Know Your School: MSU History and Trivia

Portia Vescio
Stephanie Perentesis
April 3, 2013
Topics Covered:

- General MSU history
- Campus grounds
- Traditions
- What every Spartan should know
GENERAL MSU HISTORY
Early History
Early History

- Michigan Agricultural College founded in 1855
- College dedicated on May 13, 1857
  - Classes began the following day
- There were 70 students and 3 buildings: College Hall, a dormitory (Saint’s Rest) and a barn
Agriculture and the Mandatory Labor Requirement
Agriculture and the Mandatory Labor Requirement

- Only one course of study – agriculture
- Curriculum included mandatory labor requirement
  - Three hours per day working in the fields
  - Students were paid – could apply toward expenses
- Later curriculum revised, so credit received and students were tested on what they learned
First Graduating Class
First Graduating Class

- The first class to graduate was the Class of 1861, with seven students
- All seven left two months before graduation to join the Union Army and fight in the American Civil War
The First Women
The First Women

- Women were first admitted in 1870
  - Ten women admitted that year – none graduated
- First woman to graduate – Eva Dian Coryell, Class of 1879
  - Majored in agriculture and fulfilled same requirements as men – including labor
First International Students
First International Students

- Four students admitted in 1873
  - John Macara; Goderich, Canada
  - William A. Nygh; Rotterdam, Holland
  - Nagatane Soma; Hikone, Japan
  - Tunetaro Yamaou; Yeddo, Japan

- Early international students intended to use their education to improve agricultural practices in their native homeland
Early Majors - Engineering
Early Majors - Engineering

- Engineering was first major other than agriculture offered, beginning in 1885
- Farmers of state opposed major
  - Didn’t want their sons studying engineering at a college designed for agriculture
  - Feared engineering would take their children away from the farms
Early Majors – The Women’s Course
Early Majors – The Women’s Course

- Created in 1896 to teach Domestic Science
- Learned science of nutrition and efficient ways of running a home
- First teaching courses at MSU offered as a result of this program
Early Majors – Veterinary Medicine
Early Majors – Veterinary Medicine

- Animals used for agriculture courses – Veterinary medicine natural outgrowth for College
- Classes offered informally since 1860s
- Official course began in 1909
The Business Major
The Business Major

- First business courses offered in 1925
- In 1944 the Business and Public Service School was created
International Studies and Programs

- In 1943 Institute of Foreign Studies opened
- International Club formed 1944
- Office of International Programs established in 1956
- First area study center created in 1960
  - African Studies Center – 1960
  - Asian Studies Center – 1962
  - Latin American Studies Center – 1963
  - Middle East Studies Center - 1972
CAMPUS GROUNDS
College Hall
College Hall

- First building on campus - 1st building in country built to teach scientific agriculture
- Housed both classrooms and offices
- Collapsed in 1918 because of poor construction
  - Found a stump in one corner of the building
Beaumont Tower
Beaumont Tower

- Built on the corner of where College Hall stood
- Named after John Beaumont who donated the money because he wanted tribute to College Hall
- Originally had 10 bells in carillon – Needed 13 to play alma mater (school song), “MSU Shadows”
The Sacred Space
The Sacred Space

- First buildings on campus in this area
  - Natural clearing in a forest
- Frederick Law Olmstead came to help design the campus in 1913 and recommended leaving this area of "sacred space" alone and building no new buildings on it
Union Building
Union Building

- Campus leaders called for a community center beginning around 1905.
- The class of 1915 pledged some money toward a building.
- In 1923 during excavation week students, faculty and alumni dug out dirt for the foundation of the building. The building opened in July 1925.
The Union – Excavation Week
1916 Engineering Building Fire
1916 Engineering Building Fire

- Engineering Building and mechanical shops caught fire Sunday morning, 5 March 1916
- Engineering Building only nine years old
- President Kedzie decided to continue classes in temporary classrooms
  - Asked friend Ransom E. Olds to donate money for new building
  - Used previous building blueprints to save money and time
Olds Hall
Delia Koo International Academic Center
Delia Koo International Academic Center

