In the early 1860s, the students and alumni were referring to themselves as “Wolverines.” There seems to be no evidence, however, that there were ever any wolverines in the state. In 1803 there was a dispute between Michigan and Ohio over who owned Toledo. The two states argued over the proper placement of the state line. At that time, Michiganders were called wolverines. It is not clear whether they attached the name to themselves to show their tenacity and strength, or whether Ohioans chose the name in reference to the gluttonous, aggressive habits of the wolverine. From then on, Michigan was labeled the “Wolverine state” and when the University of Michigan was founded, it adopted the nickname of the state it represented (Michigan vs. Ohio State, online at www.umich.edu/bhl).
Student Life
The University Building completed in the summer of 1841 housed the first students. It was divided into two sections, each a complete and separate unit consisting of sixteen apartments opening onto a central stairway. A tutor occupied an apartment on the first floor and presided over each of the sections. The building also included a chapel, recitation room, and a library. Below is a sketch of a student suite from a student letter. The student quarters consisted of three-room suites or apartments, each with two bedrooms and a common study room with a fireplace. The bedrooms were furnished with a bed, chest, and closet. The study room contained study tables, two chairs, a stove, and a wood closet.

By 1847 enrollments had increased to 89, and a new building was needed for additional recitation rooms, student housing, and a chemical and medical laboratory. This second building was designed to be identical to the University Building (renamed Mason Hall). It was completed in 1849 and named South College. Mason Hall and South College were designed originally as dormitories to support instruction by the tutorial system. However, the more immediate need for classroom space reduced the dormitory function to three-quarters of each building. The remaining space was devoted to lecture and recitation rooms, a chapel, a library, space for the mineralogical collection, and two literary societies. Students paid $7.50 a term for their room, $2.50 for incidentals, and $1.25 to $1.50 for firewood, which they had to split in the wood yard and carry to their rooms. They collected water from a pump for washing and furnished their own candles.

“In 1850, only twenty-five years had elapsed since the first steamship crossed the Atlantic, and the first line of passenger railways, ten miles in length, had been laid for fifteen years. The telegraph was a recent invention and electricity was a plaything. The ‘Joe College’ of those days rode to school on horseback, and the campus in many ways resembled little more than a farm. ‘Early to bed and early to rise’ was necessarily the guiding rule of life. Candles and whale oil were the sole source of illumination in those days, and as a result little studying was done at night. Rooms in the dormitories cost $15.00 a year, and board ranged from $1.50 to $2.00 a week. Students ate either at public boarding houses or in private homes, frequently those of the faculty members.”
(Michigan Technic, November, 1940, p. 17)
The tutorial plan strongly recommended by the faculty was eventually lost when President Tappan abandoned the dormitory idea in order to secure more classroom space. The students were sent out to find rooms in town. Many found housing in faculty homes.

Nov. 19, 1857...The daily routine of duty does not present great variety. It is Analytics, Surveying, History & Grammar one day after another.

Nov. 26, 1857...We (chum & I) have today changed our quarters and have concluded to try the plan pursued by many of the students here, to board ourselves. We have engaged rooms furnished with a bed, 3 chairs, a stove table & wash stand. We took our first bachelor supper tonight. It consisted of bakers bread.

Nov. 28, 1857...By paying a little more for our rooms, our lessor has procured for us a small cook stove & furnished us with dishes etc. as we shall need. We went down street & got on a stock of provisions consisting of half a bushel of potatoes, 2 loaves of bread, a bar of soap, added to which we have a piece of meat which we got of our landlord in the morning. We anticipate a tolerably pleasant time. There are a great many students here who board themselves.

Dec. 1, 1857...We are living in high style on Indian meal, pork & beans, potatoes etc. We don’t spend much time in cooking, nor do we wash our dishes every time.

May 1, 1859...Last night several of the students procured a quantity of liquor & succeeded in inducing one of their number to partake of it so freely as to cause his death today. George Beck ’60, Diary (Michigan Alumnus, March 24, 1928, p. 492)

“Behind the bell post were the latrines. As these sometimes got in bad condition, the students adopted the habit of burning them up occasionally o’night, thus compelling the Regents to build fresh ones pretty often. After our graduation I was appointed Supt. Of Grounds & Buildings, and I stopped the burning by constructing new latrines, all of brick, making them incombustible. The Regents however were staggered at the bill, as they cost about $300. (Student Letter, 1847, Bentley Library)

“Among our athletics were various forms of activity—a foot race from a quarter to a half-mile, baseball, a few runds from the stile,—saving our own wood and carrying it up stairs. Once we ran all round the Campus fence. Once—and only once—we took a load of hickory wood a farmer had left for sale, at night, in front of the fence, instead of in the wood yard, and carried it—cold winter night—up four pair of stairs, stick by stick, and put it on top of the building. We then took the wagon apart and carried it up also, wheels, axles, tongue, and side stakes, put it together again, and piled the wood upon it, so that in the morning the farmer found his load aloft, not able to get the horses up, nor if he could, to get them down again. The perpetrators were discovered, and by noon we had everything down below, as before. Another athletic exercise was turning the University bell’s mouth up to the sky in the cold winternight, at night, filling the bell with water. The clapper was dumb of course at six o’clock in the morning, and we were ‘found missing’ at prayer.” Nathaniel West ’46 (Michigan Alumnus, March, 1906, p. 261)
Professor Winchell's House on North University

A Student's Room in Professor Winchell's House

Norton's Boarding House

Prettyman's Boarding House
Student Social Activities

“The social instincts of the student herd manifested itself nightly at the post office. There was no free delivery in those days. The students had post-office boxes or else lined up at the window to get their mail. Everybody went to the post office nightly or had someone go for him. As everybody tracked to the post office from the supper table, and everybody ate supper at the same hour, the entrance to the post office, with the outsiders trying to get in and the insiders trying to squeeze out. The post office was on Main Street at the corner of the Court House Square. On the second floor was a large barbershop with several bathtubs as adjuncts. The fewest student rooming houses had bathrooms, hence, Saturday night over the Post Office: ‘Soiree de Gala.’

An occasional ‘show’ at the opera house, and hardly more than one first-class attraction per year at that, six or eight Lecture Association events, a highly diluted program weakening into third rates and the ‘Swiss Bell Ringers’ sort of stuff, a ‘Choral Union Oratorio,’ a comedy club performance (Prof dePont’s hobby—‘Dupey,’ of honored memory). Various church socials and guild receptions, and mighty little else.” David Heineman ’87 (Michigan Alumnus, December 7, 1922)

“There was a strong prohibition club and torchlight processions were frequent. On Halloween Secretary Wade pleaded for the safety of the buildings, and ‘Ben Franklin’ received his annual coat of paint.

‘The Argonaut’ and the ‘Chronicle’ were rivals in the weekly newspaper world, and the ‘Palladium’ was wholly Greek.” Royal Copeland ’89 (Michigan Alumnus, Feb./March, 1897)

“On Halloween a few indulged in the sport of hanging gates in treetops, overturning stretches of wooden sidewalks, and moving horse blocks across the city.”

