

# The Cornell Daily Sun

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## The 50th Reunion Class: Why Do They Come Back? [ARTICLE]

Cornell Daily Sun, Volume LXXVIII, Issue 151, 8 June 1962, Page 18

### *The 50th Reunion Class: Why Do They Come Back?*

By GARY G. CAPLAN

Why do they come back?

The town has changed, the campus grown more isolated and egocentric; some of the closer friends have died.

Fifty years ago the Billiken barely rivaled the Lyceum; the Lyceum featured "saucy, pert, sweet, chic, pretty, shapely, stylish, demure girls and the Collie Girl, the One Girl, the Lavender Girl, Spangle Girl; the pantaloons, sheath, Gibson, Princess and Robin Hood Girls."

Fifty years ago the heaviest man on the football team weighed 133.5 pounds, Teddy Roosevelt visited the campus and said, "I like Cornell; I like her athletics." President Schurman spoke against Teddy's re-election and for women suffrage, the Sage Hall waiters went on strike and the Mandolin Club went wild over the balalaika.

Fifty years ago a "highwayman" shot a trolley car conductor and robbed the passengers, two Cornellians rescued a girl from the insults of a loiterer, the SUN endorsed a College Widow Cigar, the class council presidents disclaimed attempts to reward their supporters with committee seats, Beebe Lake got a new tobaggan slide and Cornellians held world records in the four-mile relay, the mile and the half mile.

Fifty years ago the student body paraded down State St. in a torchlight parade, John Philip Sousa visited the campus, the football smoker was overcrowded, the off-campus apartments were declared firetraps, the students sent money to aid Chinese, the aero club got its first plane and everybody went to the Alhambra.

**'Most Durable'**

The class of '12, Cornell's "Most Durable Class," as President Malott called it, came back this

Today the forums will continue, a picture of one of the class' noted members will be unveiled, people will talk at a luncheon, laugh at a cocktail party and reminisce at a dinner, alums will gather on the steps of Bailey to hear the Glee Club sing songs again and the beer tents will open.

Tomorrow the class will raise a flag, honor a member, go to a memorial service, eat, talk, walk, hear the Duke and remember.

The class will perform its service for the University; its memorial fund will be presented.

But, most of the weekend they will backslap and laugh, tell stories and hear jokes, remember and perhaps plan. Plan because too many classes fall apart after the 50th; 50 is a climatic number. But this class, it tells itself, likes to stay together.

That's why the class of '12 came back, why from Mexico and Canada, California and Ithaca, over 200 men and women, more than any previous 50th reunion, took buses and Cadillacs and Mohawk to a hill in a small town somewhere in New York.

year to stay in Donlon Hall because "we wanted to see our friends."

The class of '12 came back because three years ago a man wrote the first of 3500 letters urging them to attend a reunion, because they received a green newsletter, "The On-To-Ithaca Gazette," because they received Christmas and birthday cards reminding them of the class, because they got letters urging them to correspond with each other, because they held class reunion dinners.

The class of '12 came back because 50 years ago Cornellians were gentlemen and the University was like a club, because 50 years ago the town wasn't separated from the gown and the hill didn't seem isolated, because 50 years ago there were no five-year programs to split the class.

The class of '12 came back because 40 of them come back every year, because they remembered the fire truck which one donates every year, because they remembered the "Dawn Barrage" with beer kegs rolling down Baker steps and firecrackers exploding in the corridors, because everybody likes to eat at the Dutch one more time.

The class of '12 came back because the Cornell tradition is a visible one; of people whom they once knew, of a campus of refreshing beauty whose trees make the years pleasant and whose grass is green every summer. And one doesn't think about but sees visible traditions.

#### Kelly Green

And so, the class of '12 moved into Donlon Hall yesterday, the Kelly green of the elevator rugs matching their caps and jackets.

They saw the candy and cigarette machines moved into the lobby as the Alhambra rose again in the informal lounge. They saw the model fire truck, the pictures, the old Zinck's menu in the Memorabilia Lounge on the second floor and met in the corridors a few of the coeds that stayed around for Senior week. They shook hands and remembered and went into one of the trapezoidal rooms to pick up a large green button.

Dinner at the Dutch, birds in Sapsucker, a walk on the campus, drink and laughter and talk in the restaurant finished the day.

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