- Opened in 1944 in refurbished faculty house, known as “International House”
- Favorite meeting place for students
- Current building completed in 1964
- Delia Koo, Master’s degree 1954, donated money for 3rd floor expansion in 2000
Beal Botanical Garden
Beal Botanical Garden

- Oldest continuously operating botanic garden in the United States
- Beal’s goal: assemble 140 species of native grasses
- By 1877 selected site near the Red Cedar River
- Originally called the “Wild Garden”
TRADITIONS
The Rock
The Rock

- Gift of Class of 1873
- Was located in Beal Garden area and moved to area near Beaumont Tower by team of oxen
- Known as “Engagement Rock”
- Moved in 1980s to location near auditorium
- New messages painted daily
Cap Night and Freshman Beanies
Cap Night and Freshman Beanies

- Freshmen required to wear beanie
  - Called “caps” or “pots”
- Band led procession of students into Sleepy Hollow where bonfire would be lit
  - Seniors burned course books
  - Freshmen burned beanies
A freshman beanie
Class Rivalry
Class Rivalry

- Freshman and sophomore classes were rivals and played tricks on each other.
- As the classes grew in size, the rivalry became more violent.
- In 1906 Chester Brewer formalized the rivalry into one day with four events: football rush, canvas pull, tug of war across the Red Cedar River, and flag rush.
Class Rivalry Poster

FRESHMEN!
COUNT YOUR DAYS

Considering Your Undesired and Abominable Appearance, WE, the Class of 1916, Will Eradicate Your Goodfornothin’ Carcases from our Sanctum on DOOMSDAY
OCTOBER 4, ’13

Our Motto: “Short and Snappy”
OUR SYMBOL—GORE

Signed, M.A.C. Class of 1916
Athletics
Athletics

- Early administration against athletic competitions
- Strong support began during Snyder administration (1896-1915)
- Teams started to be consistently dominant following World War II
WHAT EVERY SPARTAN SHOULD KNOW
John Hannah
John Hannah

- Hannah was the 12th president of MSU
- Major growth of campus programs and grounds under his leadership
- Proposed applying land-grant mission to world stage
- MSU’s longest serving president, 1941-1969
Admission to Big Ten
Admission to Big Ten

- President Hannah begins lobbying early 1940s
- University of Chicago drops intercollegiate sports programs
- Three possible replacements
  - University of Pittsburgh
  - University of Nebraska
  - Michigan State College
- December 1948 – MSC voted in
- May 20, 1949 – Official Entrance
International Projects
International Projects

- Following WWII, apply land grant mission to the world
- MSU involved in technical assistance programs
  - Colombia, Ryukyus, Brazil, Vietnam
- Institution Building
  - University of Nigeria, Nsukka; the Academies in Pakistan
MSU and Hollywood
MSU and Hollywood

- Actor John Gavin visited MSU to record sound bytes for the 1960 movie, *Spartacus*
- *Evil Dead, Spiderman, and Oz the Great and Powerful* director Sam Raimi was a freshman in 1977
- Bill Mechanic graduated in 1973 and produced *Cast Away, Speed, Independence Day*, and *Coraline*
Sparty Statue
Sparty Statue

- Sculpted by art professor, Leonard Jungwirth
- Dedicated in 1945
- Original terra cotta statue was moved for preservation purposes to the lobby of the stadium
- A copy stands in the original location
Sparty Mascot
Sparty Mascot

- Made debut in 1954 Rose Bowl parade
- Paper Mache head about six feet tall
- Original head was stolen at MSU vs. UM game and burned in 1955
- Current Sparty mascot unveiled in 1989
For more information:

- MSU Libraries MSU history resource page
  - [http://libguides.lib.msu.edu/MSUhistory](http://libguides.lib.msu.edu/MSUhistory)

- MSU Archives MSU history collections website
  - [http://onthebanks.msu.edu](http://onthebanks.msu.edu)
QUESTIONS?
Thank you!

vescio@msu.edu

perente1@msu.edu