“The students of this period found exercise in dancing, swimming in the Huron River, canoeing and long hikes over the hills surrounding Ann Arbor.” Herbert J. Goulding ’93e (Michigan Technic, October, 1941, p. 9)
From the beginning, Chapel was compulsory at the University of Michigan. Chapel exercises were held from 5:30 to 6:30 in the morning and from 4:30 to 5:30 in the afternoon. As Daniel Satterthwaite noted in his Diary: “Our seats in the chapel are being numbered, so that I suppose after this we shall have to be on hand at the appointed time.” On Sunday the students were obliged to attend service in one of the churches in town, and monitors were on hand to see that they attended. The chapel in University Hall, completed in 1872, seated 300. As enrollment increased there was no room large enough to hold all of the students, so chapel was no longer compulsory (Michigan Alumnus, 1928-29, p. 366).

“We went to chapel as individuals because we could not tell our classmates from the upper classmen, but when we reached the lecture room we found that the Sophs had a very exaggerated idea of the difference between themselves and the ‘Fresh,’ which they expressed in shouts of ‘Don’t break your milk bottle, Freshy!’ and ‘Get out of our seats you poor baby.’ These remarks were accompanied by showers of hymn books thrown at our heads. We threw them back, but we did not know our classmates and had no idea that we outnumbered the sophs two to one. After most of the hymn books had been mutilated, the faculty marched into the room in military order and took their places on the platform. The exercises concluded with announcements by members of the faculty addressed to the Freshmen.” Albert L. Arey ’75e (Michigan Alumnus, November 14, 1936, p. 105)

In 1845 the Union Society of Missionary Inquiry was founded to study the condition of the heathen, to give the seniors a chance to spread themselves, and to place the young ladies of Ann Arbor under religious influence. In 1859 the name of the society was changed to the Students’ Christian Association. The Association was housed in one small room in South College, though other rooms in the same building were occasionally used for special purposes.

By the Association’s 25th anniversary it had outgrown its old quarters and asked the people of the state for a suitable building to carry on religious work at the University. The building was erected at a cost of about $40,000. Mrs. Helen Newberry gave $17,000, and in honor of her husband the building was named Newberry Hall. Students and friends of the University gave the rest in small amounts. The spacious building had parlors for men and women, a library, three prayer-meeting rooms, and an auditorium seating 600. The building was also endowed with a Tiffany stained glass window. There were six religious meetings a week and a social every Friday evening.

At the turn of the century the Students’ Christian Association, YWCA, and the YMCA all flourished and were vigorously supported by the University, but larger facilities were needed. For many years the YMCA rented Sackett and McMillan Halls on State Street, three blocks north of campus. Alumni and friends of the University raised $60,000 for a new YMCA. The amount was matched by John D. Rockefeller, and on March 2, 1917 the new building was opened and named in honor of Judge Victor H. Lane, a Law professor and for many years president of the YMCA.
Student Traditions & Customs

Student life at Michigan has been rich in traditions. Various classes established traditions that often disappeared without leaving a memory or a record of their demise. Class observances, such as the “Burning of Mechanics,” the carrying of canes, the wearing of caps and pins, exhibitions, dances, banquets, and games, have come and gone.

Caps

The wearing of a class cap was traditional in the early days of the University. In 1868 students of the Literary Department adopted an “Oxford” style of class cap, blue with a square top, a black tassel in the center, and a movable “U of M” visor. In 1910 the class toque came into vogue. This was worn by all the classes—seniors, blue with white band; juniors, white with blue band; sophomores, maroon with white band; and freshmen, solid gray. Tassels of proper hue, designating school or college, adorned the toques. It is interesting to note that in 1870 Acting President Frieze and various professors also wore caps somewhat similar in style.

Class Canes

Class canes were carried for the first time by the class of 1869. The Class of ’73 dropped the custom, but the Class of ’77 revived it. In 1889, when the old picket fence surrounding the campus was torn down, the seniors made canes from the cedar posts. Later, enterprising merchants supplied canes from the same source. It was customary for the seniors to begin carrying their class canes during the month of May preceding graduation. After 1934 the senior classes observed the tradition sporadically, and it more or less died out by the end of the 1930’s.

Hair Cutting

One custom made it the duty of every sophomore class to kidnap the toastmaster of the freshman banquet, to cut his hair and make him otherwise ridiculous, and to send him to the scene of festivities too late to be of service. The freshman class was obliged to retaliate on every sophomore in kind. This merry war continued until several dozen luckless underclassmen had heads as smooth as billiard balls.
One of the most interesting and venerated of student traditions was the “burning of Mechanics” or, as it was sometimes called, the “hanging” of Mechanics, Physics, or Mathematics. Originally, it took place in honor of the completion of the course in physics under Professor George Palmer “Punky” Williams. It was celebrated as early as February 6, 1860 by the class of ’61, and lasted, with interruptions and variations, until the early 1900s. The ceremonies were unique. Usually a procession of “solemn officials” in costume escorted the “corpus,” borne on an elaborate bier, to a place of judgment where the victim, the course in mechanics (physics, mathematics), was most impressively “tried,” “condemned,” and “executed.”

“The night of March 21, 1878, was selected for the Crematio Physica Mechanica. A large number of hand-bills containing the program of the evening were distributed about the University, and by ten o’clock the air was resonant with the music of tin horns. Several hundred students assembled in front of the opera house, and the procession then marched through Huron, Division, Jefferson, and State Streets to South University Avenue, and thence around the Campus to the ball ground in the northeast corner, where a platform and gallows had been erected. The procession was led by the Pontifex Maximus attended by the Judex, an Advocatus Pro, and an Advocatus Con. The Junior Sodalitas followed, and a motley crowd whose costumes defy description. There were Indians, clowns, and men of every color and condition, representatives for all nations, and some whom no nation would own. Company Z, University Bashi Bazouks escorted the culprit, who was bound in chains and borne on a dray attended by guards and Mephistopheles, the executioner. The chief mourners followed, already arrayed in anticipation of the dread sentence. The Orator, Chief Warbler, and Sodalitas Sophomori brought up the rear. After arriving at the place of trial, the officers of the law took their place on the platform, and a hymn was sung, accompanied by groans. It was announced that the examination of witnesses would be postponed until after the execution, as there was no doubt of the criminal’s guilt. The mathematical defense and prosecution were conducted by the Advocati. The judge then pronounced the prisoner guilty and sentenced him to be hanged, shot, and burned. This was a signal for the widow to produce a large pocket handkerchief on which she wept copious tears, rocking back and forth in her chair. After hanging in midair, Physics was shot by the gallant Company Z, and Pontifex Maximus.” (Michigan Alumnus, February 1902, p. 23)

