

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY



Freshman Newsletter - #1

February, 1969

*... an exciting
community
of learning*

CHANCELLOR'S GREETING



It is a pleasure to take this means of extending to you an advance welcome to Oakland University. On behalf of the students and faculty, I can say that we are indeed pleased that you have chosen Oakland and will do everything possible to merit your confidence in this institution.

You will find our faculty to be an outstanding one, with an unusual dedication to teaching. Their talents, along with the other learning resources of the campus community, will be directed toward assisting you in beginning your college education. However, your success throughout your university life will depend to a large degree upon the enthusiasm, the curiosity, and the energy that you bring to the learning experience.

Until I have the opportunity to greet you personally next fall, I want to welcome you to the University community.

L. B. Warner

YOU HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO OAKLAND . . .

. . . and during the next months before fall enrollment, you will undoubtedly have many questions regarding the University. To answer some of your questions and to keep you informed of the latest happenings within the University, you will receive a series of Newsletters at monthly intervals.

In the issues to follow general information regarding academic programs, student activities, student services and campus traditions will be discussed. The Newsletter will also introduce you to faculty members and give you some information concerning research and special programs they and their colleagues are carrying out on Oakland's campus.

One of the first things you will discover as a student at Oakland is that the faculty and staff here are dedicated to making your learning experiences within the University complex successful ones. Your understanding of the many programs and services described to you in succeeding issues is important in our fulfilling this goal. We hope these previews of what to expect next fall will help you achieve a successful transition to Oakland.

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S OFFICIAL SEAL AND MOTTO



. . . Perhaps you've seen this seal and motto already on other materials sent to you and have wondered what it means. Dr. Howard Clarke, a professor of Classics and chairman of the committee that suggested the motto, offers his recollections on finding an appropriate motto for Oakland University.

"SEGUIR VIRTUTE E CANOSCENTZA"

A few years ago Chancellor Varner appointed me chairman of a small committee charged to discover or invent or otherwise come up with an appropriate motto for Oakland University. We didn't know quite how to begin, so we started by whiling away afternoons in the grill trying to recall memorable words we had heard or read. We didn't have much luck--apparently all those wise sayings just weren't that memorable--so we tried to make up an original motto. Some of our concoctions were pretty unprintable, too. Then we started to think about the mottoes of all the schools each of us had attended, but this helped not at all; let's face it, most mottoes of most schools are very square indeed, and we didn't want to burden Oakland with the dreary pieties of the past or the specious slogans of the present. Finally, we decided to limit our range of choices by determining on the language in which our Oakland motto should be expressed. Now we started to make some progress.

Latin, the obvious choice, was out--too many schools already had Latin mottoes; Greek was out, too--too difficult to read; English didn't appeal to us--who could tell when the words we chose might turn up in a cigarette commercial on TV; French was a possibility--but it's a hard language to pronounce; there's Spanish, too--but nobody could get very excited about Spanish; next, German was eliminated--it's not the most beautiful language in the world and the Germans have tended to misbehave in the twentieth century; and, finally, nobody wanted to think about the disastrous publicity we would reap from a motto in Russian. But by a process of elimination we found ourselves coming ever closer to one of the great languages of Europe--Italian.

Of course, Italian! The language of Dante and Michelangelo, of St. Francis and Machiavelli, of da Vinci and Garibaldi, the official language of music, the language of the greatest opera libretti (and the language, too, of some of the world's most beautiful women). Well, among Italian writers, there is pre-eminently Dante and his great epic, the Divine Comedy. If Dante, in this magnificent poem, could practically create Italian as a literary language, then he could certainly produce a motto for Oakland University.

There are a number of brilliant scenes in the Divine Comedy, but there is one in particular that seemed to us to strike the right note of exhortation and inspiration--at least two of the ingredients that belong in a university's motto. This is the stirring speech that Dante has put in the mouth of the Greek hero Ulysses, whom Dante and Vergil meet in their progress through the Inferno, the first of the poem's three parts. Dante thought of himself as a Trojan (the Italians were descended from the Romans and the Romans from the Trojans--or so they all like to think) and he didn't particularly like Greeks (that's why he put Ulysses in Hell), but he does formulate for Ulysses one of the most inspiring speeches ever composed. It is an address Ulysses delivers to his men in the course of their long and arduous journey home after the Trojan War. "In it he calls upon his followers to sail on and on in pursuit of knowledge and experience of the world--even beyond the Pillars of Hercules (the Strait of Gibraltar), traditionally the ancient world's limit of legitimate exploration. He exhorts his men to remember that they are human beings and that it

