

Our College Family AlbumCollege Seal

This afternoon you are going to see some of the people and places that have been significant in the life of our college. You undergraduates who sit here today might well be the great-grandchildren of our first graduates, [for the Female Normal and High School was established by a resolution of the city's Board of Education just 88 years ago, on November 17, 1869. This board of education was composed of 12 commissioners appointed by the Mayor, including in its membership William Wood, white bearded, seated second from the right, in the second row. He later became president of the board and chairman of the college governing committee. Mr. Wood was an ardent friend of the new institution and a constant and staunch supporter of its first President, Thomas Hunter. The new school provided higher education at public expense. It afforded the city a "constant supply of trained and competent teachers." Its students would be elementary school graduates who had all passed an entrance test at 75 or better, and who were at least 14 years old.]

1869 BoardMap

A building for the new school had still to be erected. At that time most of New York's million inhabitants lived below 14th Street. Therefore the new school was first located in downtown Manhattan, in an upper floor and a half of a business building at 694 Broadway, at the corner of 4th Street, running through to Lafayette Street. The long plot on the extreme right of the map is the site. Eight classrooms were provided, with an assembly hall that could be converted into eight more rooms by pushing sliding doors and curtains into place. Such were the physical accommodations.]

As to the Faculty: Irish-born Thomas Hunter, forced to leave Ireland because of his strongly-expressed democratic views, had first found employment in America as a drawing teacher. A fine teacher and a dauntless man, he had become a school principal, at the age of 26. Now, just 38 years old, he

Dr. Hunter1870

was to plan and conduct a school which was to be both an academic institution and a training school for teachers.

President Hunter, in addition to his administrative duties, was also professor of intellectual philosophy and of the theory and practice of teaching. Professor Arthur Henry Dundon, named as vice president, was professor of the English language and also of Latin. It was Professor Dundon who devised the college motto: *Mihi Cura Futuri* -- "Mine is the Care of the * Future." [There were two other professors on that first faculty -- Joseph Anthony Gillet, professor of mathematics and physics, who years later was to serve as acting President, on Dr. Hunter's retirement, and Charles Albert Schlegel who headed the department of German and French. [Lydia F. Wadleigh, who had been principal of a fine public school, became the first Lady Superintendent. (Later Wadleigh High School, and Wadleigh alcove at Hunter College carried her name and memory).

On St. Valentine's Day, February 14, 1870 the opening exercises of the Female Normal and High School were held in the third floor assembly room. More than 1000 registered teacher-pupils, as the students were officially called, met on that first day. The new school now began its years of service and of growth. During that first term provision was made for a Model Primary School, and the name Normal College of the City of New York was conferred on the new institution. The first graduation exercises were held the following July for 97 students who had completed five months of professional training. [From the first Dr. Hunter and William Woods worked for a permanent building, and when land had been acquired at 68th Street and Park Avenue, formerly Hamilton Square, it was Dr. Hunter's plan that shaped our permanent home. In September, 1873 the girls of Normal College moved into that permanent building. Around the barren neighborhood roamed wild goats, but the building was spacious and magnificent. [There were

Prof. Gillet

Miss Wadleigh

Old Park Ave Building

The Chapel

promenades, playrooms, a calisthenium, and library, in addition to classrooms, and a physics laboratory in which Professor Gillet conducted all the experiments himself, for fear, as he said, that some young lady might hurt herself. This picture shows the chapel, or assembly hall, of that building.

Faculty of
1880

The years saw a group of hard working girls at school who found the days full of adventure. [By 1879 the three-year program was extended to four years, and the Faculty, as you see, was enlarged. In 1888, the course was again lengthened -- to five years for the academic sequence -- and the

Daily Dismissal

Normal College was empowered by the state legislature to grant degrees. [Daily dismissal occurred at two o'clock for the entire student body.

During the early years of our college the students, despite their youth and their earnest studying, planned activities that have grown and flourished.