During the twentieth century, the increasing size of the student body, along with the formation of numerous clubs and societies, did much to dissipate class spirit and to lessen the interest in class activities. Organized athletics also provided a greater outlet for student energy, with the result that many of the old customs were lost in the increasing complexity of student life.
The social opportunities in the late 1800’s came largely through the “church socials.” Lower Town, or North Ann Arbor, was then relatively more important, and some of the brightest and handsomest young ladies came from there, some of them living nearly a mile beyond the old-fashioned long bridge. It was the custom to introduce new students to these engaging young ladies and to surrender our rights, if any. When the social closed, the new men walked home with these ladies, wholly unaware at the start of the distance before them. In winter it was a severe ordeal at times, and the bridge over the Huron became known as the “Bridge of Sighs.” William Beadle ’61, ’67 (Michigan Alumnus, January 1902 p. 162)

“The early athletic activities were confined almost entirely to baseball. The only other evidence of interest in athletics at this time is to be found in the records of the ‘Velocipede Club.’ Of this Club, the Palladium of 1868-69 says: ‘The organization has been abandoned because the prospect of its members’ attaining proficiency was somewhat ambiguous!’ ” Albert L. Arey ’75 (Michigan Alumnus, October 17, 1937 p. 29)
“In the late 1860s, the extracurricular activities of the Literary Department were almost entirely of a literary nature. There were the two literary societies, the Literary Adelphi and the Alpha Nu, with 162 members between them, and seven debating clubs with 130 members, so that 292 of the 399 students in the Literary Department were members of literary societies.” Albert L. Arey ’75e (Michigan Alumnus, October 17, 1937, p. 29)

February 15, 1856 “Spent the evening at Alpha Nu, but was obliged to stand most of the time on account of there being so many there. The question was on Spiritualism, and I was glad that it was lost.” Daniel Satterthwaite ’59, Diary (Michigan Alumnus, 1828-29, p. 553)

February 16, 1857 “This evening I attended a meeting of the Alpha Nu, one of the literary societies of the University. I heard part of a poem read by Mr. —, which I think was very good. There was then a debate upon the question ‘Resolved: that ladies should be admitted to this University.’ On coming before the house for adoption, the resolution was lost.”

February 9, 1859 “This evening I attended a meeting of the Literary Adelphi, a literary society connected with the University. After the reading of the ‘inaugural’ by the president, the following question was debated: ‘Resolved: that females should be admitted to this University upon the same conditions as males.’ After the debate it was adopted by the society.” George Beck ’60, Diary (Michigan Alumnus, March 24, 1928, p. 492)

The oldest, but short-lived, literary magazine was the Peninsular Quarterly and University Magazine published in 1853. It contained articles contributed by President Tappan and other members of the faculty. The Peninsular Phoenix appeared in 1857. The Palladium was the first successful Michigan student publication, with a further claim to fame as a forerunner of the Michiganensian of today. The Palladium was the official publication of the fraternities in a day when fraternities were often at odds with the faculty and almost always with the independents. The non-fraternity journalists established a yearbook in 1866, The Castalian. These two publications, together with ReGestae of the lawyers, became the Michiganensian in 1897. The Oracle of March 9, 1867 was published by the Class of ’69 at Dr. Chase’s Steam Printing House. One of the few magazines issued by a class, it continued in publication for about 30 years.

The Michigan University Magazine (a monthly) appeared in 1867, but in 1869 it was combined with The Chronicle, (a weekly). A rival, The Argonaut, another weekly, also appeared, and these three publication continued until 1890. In 1890 the U of M Daily was founded by a group of energetic students in the belief that the Campus could support a daily newspaper. The Chronicle and Argonaut perished one year later. The Gargoyle, the campus humor magazine, appeared in 1908. The Michigan Technic, the oldest engineering college magazine in America, was first published in 1882. It survived through the 1980s.

Many other student publications were established and then disappeared. Some were literary, some had a crusade to carry on, and some were simply interested in giving student writers a chance to see their work in print.
“Cercle Français de l'Université du Michigan” was organized in the early 1900s to form a French Society for increasing the study and interest in French Language and Literature. A French play was performed annually, alternating classical plays with contemporary plays that had been successful on the Paris stage.
Open Air Performance of *As You Like It*

Literary & Engineering Banquet (1913) in the Union Clubhouse

Glee Club Trip

Michigan Marching Band
"Whenever Dr. Tappan left his house for the chapel, or on his walks abroad, he was, in my day, always accompanied by a huge yellow dog known as Leo. Towards the last, Dr. Tappan had a fellow even larger and yellower, but this second canine companion of the President never enjoyed the favor in student circles that the first did, and I cannot recall his name. One day a mischievous youth, who cared little about Kant and Cousin, tied one of Leo's fore paws close to his head, and the great dog went limping up the aisle to the Doctor's chair on the platform. His master quietly cut the cord, and then the huge beast placed his fore paws on the arm of the President's chair, and testified to his gratitude by licking the latter's cheek. Dr. Tappan, without a word of reproof for the indignity which had been put upon his pet, placed one hand on the great dog's head, looked him in the face, and for half an hour discoursed to him on canine nature and the possibility of the existence of a canine soul. The discourse was as delightful as it was learned, as replete with the happiest turns as it was with the most profound knowledge and the most impressive speculative inquiry. There was more than one member of the class who entertained the belief that Leo understood it all much better than himself." Watson Ambruster '62, '64 (Michigan Alumnus, October, 1901, p. 13)
"Phi Alpha Tau and Stylus, the men’s and women’s writing clubs, respectively, undoubtedly pursue the most purely cultural airs and are least adulterated by ulterior motives. The rest of the debating societies are probably the most widely supported for art’s sake alone. The Glee and Mandolin Clubs and Bands are popular because of the trips they are privileged to take, and the Mimes, producers of the Michigan Union Opera, because of their close identification with the great center of student interest, the Michigan Union. The Comedy Club is rather popular because of the extremely popular character of its productions, and because it begins to visit surrounding cities. Michigan students seem to be fond of traveling.” Harold B. Teegarden ’17 (Michigan Alumnus, March, 1916, p. 345)

The Crimson Chest, the fourth Michigan Union Opera, introduced two memorable songs to University students, “College Days” and “Bum Army.” It was staged at the Whitney Theatre.

“Class organizations exist for no other discoverable purpose than giving dances, smokers, and class memorials, of which the dances are the most important.” Harold B. Teegarden ’17 (Michigan Alumnus, March, 1916, p. 345)
“The annual football rush between the Frosh and Sophs afforded another bit of exercise. This took place in the open area bounded by North University and East University. Male students of each class, numbering about two hundred on a side, were lined up facing north and south with a stated space between them. The coeds were on the sidelines to cheer the members of their respective classes. The Juniors backed up the Freshmen and the Seniors the Sophomores.

Their duty was to rush back into the fray any duffer who had wiggled out for a bit of relief from the crushing pressure, which had reduced him to half his normal size. It often took hours to decide the contest. Due to the shortage of bed space in University Hospital, this "sport" had to be abandoned and was replaced by the tug of war. The traditional site for this event was the Huron River.”

