semester, along with Professor Ray Wallace of the Speech Department. Professor Wallace, the first Chapter Advisor, was known by many of the Brothers as a respected member of the Faculty and supporter of Theta Xi. Harold Daum was initiated a few weeks later in that Fall 1966 semester on November 2, 1966. It took another year before Wesley Clinger could be initiated into the Bonds of Theta Xi in 1967. Beta Upsilon did not forget loyal friend Walter Merriman, who was the last Founding Father to become a Theta Xi Brother when he was finally initiated in 1969.

*Left to Right*, Executive Secretary Elmer Blumenkamp, Alpha Beta 162, Michael Stramiello, Assistant Dean of Men, Ed Woolcock, Beta Upsilon 1 and First Chapter President, and Jerry Lilly, Kappa Epsilon 34, Assistant Secretary, admire the new Charter at Kerr's Town and Country Restaurant in Meadville, Pennsylvania. The Beta Upsilon Charter is one of only three Chapters in the National Fraternity that have the signature of President Wolff. The Blumenkamp years chartered only four new Chapters during his tenure leading the National Fraternity Headquarters. Beta Upsilon Chapter has always considered it an honor in the history of the fraternity to be in this select group of chapters who began in what many consider golden years within the American Fraternity Movement.

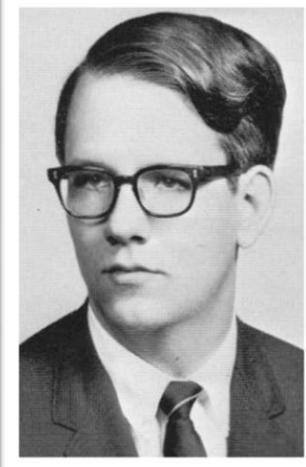




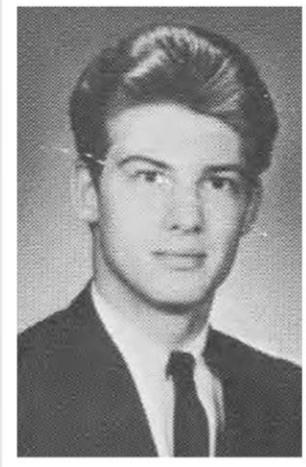
Brother  
**Edward G. Woolcock, Jr.**  
*Beta Upsilon 1*  
May 13, 1966



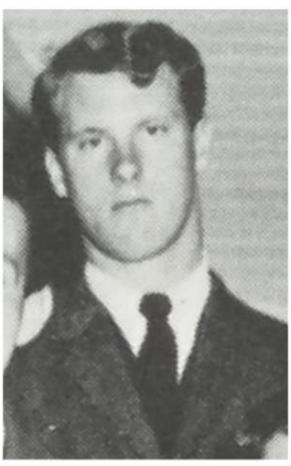
Brother  
**Bradley N. Walker**  
*Beta Upsilon 2*  
May 13, 1966



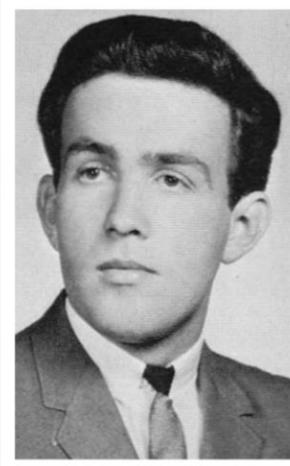
Brother  
**James E. Gimiliano**  
*Beta Upsilon 3*  
May 13, 1966



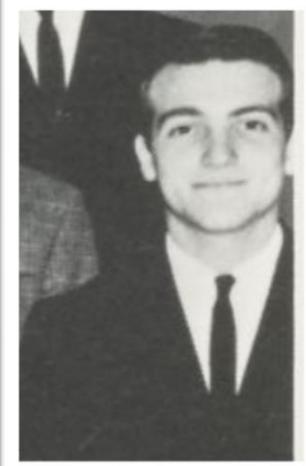
Brother  
**Robert O. Barnes**  
*Beta Upsilon 4*  
May 13, 1966