Alumni
Accomplish-
ments

* The Alumnae Association itself was organized in 1872 "for the purpose of preserving the friendship and pleasant intercourse begun during our college life, and to advance by every means within our power the best interests of our Alma Mater." Its early activities included the nurturing of the free kindergarten movement -- the first free public kindergarted in America was ours. A loan fund for needy students was set up and has been constantly enlarged. It was the Associate Alumnae who founded the college library. [

Miss Wells

In the 1890's the Alumnae Settlement was established on East 72 Street. One room served both as office and as bedroom for Mary A Wells, the Head Worker, graduate of the class of 1880. A picture of the college stood proudly on her bookcase. The settlement brought to residents of the Upper East Side, old Yorkville, day care for their children, health and social service for the entire family. Today the number aided is so great, the activities so expanded, that other groups combine with the Associate Alumnae to maintain Lenox Hill House. In 1896, the Alumnae News, a warm and friendly paper, came to life under the wise guidance of Mrs. Eleanor Funk Hahn. [

President
Harrison:

flowers
strewn

Alumnae
NEWS

In 1889, when the city celebrated the centennial anniversary of being the first United States capital under the constitution, Normal College students strewed flowers before President Harrison as he entered City Hall.

During these years, the two literary societies of the college, "Philomathean" and "Alpha Beta Gamma," forerunners of our present departments clubs, provided musical, literary, and dramatic programs in the chapel. This picture shows the entire cast of the Christmas play of 1893, which was written and produced by the Senior class. In 1889, the literary societies had joined forces to bring forth a publication. Echo first appeared in April, 1889. In the 1890's, Echo sponsored another publication, an Annual, later named Wistarion

in reminder of the lovely Wistaria vine that bloomed on the college wall. Fashionable change. In College, in the Manual Training Class, as it was called, dresses were carefully covering Athletics also claimed its enthusiasts - the "Normal five" of basketball

even went to Staten Island and to Southampton to play. 1901 saw the last senior class that was graduated in dresses. The graduates of 1902 were the first class proudly clad in caps and gowns.

By 1903 the college course was again reorganized. A separate four-year high school was accredited by the State Board of Regents with a three-year college course. Not long after, qualified high school graduates were offered a four-year academic course with a fully accredited degree of Bachelor of Arts. 1906

Dr. Hunter in 1906 was 75 years old. He had created a school and led in its development from a three-year course following elementary school, to an institution that could take a girl at kindergarten entry and guide her through elementary, and high school, and on to college graduation. Dr. Hunter "in the full vigor of his health presented his resignation with the earnest dignity and simplicity which ever characterized his work."

Professor Gillet declined to be considered as successor to President Hunter. However, he did serve as Acting President for a year and a half. You see him in the middle of the second row in this picture, surrounded by

Christmas Play
1893

Manual Training
Team, 1901

Class of 1901

Class of 1902

Also
created
the
Library

Echo
Wistarion

Fashionable change

Dr. Hunter
1906

1907 graduates
with
Prof. Gillet

the graduates of 1907. It was he who worked heartily with the Alumnae Association, and successfully, to prevent a merger of Normal with the City College, because "The two schools are not alike in tradition or in outlook. Let each go its own ways and advance along its own lines." [Professor Gillet died suddenly in January 1908. Years later his name was perpetuated by Gillet Hall on the Bronx Campus.] Professor Burgess, head of the natural science department, acted as president until the induction in May, 1908 [of Dr. George Samler Davis, our second president. A graduate of City College, and of Columbia's law school, he had been associate superintendent in the city's school system. Dignified in appearance and manner, he was kindly, direct, earnest. It was in his administration that Columbia and Teachers College gave full recognition to our graduates as candidates for advanced degrees. In 1909, the commencement procession had first shown the outward and visible signs of scholastic distinction -- the faculty marched garbed in full academic attire (though no picture is available.)] Notice that the Faculty of 1910, larger in number than earlier faculties, also included a number of women. In these years the present High School Building on Lexington Avenue was completed, but for many years thereafter the college occupied the structure and the high school was scattered over various parts of the city. It was during the construction of the High School Building that President Davis obtained a Hunter College Subway station at 68th Street and Lexington Avenue. In 1916, under president Davis, the summer session was established, and in 1917 the evening and extension session. [Miss Annie E. Hickinbottom had been appointed as woman superintendent in 1906. A warm hearted, sympathetic guardian of the "department" of that period, her duties expanded when she became the first Dean of Students, a post she held until her retirement in 1934.