Herbert J. Goulding 93e
(Michigan Technic, 10/1941, p. 9)

“In the spring of 1916 two classes assembled for the tug of war at the Wall Street Bridge at 4 PM. Many visitors had come to town for the occasion, and in spite of the rainy weather, a large crowd assembled on both banks of the river. The Sophomores made short work of the first two events. They dragged the Freshman Lightweight team into the chilly waters of the Huron in 12 minutes, while the Middleweight freshmen held out for only 9 minutes. The two heavyweight teams strained in a deadlock for the full 20 minutes, and when time was called, the first year men had 24 feet more of the rope than the Sophs, leaving the score 2–1 in favor of the Sophomores.” (Michiganian, 1917, p. 48)
“The freshmen went directly to their flag poles and gathered around them as densely as possible. The sophs formed in a solid column 16 abreast with arms linked together, charging at the firing of the gun. Upon reaching the first pole, the column split in two, driving off as many of the freshmen as it could, but not stopping until it reached the center pole. Here the real fight raged for the full 30 minutes, interrupted occasionally by the crack of the pistol when a man was down. During the struggle most of the green painted warriors were kept on the outer edge of the melee, and the only obstacle to sophomore victory was the inability of the 1919 men to shin up the slippery pole.

Several times a second year man would get started up the pole, well out of reach of all clenching hands, but would hang motionless half way up and finally slide down for sheer lack of strength. After the struggle was over, the jubilant yearlings themselves endeavored to get down their standards and found that they were as unable as the sophomores to climb the polished shafts. They finally resorted to ladders.”

(Michiganensian, 1917, p. 48)
In 1868 the graduating class gave the first Senior Hop on the eve before Thanksgiving day. The Class of 1871 gave the last Senior Hop. The juniors adopted the idea, and in 1872 the first Junior Hop, known as the J-Hop, was organized. The early J-Hops were held at Gregory House, a hotel on the northwest corner of Main and Huron streets. They shifted it to the Armory in 1876, and then in the 1880s it was often held in Hangsterfer’s Hall, at the southwest corner of Main and Washington streets. In 1893 the J-Hop marked the informal opening of Waterman Gymnasium. Later Hops were held in the Intramural Sports Building.

By 1886 the fraternities had assumed leadership in campus social affairs. There was considerable difficulty and rivalry between the fraternities (Palladium) and the independents (non-Palladium), and in 1896 there were two Balls. Four fraternities joined with the independents for a rival ball, designated as the Annual Promenade, in Waterman Gymnasium, while nine other fraternities took the Annual Ball (which dated from the establishment of the J-Hop) to the Memorial Hall in Toledo. After the squabble, most of the participants were heartily ashamed and all agreed that the ball should be a genuine, all-inclusive University affair.

The Gregory House was completed in 1862. It was located on Main and Huron across from the Courthouse Square. The Hangsterfer Building was located on Main and Washington. The ballroom on the third floor was known as Hangsterfer Hall.

February 2, 1883 (Special to the Chronicle) “The Society Hop given by the Secret Societies was without doubt the finest affair of the kind ever held in Ann Arbor. For years since, the social event of the season has been accredited to what was formerly known as the Junior Hop, but which for the past four years has been given under the auspices of the Secret Societies. This year all of the societies did not take part, but it may be said to the credit of those who did, (Chi Psi, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Sigma Phi, Zeta Psi, and Beta Theta Pi) that a more elegant and successful hop could not have been desired. The affair was recherché throughout.

The canvas (upon which they danced) was bordered with several widths of carpet upon which was placed handsomely upholstered divans and easy chairs, which, together with the drapery of the windows and the artistically arranged hangings of the gallery, gave a most pleasing and charming effect. By 9 1/2 o’clock most of the guests (about twenty-six couples had arrived). At 10 Spiel struck the first note, and when the music arose ‘with its voluptuous swell,’ the happy throng were ‘gliding through the dizzy maze of the waltz.’

The supper hall was thrown open at twelve, and when once within the door, it was plainly to be seen that ‘Hank’ (Hankstetter) also was in his happiest vein. The menu cards were beautiful in design, and the delicacies of the table most palatable. After supper, dancing was resumed and carried on without interruption until about five o’clock in the morning.”
February 5, 1910 (The Michigan Daily) “With all the charm of beautiful gowns, music, and flowers, the Junior Hop of the class of 1910 was celebrated by 350 couples in Waterman Gymnasium. Supper was served shortly after midnight in Barbour Gym. The booths (twenty-three fraternity and one independent), varying in decoration from colors of oriental magnificence to the yellow and blue of Michigan, were crowded with fair guests.

During the singing of ‘Sweethearts True’ the semi-lighted hall was made brilliant by a chain of scarlet hearts strung along the balcony. The words of this selection were written especially for the J-Hop by Donal Haines, and the music composed by Burton Fisher of Fisher’s Orchestra.

‘The Rose Song’ from ‘Culture’ was featured by three hundred natural bride’s roses being overturned on the dancers from a large rose basket over the center of the gymnasium. ‘The Flight of the Redskins’ was punctuated by revolver shots, jumps of the dancers, and Indian war-whoops. ‘The Glow Worm’ selection received much applause, illustrated as it was by miniature firebugs among the folds of yellow and blue. With the orchestra playing ‘A Toast to all the Girls,’ a selection dedicated to the 1910 J-Hop guests, a great cloud of confetti, over twenty bushels of it, was blown down upon the dancers, covering them with variegated flakes. The dances were alternating waltzes and two-steps.”

February 11, 1927 (Special to the Michigan Alumnus) “On they march, led by Thomas Winter of Grand Rapids, past the fifty booths; forty-three labeled with Greek letters and guarded by armored knights. Eight hundred and fifty dinner coats. Eight hundred and fifty pairs of legs. ‘Hail to the Victors Valiant.’ Happy, but feeling a little foolish as they parade. More than a hundred pairs of bored, neglected chaperones try not to be Victorian as they point out a girl with a scanty dress. ‘Clothed from head to toe.’ Modern youth in a medieval setting. A rush to be shot by the movie camera.

Music to the youthful ear—Guy Lombardo, Jean Goldkettle, Fletcher-Henderson radio orchestra. They move—just move. They sway. Before the performers’ platform hundreds, jiggle clasped in each other’s arms. The derby-topped orchestra was led by the shifting hips of its director. So were the dancers. Vast empty spaces of dance floor at each end of the hall are streaked by a few dancing chaperones. Never saw so many sitting out dances. Guess that is the result of the University rule—No person attending the dance shall be permitted to leave the dance hall and return to it during the progress of the Junior Hop. Three Campus cops in the locker room.

Three o’clock. ‘No couple attending any house party shall be on the streets later than one hour after the cessation of dancing.’ There shall be no dancing in any house after 3 o’clock on Saturday morning. ‘Despite the innumerable rules none states how early festivities may start on Saturday. Lights out. Everybody to bed. Breakfast will be served at 4:30 A.M.’” W.A. (Michigan Alumnus, February 19, 1927, p. 386)
“Sunset on June 2nd, 1916, saw long lines of students stretching along the diagonal walk: Stolid seniors, laughing juniors, sophomores with a blasé superior smile, and jubilant freshmen, hopping and dancing in the excitement of their evening—for this was Cap Night, and within three hours the little gray headpieces would be no more.