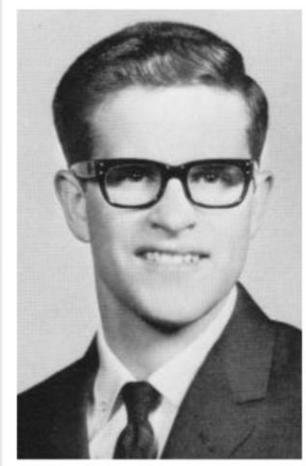
Brother  
**Kenneth A. Monro**  
*Beta Upsilon 5*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**John P. Hoffman**  
*Beta Upsilon 6*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**John N. Lawler**  
*Beta Upsilon 7*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**Dennis L. Hillwig**  
*Beta Upsilon 8*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**Richard C. Paszek**  
*Beta Upsilon 9*  
May 13, 1966



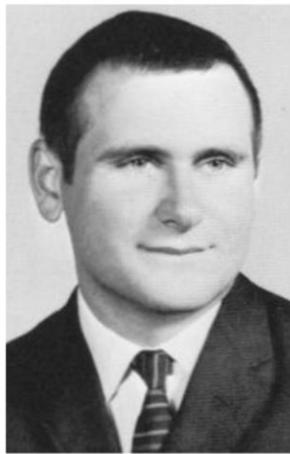
Brother  
**John J. Wolfe**  
*Beta Upsilon 10*  
May 13, 1966



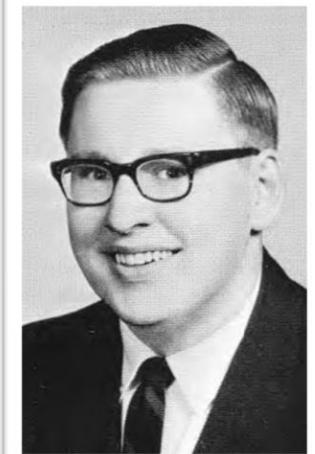
Brother  
**William K. Alford**  
*Beta Upsilon 11*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**Jeffrey L. Blass**  
*Beta Upsilon 12*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**Terry E. Buckwalter**  
*Beta Upsilon 13*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**William R. Everall**  
*Beta Upsilon 14*  
May 13, 1966



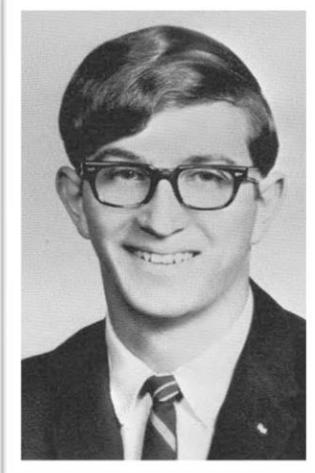
Brother  
**John P. Hull**  
*Beta Upsilon 15*  
May 13, 1966



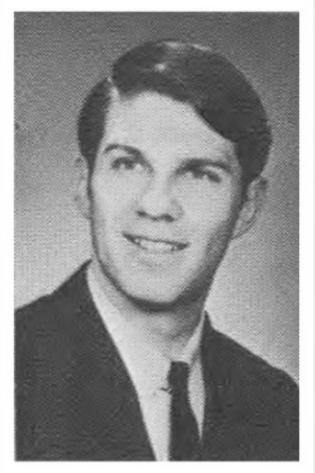
Brother  
**Matthew M. Kowalczyk**  
*Beta Upsilon 16*  
May 13, 1966



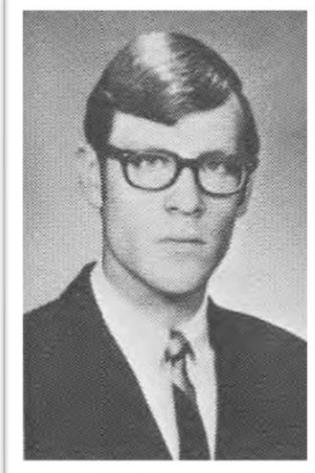
Brother  
**Paul G. Mihalic**  
*Beta Upsilon 17*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**James T. Turnbull**  
*Beta Upsilon 18*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**James L. Bickford**  
*Beta Upsilon 19*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**James R. Crawford**  
*Beta Upsilon 20*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**Donald P. Mailliard**  
*Beta Upsilon 21*  
May 13, 1966



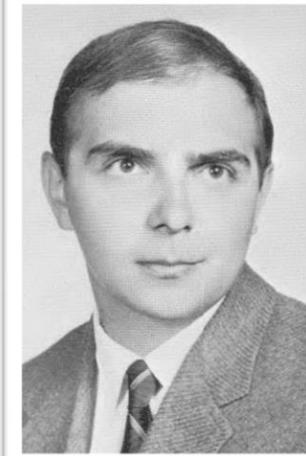
Brother  
**Kenneth L. Mincer**  
*Beta Upsilon 22*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**Richard H. Ring**  
*Beta Upsilon 23*  
May 13, 1966