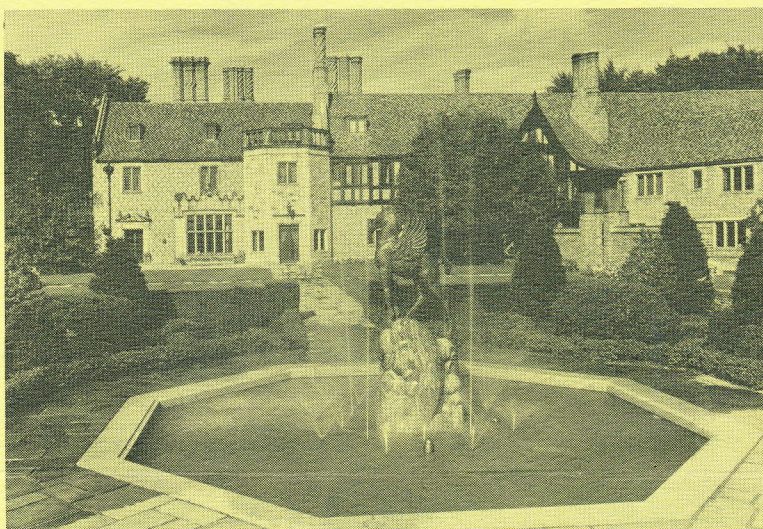
is their pride and their responsibility to 'follow courage and wisdom'. Ulysses' words are particularly appropriate for a university, since they are a reminder that the pursuit of knowledge requires both courage and conscience, but is ever man's great aspiration, his highest human endeavor."

The last three sentences in the preceding paragraph I have excerpted from a description of the motto that I once wrote for the Oakland University Student Handbook. The description is adequate as far as it goes, but it does not exhaust the meaning of the motto nor does it fully render the message our motto should communicate to the members of Oakland University. For the words we have chosen are not "follow courage and wisdom", but "seguir virtute e canoscenza", and the Italian words have meanings that range far beyond their English equivalents. The Italian seguir, for instance, is a stronger verb than the English follow, suggesting that the pursuit of knowledge is indeed a pursuit and hence requires energy and devotion and commitment. Likewise, virtute, connotes more than courage. It suggests also that the student and teacher in the pursuit of wisdom must be moral, responsible, dignified, humane--in a word (how much misused) "virtuour". And canoscenza suggests a dimension of wisdom that is beyond the narrow, the technical, and the pedantic; it reminds us that true wisdom involves an acquaintance with self and world, a total awareness of what it means to be a human being.

So that is what our motto says. And although I am a college professor and occupationally addicted to lecturing the young, I have nothing to add to what Dante has said so well. It's a good motto. It has class. Think about it.