The Freshmen “Pots”

Headed by the Varsity Band, the classes marched to Sleepy Hollow, the scene of the event, along a road marked out by blazing red-fire torches set in place by the sophomore committees which had been working all day gathering wood for the great bonfire. This was burning high when the first of the marchers swept down the boulevard into the Hollow and sank to their places on the incline near the blaze.

More than 9,000 people had cheered themselves hoarse before Francis E. McKinney ’16l, who acted as chairman for the evening, began to speak. Frank Murphy ’14l, and Dean Henry M. Bates ’90, aroused particular enthusiasm. When the last shout had died away, there came the traditional snake dance, and the freshmen, forming a giant moving ‘M,’ ran down to the fire and dropped their caps. When they had resumed their places again, all classes joined in singing ‘Where, Oh Where, are the Verdant Freshmen?’

Within a few minutes the Hollow was emptying rapidly, and far ahead were heard the shouts of those taking part in the race for free shows, offered by several theater managers in honor of the new sophomores.” (Michigamian, 1917, p. 46)

Free Show at the Majestic Theater
The tradition of the senior women giving lanterns to the juniors, and they in turn giving hoops to the sophomores, symbolized the passing of the college year and once again another class leaving their Alma Mater.

“As an interlude between the picnic supper on Palmer Field and the Lantern Night procession, the Freshmen Pageant came just at sunset. The trees on the hillside formed a natural background for the dancers, whose billowy scarfs caught the last rays of the setting sun. A May queen was chosen, and for her entertainment country dances were held by Robin Hood and his merry men, by gypsies, and by Irish, English, and Scots peasants. Jesters and tumblers in gay red and yellow suits played among the trees. For the finale, all the dancers mingled in a whirl through and around the Maypole.” (Michiganensian, 1931)
Prior to 1885 the various schools and colleges held independent commencement exercises. In 1870 Professor Frieze began the custom of holding a Commencement Banquet to which alumni and guests of the University were invited. This occasion, later established officially by the Board of Regents, inaugurated the "Alumni Banquet" of Commencement week, held annually on Alumni Day. As Commencement approached, it also became customary for the senior class to hold "sings" on the campus—in later years on the Library steps. Earlier, in both the spring and the fall, the seniors customarily gathered once a week about the "senior bench" to sing informally.

A description of the 1858 commencement by S. W. Dunning '60. "I rose before six. After breakfast I procured a palm leaf fan, went around to Campus and waited for the boys to collect. It was cloudy and threatened to rain and was very hot. Our procession started before nine. Without difficulty we entered the hall (over the Union School), and I obtained a good seat, immediately in front of the stage. Then commenced the fanning. The speeches went on as usual. Nearly all were very good and some, of course, super-excellent. We were kept there till after one, when I went home and took a little dinner, and shortly after went to the Campus, where the procession was soon formed, and we went back to the Union Hall. It was hotter than the forenoon, and we broiled almost. There were fifteen speakers only in the afternoon, so the exercises were shorter. The Doctor then conferred the degrees. He addressed a few words to the graduates, and then the audience mostly dispersed. A few remained to hear the address before the Alumni Association by Rev. Geo. P. Tindall. It was excellent and excellently spoken, but so long that it took an hour and a half to deliver, though he spoke exceedingly fast." (Michigan Alumnus, 12/1915, p. 144)

The first University of Michigan Commencement was held on August 6, 1845. An oration was delivered by each of the eleven graduates.

"The class of 1894 of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts was the first to wear academic gowns at a Michigan Commencement. The students of the Law School and the Medical School opposed the idea. When told that it was an old English custom to use academic dress on important occasions they replied: 'I suppose then that if someone told you it was raining in England, you'd turn up your trousers.' The debate raged for weeks. Finally, some of the 'Lits' bought gowns, and the 'Laws' and the 'Medics' served notice that anyone appearing on campus in such garb would be forcibly disrobed. The gown-wearing 'Lits' set the day on which they were to appear, and the turbulent senior 'Laws' prepared for a fracas. The dean of the Law School, learning of their designs, scheduled an examination in order to keep them fully occupied during the danger period. The junior 'Laws' then took up the cudgels. The 'Lits' met in University Hall, donned their robes, and went to chapel in a body. All was calm until they started to leave after the service. The junior 'Laws' were waiting at the door. As the procession approached, with Dean Martin L. D'Ooge and President Angell at the head, the 'Laws' flashed into action. Dean D'Ooge demanded, 'You young gentlemen, young gentlemen, what does this mean?' His question was ignored, and the invaders reached for the first gown. Just then 'Prexy' went into action. Beaming upon the vandals with his most genial smile he inquired, 'Can I do anything for you, gentlemen?' The enemy sheepishly disappeared. Later, however, a formal challenge to a 'rush' was sent to the gownites and was formally accepted. The same evening the 'Medics' and the 'Laws' robed in nightshirts, met the 'Lits'. The battle was long and furious, but the 'Lits' won. The next morning the fraternity houses on State Street were all aflame with white streamers torn from the back of the enemy. This was the origin of the famous nightshirt parade, which became an annual feature until the leaders invaded the Library and created a disturbance."

Orma F. Butler (UM Encyclopedic Survey, p. 1769)

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In celebration of the University’s 75th year, Commencement was held in a large tent, known as the Pavilion, placed between the Chemistry Building and the Gymnasium. The Baccalaureate address was given the preceding Sunday in University Hall; the President’s reception and luncheon were given in the Library; and the alumni dinner, that concluded the week’s events was given, as usual, in Waterman Gymnasium. Following the bugle call, the various parts of the long procession formed at their respective stations, the graduating classes at their respective buildings. The various lines of students fell into line in the long procession which proceeded down the long diagonal walk, through the arch of the Engineering Building and past the Medical Building to the Gymnasium where they turned in to the main entrance of the pavilion.

A tradition developed (which continues to this day) in which Engineering faculty members served as the marshalls for the Commencement, beginning with Mortimer Cooley and Charles Denison. There was a belief that only engineers could keep the trains running on time.
The October 1894 issue of the Michigan Alumnus posed the “Alumni Question.”

“The loyalty of Alumni rarely finds practical expression. It is chiefly a latent patriotism which might just as well not be in existence.

There is a larger number of living alumni of our University than of any other educational institution in this country, about 10,500 in 1892. Harvard is next with 5,553. Yale is third with 4,618. The present popularity of the University can be compared with two of the oldest institutions of learning in the country. Michigan is two centuries younger than Harvard, yet her body of alumni is nearly twice as strong numerically.

Our University has furnished to the country 26 college presidents, 34 members of the House of Representatives, five senators, three chief justices, 12 state supreme court justices, and 68 judges. A number of governors as well.

If our eminent alumni chose, they could exert powerful influence for good to the University. But they don’t. It can hardly be said that our alumni are not an effective factor in the development of the University because they are scattered and disunited. As a matter of fact, the alumni are elaborately organized—there is too much organization. The indifference of our alumni cannot be traced to lack or organization.

If the graduate is appealed to for money, he will hesitate before endowing an institution which an illiberal legislature may do much to cripple. Many alumni say that although the old associations are pleasant as a recollection, the new ties, new duties, and new institutions draw their energies.