Brother  
**Douglas M. Houseknecht**  
*Beta Upsilon 24*  
October 19, 1966



Brother  
**Peter G. Macko**  
*Beta Upsilon 25*  
October 19, 1966



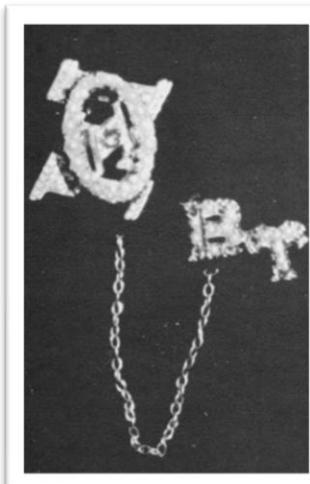
Brother  
**Robert A. Read**  
*Beta Upsilon 26*  
October 19, 1966



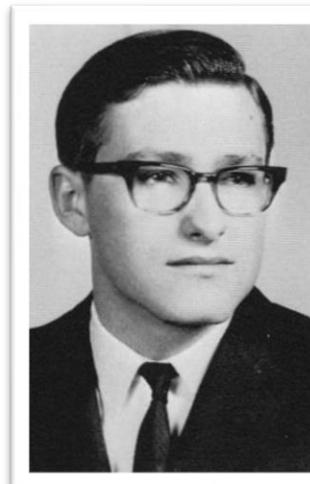
Brother  
**Robert E. Fasano**  
*Beta Upsilon 27*  
October 19, 1966



Brother  
**Raymond V. Wallace**  
*Beta Upsilon 28*  
October 19, 1966



Brother  
**Harold H. Daum Jr.**  
*Beta Upsilon 29*  
November 2, 1966

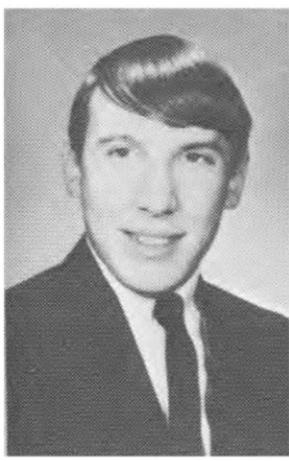


Brother  
**Wesley C. Clinger**  
*Beta Upsilon 38*  
October 18, 1967



Brother  
**Walter F. Merriman**  
*Beta Upsilon 53*  
May 1, 1969

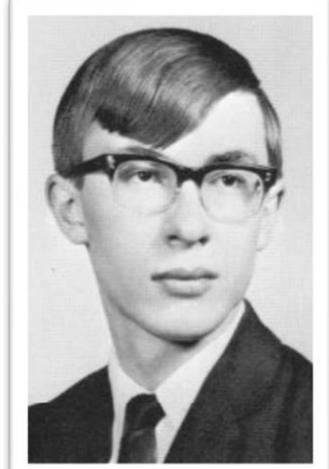
## THE ALPHA NEW MEMBER CLASS



Brother  
**Frank Morrone**  
*Beta Upsilon 30*  
January 4, 1967

In the history of all college fraternities, there are those that are selected by the Chartering Founding Fathers to be the first ever new members. In the history of Beta Upsilon, that distinction goes to three men who rushed and received the Associate Member Shields of the new fraternity at Slippery Rock in the fall semester of 1966. **Frank Morrone, Charles Donaldson, and Carey McGriffin** started their quest for Theta Xi that year as members of our historic Alpha Class, an experience that was certainly new for everyone in the newly chartered chapter, never having associate members before.

Frank, Charles, and Carey had solid reputations as good students with strong moral character who wanted the right kind of fraternity membership experience. Beta Upsilon's strict no hazing policy and practice, combined with our emphasis on living our Motto *Juncti Juvant* by serving others in a values-based Brotherhood proved to be the right match for the three young collegians.