MEADOW BROOK--THE TRADITION OF A NAME

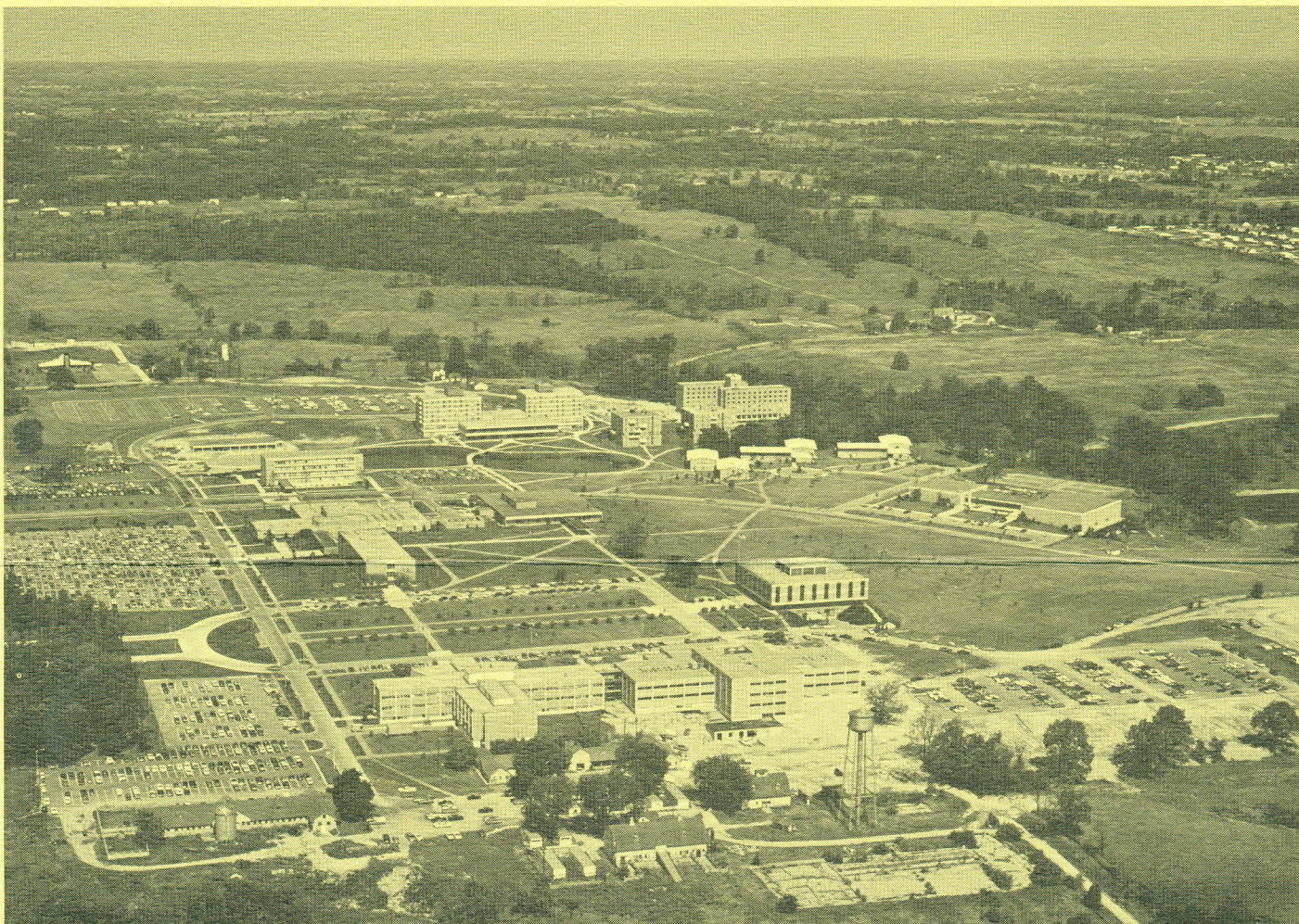
You will find the name "Meadow Brook" borne by many things on and near campus-- Festival, Theatre, Fair, School of Music, Elementary School, Subdivision, and Baptist Church, among others. It all began with Meadow Brook Hall, one of the world's great homes, built in the 1920's on the estate which has since become Oakland University.



Meadow Brook Hall, containing 200 rooms, was the home of the late Mr. and Mrs. Alfred G. Wilson. It is surrounded by wooded and rolling pasture land on which the Wilsons bred great herds of horses, from miniature Shetlands to gigantic Belgian draft horses. In 1957 they gave their 1,400-acre estate and \$2,000,000 in cash to found the University, retaining during their lifetime the use of Meadow Brook Hall as their home.

Early planning of the University was done in Meadow Brook Hall by a panel of distinguished educators and statesmen whose meetings were known as the Meadow Brook seminars. The Wilsons continued to open the doors of their home to many University functions, including most recently a reception, banquet, and dance for seniors two years ago.

The mansion officially became University property upon Mrs. Wilson's death in the fall of 1967. However, the estate is still being probated in court and no decision has been made as to its future use.



From two buildings when it opened in 1959, the Oakland Campus has expanded quickly to a complex of 21 buildings. The University is in the midst of a \$46 million five year capital outlay program, which will add 13 academic and service buildings plus the dorms needed to accommodate its rapidly growing student body. Three buildings, the \$5 million Dodge Hall of Engineering, the \$3.7 million Hamlin Hall dormitory and the \$660,000 Student Health Center, were completed in 1968.

O A K L A N D U N I V E R S I T Y
Rochester, Michigan

Freshman Newsletter - February, 1969

Bulk Rate
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Rochester, Michigan
Permit No. 17