We need to draft alumni into the service of the University when legislative appropriations are sought. Crystallize the alumni into clubs no matter how small the knot of alumni in a given locale. Perhaps the ‘Michigan Alumnus’ will be the agency which will create the atmosphere in which the alumni spirit will be stimulated and developed into an active factor in the growth of the University.”
Alumni
On February 4, 1911, a National Alumni Dinner was held in New York to honor Michigan’s Congressional leaders. The University of Michigan delegation in Congress, with 27 members, was greater than that of any other institution. Harvard had 16; Yale and Virginia had 15. The event was described in the March issue of the Michigan Alumnus.

“...a mighty tribute to the power of Michigan friendships. The alumni delegations of St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Toledo, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Washington, Philadelphia, Rochester, Boston, and the ‘Wolverine Alumni Special’ train from Chicago, Detroit, and Michigan points, and the alumni who came from far away Helena and Denver, all to join in one vast tribute to our beloved University and to her distinguished sons. The University is ‘a truly national school,’ and its current 5,383 students come from every State, Territory, and Insular Possession, as well as from 29 Foreign Countries.

The words of Dr. Tappan have proved prophetic. A young vigorous, free, enlightened and magnanimous people had laid the foundations of a State University; they were aiming to open for themselves one of the great fountains of civilization, of culture, of refinement, of true National grandeur and prosperity. And it is because of the graduates scattered all the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific, men who are doing things that the University has got its reputation, and I think deserves it.

At Headquarters there was a small button with block ‘M’ and the legend ‘National Dinner, Feb. 4, 1911’ in yellow. Attached to the button was a small silk American flag, suggesting the patriotic purpose of celebrating the achievements of Michigan alumni in the service of the nation. Being thus ignored the sun soon returned for his share in the general good fellowship, and out came the official flags of the day, the Stars and Stripes, the State of Michigan Flag, and the University of Michigan pennant, which had been send on by Governor Osborn and President Hutchins to join that of Uncle Sam in the breezes of Broadway, as emblematic of the celebration of that high and pioneer purposes.

Detraining, we were met by the advance guard of the New York contingent who had been with an army of red caps saw that none of us got away until after we had been rounded up and properly photographed for purposes of identification in case any of us became lost or stolen. The sixty porters then stowed us away in sixty taxicabs, and we were whisked away in the bright sunshine to our respective abiding places, the greater number going to the Hotel Astor. But bringing into proud reminiscence the services of alumni and faculty for the nation, a wonderful roll of honor, yet one which can be duplicated with equal splendor in a dozen fields of no less importance.
Along the entire length of the room was a gigantic picture of the University Campus with all its buildings, each faithfully reproduced in color, and giving the panoramic view, as it is today. The painting was 60 feet long and 30 feet high, so arranged that the view of the Campus appeared without obstruction above the “Capital Table.” A few moments after some one discovered that the Library Clock stood at 7:20 and then that the hands actually moved; it was a real clock and did its work as faithfully as any undergraduate could wish. The Class of ’70 which according to the song book, organized the University Glee Club. It was 9:15 by the chimes and time for the speaking, but the Glee Club held sway for a solid 15 minutes, singing song after song. For nearly an hour the ladies had been filing into the boxes, and every box was crowded with alumnae and the wives of alumni. At this moment the great picture of the Campus suddenly started into light, being illuminated from behind, so that every window shone as with internal light. Suddenly there appeared in the sky above the Campus a glowing representation of the Capital at Washington, and over all the memorable words from the Ordinance of 1787, “religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.”
The University of Michigan played an important role in the nation's space program through its nationally ranked aeronautical engineering program. In the 1950s the Department of Aerospace Engineering added a number of new fields such as rocket propulsion, orbital mechanics, and space science. A major NASA laboratory in space physics was established, with extensive capabilities in upper atmosphere research and satellite instrumentation. The University's strong reputation in aerospace engineering and space science not only attracted significant funding from NASA but also the training responsibilities for a number of astronauts.

The three-man crew of the Apollo 15 moon mission consisted of Michigan engineers, David R. Scott, Alfred M. Worden, and James B. Irwin, leading to the establishment of the first University of Michigan Alumni chapter in outer space!

A document left on the Moon established a lunar branch: “The Alumni Association of The University of Michigan. Charter Number One. This is to certify that The University of Michigan Club of The Moon is a duly constituted unit of the Alumni Association and entitled to all the rights and privileges under the Association's Constitution.”
Let’s sing a song of our college days  
and live them o’er a new  
Let’s sing a song for Michigan  
And friends forever true  
Let’s sing again, like loyal men  
Ann Arbor all for you  
With main and might, our hearts unite  
And sing to the maize and blue  

In future years when memory  
brings us back our college days  
We’ll raise a song for Michigan  
The maize and blue for age  
When we recall those days of yore  
’Mid tender tho’ts of you  
We’ll sing again for Michigan  
Our Alma Mater true  

I’ll ne’er forget my college days  
Those dear sincere old college days  
I’ll ne’er forget my Michigan  
’Twas there long friendships first began  
At Michigan all hearts are true  
All loyal to the maize and blue  
There e’er will be a golden haze  
Around those dear old college days  

From “Koanzaland,” 1909  Earl V. Moore ’12
The Michigan Union was born early one morning in my rooms in Miss Gagney’s home on Laurence Street, the same room in which Dr. Gayley, years before, had written ‘The Yellow and Blue.’ We wanted a better condition; we wanted an organization ‘for Michigan men everywhere,’ an organization that would be the one recognized all inclusive medium to tie up the loose ends, to centralize the Campus life, to bring us all together as Michigan men in whatever contact or endeavor might apply to our life as a whole. To make this organization effective we must have a home—we must have the Union.” Edward F. Parker ’04 (Michigan Alumnus, May 29, 1926, p. 599)

The Michigan Union was both an organization and a building. ‘As its name indicates, it is an organization, a union for all Michigan men, graduates, faculty and regents. Its avowed objects are to promote university spirit and to increase social intercourse and acquaintance with each other’s work among the members of the different departments and other University organizations. In short this building will be a Michigan man’s Ann Arbor club or home; it will be the center of all University activity and social life.” Henry M. Bates ’90 (Michigan Alumnus, April 1905, p. 324)

The Michigan Union was incorporated on November 5, 1904. The first public meeting was a dinner held on November 10, 1904, 1,100 attended. In its early years the Union functioned entirely as an organization, and, in accordance with its fundamental purpose, it became almost at once a unifying and coordinating agency in the life of the students, with the undergraduate organizations turning to it for effective guidance and assistance. The women had a social center in the parlors of Barbour Gymnasium, and the Union was envisaged as a club for men of the University. A campaign began to secure a Union Club House.

The original Union Clubhouse was the remodeled home of Judge Thomas Cooley, a member of the law faculty. The house was a spacious, rambling fieldstone structure with pointed gables. It stood on State Street at the end of South University. Professor Emil Lorch of the Architecture Department made the necessary alterations. The Union Clubhouse opened on November 14, 1907.