Brother  
**Charles R. Donaldson**  
*Beta Upsilon 31*  
January 4, 1967

Beta Upsilon made certain that the new Associates were fully incorporated as equals into all of the Chapter activities that fall semester. Knowing that the Alpha Class was the future of Beta Upsilon, there was a feeling of appreciation and admiration for the three new members. And after a successful completion of the New Member Education program, the Brotherhood took the first ever ritual initiation votes, resulting in a unanimous decision to invite all three associates into full membership. And when the students returned for the spring semester, January 4, 1967 was scheduled as the Ritual Initiation date. Beta Upsilon 30, 31, & 32 began a tradition of Ritual Initiations for new members at Beta Upsilon that has become a special memory for the Brotherhood for over 50 years.

## MAIER CHAPTER HOUSE

Even before the chartering of Beta Upsilon Chapter, the national fraternity made contact with the Theta Xi Educational Foundation of Pittsburgh for their support to help the men at Slippery Rock. Unique within the American Fraternity Movement, the Pittsburgh Foundation was chartered in 1955 with the purpose of supporting Theta Xi Chapters within the Allegheny Region of the National Fraternity. At its peak, the Foundation owned and supported eleven (11) properties across the region, including the Fraternity Houses at Lambda Chapter (Penn State), Pi Chapter (Carnegie Mellon), Beta Omicron Chapter (Clarion), Beta Sigma Chapter (California of Pennsylvania), Beta Lambda Chapter (Indiana of Pennsylvania), and Beta Phi Chapter (West Liberty). Elmer Blumenkamp and Joe Wolff reached out to Elmer Kaelin, Pi 406, leader in the Foundation who worked closely with the national fraternity in bringing Kappa Sigma Kappa into the Bonds of Theta Xi earlier in the decade. Within a short period of time, the Foundation purchased what would be known as the Maier House.

Named after Foundation Board Member and dedicated Theta Xi alumni Philo Maier, Beta Upsilon's first chapter house was located on the corner of South Main Street and Maltby Avenue, directly across the street from West Hall, Miller Auditorium, and within view of North Hall, the Chapel, and South Hall. For many years it was a center for supporting the brotherhood and fostering lifelong Theta Xi Bonds. In what was considered the finest fraternity house in Slippery Rock at that time Maier house was sold by the Pittsburgh Foundation after the chapter closed in 1979, and today the property is the All Saint's Lutheran Church.

## BEGINNINGS

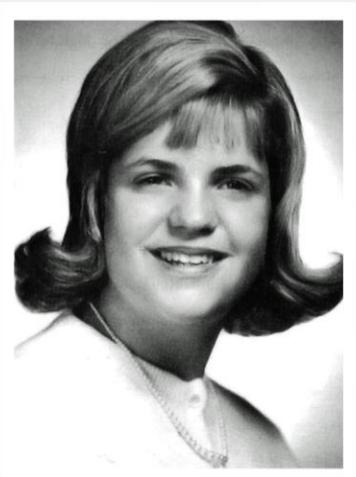
Like so many new fraternity chapters on American college campuses, Beta Upsilon was no different in their success and achievements. In the fall semester of 1966, our new chapter had great accomplishments both in the academic, leadership, and social arenas at the Rock. The many chapter traditions that were started and campus traditions that had existed in 1966 were an integral part of Theta Xi that first year of active membership.

Beta Upsilon was represented with the national fraternity for the very first time in August 1966 at the 102<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary National Convention in Houston, Texas by Brother Ed Woolcock. That convention was memorable not only for Beta Upsilon Chapter being present and voting for the first time, but also for the moment that the Convention voted to establish the position of Undergraduate Director on the Grand Lodge. We were all so proud that Beta Upsilon 1 represented the chapter at this historic national event.

Another fraternity milestone occurred in the fall semester when Beta Upsilon Chapter voted to select Ms. Barbara Artzerounian as the first ever Chapter Sweetheart. The girlfriend and eventual wife of Brother Matt Kowalczyk, Barb was a great friend and classmate of many of the Founding Fathers. The Brothers voted on Barb as the first ever Theta Xi Sweetheart at Slippery Rock, serenading her with the National Sweetheart of Theta Xi Song and presenting her with the Sweetheart Lavalier. Barb fulfilled her duties admirably by helping coordinate many events and formal functions of the chapter, assisting in supporting the Brothers with community service efforts, promoting positive relations on campus, and representing Theta Xi to the community at large with her grace, beauty, and charm. Barb has gone down in Beta Upsilon history as being the very first of many generations of wonderful young women selected by the chapter to proudly wear the letters of Theta Xi at the Rock.