In 1912, at the time of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the University, an addition in the form of a frame structure was built at the rear of the Union Clubhouse. This addition called the Assembly Hall, was used for large social gatherings and dramatic performances.
The Union Clubhouse had a large dining room on the first floor, a smaller one at the side, a large lounge, a game room, and a kitchen. On the second floor was a billiard room, a reading room, a room for the directors, and an apartment for the steward. This building served the students for almost nine years.

With the rapid growth of the student body and the increasing importance of the Union, an expansion of its faculties became imperative. A fund-raising campaign was begun.

The first Union Clubhouse was torn down in 1916 to make way for the new Michigan Union. This photo of the groundbreaking for the new Michigan Union shows the back of the original Union Clubhouse.
“Judge Cooley and his friend Elihu B. Pond, father of the architects, purchased these adjoining properties soon after moving to Ann Arbor and thereon built their homes that the friendship begun in a distant community might be continued intimately in the new environment. The main axis of the new building, running east and west through the center of the great tower, coincides with the lot line between the two properties. At the suggestion of a friend, the architects caused to be built into the northeast pier of the new building a stone from the foundation walls of the house which sheltered them during their school and college years; the home to which they frequently returned for rest and inspiration until the death of their mother in 1915. Shortly after this event, the house was moved to the rear of the property and converted to the uses of the Union. The fragment of the stone in the east face of the pier marks the northwest corner of the old house in its original location. The stones which form the interesting mosaic in the platform at the main entrance are from the Cooley house, the first home of the Union.” Irving Pond ’78e (Michigan Alumnus, December 1918, p. 169)

The pond house was moved to the rear of the lot, and with a rough frame building which had been erected in 1912 for student social affairs and dances, served as temporary headquarters while the new building was in the course of construction. “The temporary quarters of the Union at the rear of the lot are surprisingly adequate. The building has been formed by moving the house from the Pond property which stood next to the old Union, and the stucco covered frame shed which has been used by the Union for the last three years, for big dinners and dances, to the northwest corner at the rear of the Zeta Psi House where formerly Walker’s livery barn stood. A basement has been put underneath both buildings and the result is a temporary building which as far as convenience and adaptation to the needs of such an organization is in most respects better than the old building. The big hall which has been used for large gatherings retains the same appearance. It has been raised somewhat higher above the ground, making room underneath for three large dining rooms and a kitchen ample for all the needs of the Union. In the main building, which has been formed from the Pond house, are the general lounging and reading rooms, and the various offices of the Union, as well as rooms for the servants.” (Michigan Alumnus, October, 1916, p.17)
With America's entry into WWI in the spring of 1917, plans for the Michigan Union were modified for wartime use. A loan of $260,000 from the Michigan State War Preparedness Board permitted completion of the building to a point where it could be used as a barracks, and it was then taken over by the Students' Army Training Corps. With the beginning of the fall semester in 1918, some 800 corps members were housed in the Union, and meals were served to more than 4,000 in the building and in a temporary mess hall set up beside it. Thus the Michigan students were unable to use their new Union until 1919.

The New Michigan Union

Plans for the Michigan Union were on a scale unknown for club houses in American universities. Only a building of this size would be adequate for such a large student body. Within the building, correspondingly large facilities included ample lobbies, a large number of dining rooms of various sizes with well-equipped kitchens, and about sixty sleeping rooms for alumni on the upper floors.

The Cooley house was razed in 1916, and the new building was begun. There was only enough money to build the shell; the interior and furnishings were to be provided as subscriptions were paid. Construction estimates grew from $300,000 to $1,000,000, of which $100,000 was set aside for furnishings and $250,000 as an endowment. The University Buildings and Grounds Department was the contractor.

"Basically the style is 'English Collegiate' of the gothic type, though in all its forms and details it is a thoroughly modern American Expression, symbolic of the life of the American university rather than that of the English college." Irving Pond ’78 (Michigan Alumnus, December, 1918, p. 10)
The story of the Michigan Union Opera is so closely interwoven with the Michigan Union that it has become a part of the history of the organization. The Opera was a natural development of the county fair and minstrel shows staged so often during the years when the students were engaged in securing funds for the creation and operation of a Union building. The first Opera, “Michigenda,” was staged at the Whitney Theater in the spring of 1908.

For a number of years the Union Theater was used for Michigan Union productions. In February, 1922 it was taken over by the Mimes Society, a student dramatic organization which was under Union auspices. Here rehearsals were held for the annual Union operas.

It became a custom for students to organize a huge carnival when funds were needed for worthy Campus projects. In 1905 the student carnival in the form of a county fair (later known as Michigras) raised money for the Michigan Union Clubhouse Fund. The Michigras Carnival was given for two nights and one afternoon. The event included a parade, carnival rides, side shows, and games of skill, and it attracted thousands of participants and cleared thousands of dollars. In 1937 Michigras was held for the first time in Yost Arena.

Watching the Michigras Parade
President Hutchins, President Emeritus Angell, Regent John H. Grant ’82, Dr. Andrew White, Bishop Charles S. Burch ’75, and Charles F. Brush ’69
The Michigan Union was indebted to the Opera for its very existence, since the profits from this activity kept the Union out of financial difficulties in its formative years. The first two Operas netted enough money to purchase the building site, and subsequent shows helped to pay off the bonds on the building itself. During the first twenty-three years of its history, the Opera played before capacity audiences totaling approximately 400,000 persons, with a gross income of $812,258 resulting in a net profit of $147,760.

From 1908 until 1929, with the exception of the war years, the Opera was presented yearly with an all-male cast.
One of the first measures passed by the directors after the construction of the new building was a rule that the Michigan Union must remain exclusively a men’s club. Women were not allowed to enter the front door. The side door, known as the ladies’ entrance, gave access to the lobbies, dining rooms, ballroom, and a ladies’ dining room.

The Michigan Union served as the headquarters for the Inter-fraternity Council; Inter-House Council; Men’s Glee Club; Quadrangle; Michigamua; Druids, the senior honorary society of the College of Literature, Science and the Arts; Vulcans, the senior engineering honorary society; and Sphinx, the junior honorary society of LS&A.

Twice a month a Union Forum was held at which controversial issues were debated and discussed by students and faculty.

Union Week, which was held at the beginning of each semester, served to introduce the students to University facilities.

The Michigan Union, in cooperation with the Women’s League, presented various events. On alternate years the two groups presented Spring Weekend, consisting of a skit night and a “soap-box derby.”
University Day, a program for high school seniors, football ticket resale, tutorial services, speech-photography-art contests, dance contests, and student-faculty-administration conferences, were among the many Michigan Union activities.

Orientation Week leaders were chosen by the Michigan League and Michigan Union, and student groups entertained in the local hospitals at Holidays.

The Michigan Union sponsored theater trips to Detroit during the year, permitting the students to take advantage of the plays that came to the metropolitan area.