Beta Upsilon competed in their first ever Homecoming Float Contest and Greek Week that academic year and did well in the Greek Skits (the forerunner to Greek Sing). The tradition of Big and Little Brothers began that first academic year and is a time-honored tradition that has continued for over fifty years. Along with that tradition came the exchange of gifts with decorative fraternity paddles when the first new members were ritually initiated that fall 1966 semester.

Brothers Barnes and Donaldson sang in the College Choir at the annual Slippery Rock Christmas Concert that December. And at the campus May Festival in the spring of 1967, Brothers were proudly wearing their Fraternity Blazers and Letters. The tradition of wearing Theta Xi Greek letters has endured at the Rock, as active Brothers continue to take pride by wearing the Theta and Xi on T-Shirts, Sweatshirts, and Jackets.



**1<sup>st</sup> Chapter Sweetheart  
Barbara Ann Artzerounian  
1947-2013**



## THE CLOSING IN 1976

The founding fathers left Beta Upsilon in the late 1960's in strong hands for the remainder of the decade. Several chapter president's, including Frank Morrone, Ed Pete, Jim Crawford, and Dennis Riegelnegg continued the strong positive leadership and traditions of the founders with solid academic's, a positive campus reputation, a close relationship with the national organization and college administration, and very strong bonds of friendships between the active members. But as the anti-fraternity waive and other long-held national cultural customs and traditions became less prominent on college campuses in the late 1960's, so did these changes and the contrasting student environment have an adverse effect on many within the American Fraternity Movement. The pervasive effect of the 70's drug culture on many college campuses, along with increased hazing and a destructive Animal House atmosphere, ultimately had a damaging impact that infected college fraternity chapters across the country. This dynamic began to have a corrosive effect at Slippery Rock that was ultimately harmful to the recruitment efforts of Beta Upsilon Chapter. American college traditions that were once so prominent and popular, were now out of fashion and led to many fraternity chapters and Greek Communities loosing membership and even closing altogether across the country. One infamous and well publicized example at that time that represented the attitudes of many university administrations was when the Dartmouth faculty voted to abolish their Greek System in 1978 because of what they viewed as a community that's values were not in alignment with the academic mission of the college.

The last Brother to be initiated before Beta Upsilon lost its campus and national recognition was Brother John McHugh, Beta Upsilon 141, on May 5, 1976, almost ten years to the day when Beta Upsilon was chartered by the national fraternity. Although a sad day for Theta Xi at Slippery Rock, there was a brighter future with a new decade and a new generation of students.

## THE REBIRTH OF BETA UPSILON IN 1986

The 1980's brought with it a rebirth for the American Fraternity Movement across the country. National Fraternity membership began to soar as the 1970's ended and students again saw the benefits of joining a national college fraternity. Student's in the 1980's had a spirit and attitude more in line with many traditional fraternity values, and some good friends not in Greek Life living in Patterson Hall wanted a values-based fraternal experience that was becoming so popular on college campuses across the country.

In 1986 students Alan Radcliffe, Scott Shidemantle, Tom Sivco, and Steve Marquis, all members of the Marching Rockets, along with other friends, reached out to the university administration in the Student Life office in the Student Union for support to expand Greek Life on campus. Director of Greek Life Becky Hulbert met with the leadership of the group and encouraged them to form an official interest group. Once the group was established, the Division of Student Affairs, under the leadership of Vice President Al Matthews, encouraged the approval of interest group status with the Interfraternity Council.

At a meeting with Becky Hulbert, the group was informed of the inactive chapters at Slippery Rock, including Theta Xi Fraternity. The group reached out to the national organization and within a short period of time received a telephone call from Executive Director Jim Vredenburgh, Beta Omega 11 and long-time staff member of the National Fraternity. The student group was excited about Theta Xi's history, values, and the possibility of support from the Beta Upsilon Alumni Association.

The conversations continued with the university, the Interfraternity Council, and the National Headquarters staff. After meeting the academic, recruitment, and community service requirements, the Grand Lodge voted to colonize the interest group. And within a few semesters of hard work from that core group of friends in Patterson Hall, the interest group received communication from the national organization with approval to recharter Beta Upsilon Chapter.