At its completion in 1919, the Michigan Union was dedicated as a memorial to President James B. Angell, and a bronze tablet to his memory was placed at the front entrance.
In May of 1890, Alice (Freeman) Palmer ’76 addressed the Alumnae Association, emphasizing “the necessity for college girls cultivating their social natures, as well as their intellectual powers.” As a result of her interest, serious consideration was given to the problems faced by women students, and the Women’s League was organized. In October of that year the first general meeting was held in the University Chapel, Mrs. Angell presiding and Mrs. Gayley Browne presenting the objectives of the organization. All college women were to be eligible for membership, as well as the women of the families of those who had been or who were presently professors in the University. The first president of the Women’s League was Ethel (Fountain) Hussey ’91, who was instrumental in the initial planning preceding the League’s formation.

The Michigan Alumnus in November of 1911 commented that the “Women’s League was regarded as the representative of Michigan women in all campus affairs... Everything that is of interest to women and touches them on Campus is carried on by the League.” In the fall of 1894, the Waterman Gymnasium was completed. The men used it in the afternoons and the women on certain mornings during the week. Large numbers of women enrolled voluntarily in supervised athletics. This was evidence enough that a women’s gymnasium was needed. In 1895 the drive for the Women’s Gymnasium began. The purpose was to provide not only a gymnasium, but also other facilities such as bathrooms, parlors, and an assembly room that would accommodate a few hundred where lectures and performances could be given. The Women’s League was promised space in the proposed building, and the women enthusiastically set about raising the $15,000 needed to meet the estimated total cost of these extra facilities.

Barbour Gymnasium was completed in 1902. By 1921 the facilities had become inadequate for the number of women, which had multiplied four times since the building’s construction.
Hospital Volunteers
The “Fruit and Flower Mission,” a committee which ministered to patients in the Hospital, operated under the auspices of the Women’s League beginning in 1890. War relief work was the chief interest from 1917 to 1919, and each woman was asked to pledge a part of her time to the Red Cross.

Class Projects
Class projects and meetings were organized at weekly receptions under the sponsorship of the League. In the winter semester of 1902, the Women’s Glee Club was formed. During Commencement week in 1903, the seniors presented a Senior Play in which all of the parts were taken by women. The graduates were honored by the three other classes at a Senior Breakfast and at a party held by the juniors the night before Commencement. In 1904 the juniors entertained the seniors with an original playlet, which was a takeoff on prominent seniors. This was the first Junior Girls’ Play, an annual production which soon developed into a full-length musical comedy.

The League presented a pageant, “Joan d’Arc,” with a cast of 300 men and women students in the spring of 1914. More than 4,000 attended, and it was a great success. In 1916 another pageant was undertaken as a part of the tercentenary Shakespeare celebration.

County Fair
The first “County Fair,” sponsored jointly by the Men’s Athletic Association and the Women’s League, took place in the spring of 1902. The Fair, held on two consecutive nights in the combined Waterman-Barbour Gymnasiums, was publicized each day at noon by a street parade. Vaudeville and side shows were presented by campus groups, and great crowds attended every evening. This entertainment proved to be the most successful ever attempted, and a large profit was divided between the sponsoring organizations.

Lectures & Symposiums
Lectures and symposiums were held on subjects of interest; the topics varied from the “Columbian World’s Fair Symposium” to a “political symposium”—a debate on women’s suffrage.

Afternoon Dances
The Women’s League sponsored Friday afternoon dances for members and their friends, including instruction in ballroom dancing.

New Student Orientation
The Women’s League co-operated with the Michigan Union in carrying out the Orientation program for new students. Beginning in 1884 the Freshman Spread in honor of new students was given annually by the sophomores for all new women on campus. The Women’s League also provided hospitality and tutoring services for foreign students.

A Reception Committee welcomed Freshman women, helped them in finding their way around campus, introduced them to their professors, and assisted them in obtaining suitable rooms and boarding places and in establishing their church relations.

Housing for Women
Housing was another important problem that was of much concern to the Women’s League. The members promoted projects to arouse interest in better housing conditions, and as a direct result of their labors, separate houses for women, known as league houses, were established on the campus. By 1909, however, because of the growing enrollment of women, it was clear that dormitories would be the only answer to the housing problem. A fund drive was begun and the League employed a financial secretary to travel about and arouse interest in the project among the alumni. As a direct result of their efforts, Helen Newberry Residence, the Martha Cook Building, Alumnae House, and Betsy Barbour Residence were donated to the University by 1920.

Programs and structure fluctuated greatly in the early years of the League, but the purpose remained the same—to unite the women students irrespective of varied backgrounds, courses of study, affiliations, or interests. In addition to its coordinating and governing functions, the League emphasized leadership training in organizational and service opportunities. In many respects this work was not chosen but laid upon it by the demands of the University.

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Another important phase of League activity was the student employment bureau, organized in 1896 to assist women in finding work in the community.

In 1902 President Angell reported: “I take pleasure in recognizing the great value of the services rendered by the Student’s Christian Association, the Young Men’s Christian Association, and the Women’s League in aiding new students in finding suitable homes and also employment. The great body of our students have very limited means, and many of them are glad of the opportunity to gain something by honorable toil, however menial.” (Regents’ Proceedings, 1902, p. 9)
Soon after the Michigan Union was completed, the Women’s League began to raise funds for a building. The number of women students at the University was rapidly increasing each year. By 1927 the funds were secured, $600,000 was to be used for construction, $150,000 for furnishings, and $250,000 as an endowment. Heat and light were to be furnished by the University.
Mary Bartron Henderson ’04 was the driving force behind the construction of the Michigan League. She served as Executive Secretary of the Alumnae Council, led the building campaign, and remained chairman of the building fund until all the payments were made. The architects for the Michigan League were Pond and Pond, the same firm of architects that had designed the Michigan Union.

Just as the male students and alumni had raised the funds for the Michigan Union, the women students and alumnae began a campaign for their building. They organized sales, style-shows, and benefits. The “Women’s League and InterChurch Bazaars” yielded thousands of dollars annually. Class projects were used to raise funds. The Senior Girls’ Play was presented publicly. The Junior Girls’ Play, presented in honor of the seniors and first staged in the Whitney Theater in 1919, opened to the general public for the first time in 1923. In 1924 the first Freshman Pageant was given as a part of the Lantern Night celebration and was thereafter a yearly event; until this time freshmen had not been permitted to participate in extracurricular activities which involved public performances. In 1925 the first Sophomore Circus was held in conjunction with the bazaar.

Robert Lamont ’96 of Chicago established a memorial in honor of Ethel Fountain Hussey, the Women’s League’s first president.

The New York state alumnae contributed $15,000.

Oriental rugs, vases, silver services, pianos, and many other furnishings were donated by alumnae.

A gift of $50,000 from Gordon Mendelssohn provided the Lydia Mendelssohn Theater, a memorial to Mendelssohn’s mother.

Gifts were made by alumnae from all parts of the world.

Chinese alumnae in Tientsin sent antique tapestries made from a royal Manchu dynasty robe.
The Michigan League formally opened on May 4, 1929. At last the women of the University had a home of their own, and the Women’s League had a center for all its activities.
The building was formally presented to the University on April 1, 1930. The new Michigan League included meeting rooms, dining rooms, lounges, work rooms, a ballroom, hotel accommodations, a chapel, and a theater seating 700.