## THE RECHARTERING FOUNDING FATHERS OF 1987

On November 13, 1987, thirty-four (34) students at Slippery Rock University were ritually initiated in Miller Auditorium and became rechartering founding fathers of the Beta Upsilon Chapter. Scott Shidemantle graduated the previous semester and was ritually initiated later that academic year. National President Dr. Richard McCormac, Beta Epsilon 131, presided over the induction ceremonies and the reactivating of the charter. Both the Lambda Chapter at Penn State and the Pi Chapter at Carnegie Mellon University assisted in the Ritual Initiations. And Jim Vredenburgh himself was involved directly in the initiation and education of the new members of Theta Xi during that eventful weekend.

Brother Alan Radcliffe was given the honor of being the first new initiate into the Bonds of Theta Xi at Slippery Rock in November of that year, for his instrumental efforts as the key leader of the colony members. As the President of the group, Alan is remembered for his outstanding leadership and high moral and ethical standards that resulted in a successful chartering and campus recognition for Beta Upsilon. The transfer of chapter leadership took place when Brother Don Hinkley was elected to continue Alan's legacy in the Chapter Presidency that fall semester.

Alan Radcliffe, Beta Upsilon 142
Tom Sivco, Beta Upsilon 143
Steve Marquis, Beta Upsilon 144
Dave Lucente, Beta Upsilon 145
Jon Turk, Beta Upsilon 146
Rich Rizzardi, Beta Upsilon 147
Greg Ash, Beta Upsilon 148
Matt Berryman, Beta Upsilon 149
Greg Campbell, Beta Upsilon 150
Don Hinkley, Beta Upsilon 151
John Kirk, Beta Upsilon 152
Dean Markovics, Beta Upsilon 153
Rich Riccardi, Beta Upsilon 154
Tom Adams, Beta Upsilon 155
Paul Hoffman, Beta Upsilon 156
Joel Kerrigan, Beta Upsilon 157
Bob Mrozek, Beta Upsilon 158
Christopher Michael, Beta Upsilon 159
Tom Naskoviak, Beta Upsilon 160
Jim Sheaffer, Beta Upsilon 161
Doug Williard, Beta Upsilon 162
Todd Tramuta, Beta Upsilon 163
Grant Allen, Beta Upsilon 164
Pete Fluck, Beta Upsilon 165
Jerry Koltz, Beta Upsilon 166
George McDowell, Beta Upsilon 167
Chris Achey, Beta Upsilon 168
Craig Blend, Beta Upsilon 169
Aaron Cotter, Beta Upsilon 170
Ed Egolf, Beta Upsilon 171
Mike Hanko, Beta Upsilon 172
Ron Shidemantle, Beta Upsilon 173
Brian Shipe, Beta Upsilon 174
Steve Taylor, Beta Upsilon 175
Scott Shidemantle, Beta Upsilon 176

## THE FOUNDING FATHERS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP



*Pictured above are active undergraduates under the leadership of Chapter President Braydon Sloan, with Beta Upsilon Alumni at the SRU Alumni House on November 1, 2025 in recognition of the newly endowed scholarship.*

At the April 2025 general meeting of the Theta Xi Educational Foundation of Pittsburgh Board of Directors, there was discussion on an initiative to establish and fund an endowed scholarship for the Beta Upsilon Chapter. The decision was unanimous and the scholarship was created to support an annual donation to support undergraduates from Beta Upsilon who have obtained high academic achievement and also have financial need.

In recognition of the Brothers who worked so hard to establish Beta Upsilon in 1966, and to the Brothers who rechartered the chapter in 1987, the Pittsburgh Foundation leadership named the new scholarship for those men who played key roles in history with the chapter. On Saturday, November 1, 2025, Ron Shidemantle, Beta Upsilon 173 and President of the Pittsburgh Foundation, read a proclamation of appreciation at the SRU Alumni House declaring the Beta Upsilon Founding Fathers Scholarship endowed and supported in honor of the alumni. Beta Upsilon 1, Beta Upsilon 6, Beta Upsilon 14, and Beta Upsilon 18 were in attendance at the milestone event, representing that historic group from 1966. Brother Connor Grasser, Beta Upsilon 498, and Brother Ryan Mullen, Beta Upsilon 502, were presented as the first ever recipients of the new Beta Upsilon Scholarship. Brother Brandon Berns, Beta Upsilon 357 and Director of Corporate & Foundation relations at SRU was on hand to give support to the new partnership between the Pittsburgh Foundation, the Beta Upsilon Chapter, and the University.



*Pictured above are undergraduate Brothers Grasser & Mullen with Founding Father Ed Woolcock, Beta Upsilon 1, at the inaugural scholarship event honoring our Beta Upsilon Alumni and Chapter.*

## THE HISTORIC 500<sup>TH</sup> INITIATE MILESTONE

Another historic milestone occurred at the Rock in the spring 2025 semester when the Beta Upsilon Chapter ritually initiated its 500<sup>th</sup> Brother, Isaac Junkin, Beta Upsilon 500. The year 2025 marks the moment when over 500 students at Slippery Rock University have been initiated into the Bonds of Theta Xi Fraternity.

When Phi Beta Kappa was founded in America at the College of William & Mary in 1776, just six months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, those founding fathers began a uniquely patriotic institution and what has been for over 200 years and continues today to be the American Fraternity Movement. Today, collegiate fraternalism and the many other civic fraternal organizations in our country have provided its members wonderful opportunities for leadership development, scholarship, community service, spiritual guidance, and career advancement through alumni networking. Those that are selected to join fraternal organizations such as Theta Xi have also had the advantages of life-time friendships and a home away from home during their college careers.

Beta Upsilon Chapter has produced several successful members who have benefited from the oath they took when initiated into the Bonds of Theta Xi. With a strong history at the Rock in Education, many Brothers have been successful grade school and high school teachers throughout their careers, including many of the Founding Fathers. Beta Upsilon Alumni have received law degrees and are upholding the US Constitution in their practices, are practicing medicine and have pledged to prioritize their patients well-being, have ministered to their congregations, have become college professors, are CEO's of large and successful corporations, have provided leadership as President's of educational and charitable foundations, have served with great distinction in the United States Armed Forces in war and in peace, and have been elected to public office in their communities. Beta Upsilon 63 served as President of St. Joseph's College in a very successful career in higher education administration. Beta Upsilon 173 was the first member of our chapter to be elected to the Grand Lodge. And Beta Upsilon 240 was the first and only member of the chapter elected to serve as our National Fraternity President.

Maybe most importantly, Beta Upsilon Alumni have been great husbands, fathers, grandfathers, and pillars of our communities, living our cardinal principles with loyalty to our Chapter, College, Community, and Country.

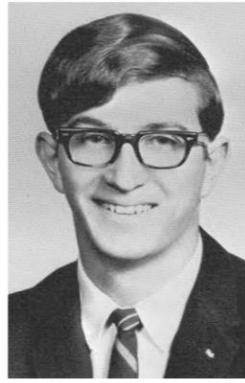


*Pictured above are Beta Upsilon 1, Brother Ed Woolcock, with Beta Upsilon 500, Brother Isaac Junkin.*

## A LIFETIME OF BROTHERHOOD

The Beta Upsilon Chapter of Theta Xi Fraternity has been fortunate to have been established in 1966 with a strong foundation of life-time friendships and brotherhood. Those of us who have been initiated into the sacred Bonds of Theta Xi at Slippery Rock will be forever grateful for such a strong beginning that continues to this day to provide support for its members. All alumni are counting on the current undergraduate members and future initiated Brothers to uphold the cardinal principles of the fraternity at our alma mater in the great state of Pennsylvania. And with the newly established Founding Fathers Scholarship, the alumni hope that this effort of financial support will assist and support the current chapter members in a meaningful way to continue to promote and advance the prosperity of our college fraternity that means so much to so many in the Bonds of Theta Xi at the Rock.

*\* It is with special appreciation that the Theta Xi Educational Foundation of Pittsburgh recognize the work of Brother Brad Walker, Beta Upsilon 2, for his significant contributions and support to the Beta Upsilon Chapter History.*



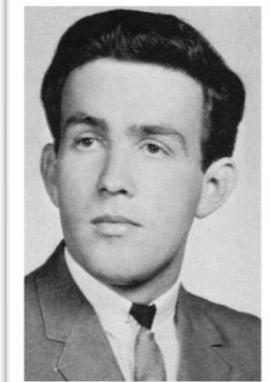
Brother  
**James T. Turnbull**  
*Beta Upsilon 18*



Brother  
**Edward G. Woolcock**  
*Beta Upsilon 1*



Brother  
**William R. Everall**  
*Beta Upsilon 14*



Brother  
**John P. Hoffman**  
*Beta Upsilon 6*



*Pictured above are Founding Fathers Woolcock, Hoffman, Everall, & Turnbull at the Rock in 2025.*