Gillet + Hall

Pres Davis

Faculty 1910

Dean Hickinbottom

1909
Commencement

STUDENT COUNCIL 1911-12

In 1911-12 a strong feeling among the students that they should assume greater responsibility for themselves, resulted in the establishment of a student council. Its objectives were: to form a nucleus of public opinion, and to agitate for the general welfare of the college, in accordance with such powers as the Faculty may from time to time grant. There were other "firsts" at this time. A college literary annual Ye Pedlar's Pack appeared for two consecutive years. A college newspaper The Normal College Bulletin dated its first issue October 8, 1913 and survived until absorbed by the present-day Arrow. The first student hop, the first Athletic meet (ancestor of Field Day), the first Sing, all came between 1912 and 1917.

Publications

Physics Laboratory 1915

The Old Christmas Play written and presented annually for over twenty years by the upper classmen, became the Varsity Play, the writing of an established playwright, the casting open to the entire student body. Before 1915, students were conducting their own experiments in physics in a well-equipped laboratory. One of the most satisfying events of these years was the changing of the college name. No longer was the college merely a professional school. It had broadened with a curriculum of standard scholastic rank.

1914 Hunter College

Many names less restrictive than Normal were proposed but the Alumnae would hear only the name Hunter. On April 4, 1914 Normal College did become Hunter College. Dr. Hunter, the "beautifully handsome, majestic old man" now 83 years of age, had the joy of receiving this tribute from "his girls".

W. W. I - Red Cross Group

In 1917 came the United States' entry into World War I. Students and staff helped in the military census; they joined the Women's Land Army; as you see, they were active in Red Cross Work; they donated four ambulances to the Red Cross; they organized the Hunter College Minute Men; they raised over a million dollars in Liberty Loan drives. And students and staff maintained the high academic standard of the college.

World War I Activities

Gym. Class 1920

Note the earnestness of the girls in this gymnasium class of 1920. After the armistice, in 1920

Hunter College celebrated its 50th birthday. On that occasion the Nu chapter of Phi Beta Kappa was established, and in that year the Master of Science degree was granted in education. The following year the Master of Arts degree was set up, and also the Bachelor of Science degree in Education. It was in the anniversary year that the Alumnae raised \$125,000. towards the building of an Alumnae Hall, a building that to-day is still a dream. Also in 1920, the Alumnae set up a bureau of occupations to find part time employment for students, with volunteers and alumnae-paid workers to operate it. This bureau was later taken over by the college, and today has offices on both campuses. E

Pres. Kieran

By the mid 1920's college registration was too great for the red brick building. Larger quarters were needed, and the city assigned the present Bronx campus for the college. In 1929, on Dr. Davis' retirement, Dr. James Michael Kieran, who had been the benign head of the department of education became our college president. E

Bronx Student Hall

Bronx Campus

It was during his term of office that the present four buildings on the Bronx Campus were completed. Yet classes also crowded the Park Avenue Building. E

Pres. Colligan

Succeeding Dr. Kieran, Dr. Eugene A. Colligan, former professor of history at Fordham and associate superintendent in the city's schools, took office in 1933. It was he who instituted a reorganization of the curriculum, and it was during his regime that a new by-law of the Board of Higher Education provided for an enlarged faculty membership, and for the election of department chairmen. It was under Dr. Colligan that House Plan came into being, in 1937. But more memorable to most people than these changes, was the distressing fire which burned the Old Gothic Structure on the morning of the college's 66th birthday, in 1936. The president immediately arranged to continue classes in rented quarters. Temple Emmanuel at Fifth Avenue and 65th Street hospitably offered its

House Plan

schools rooms to the elementary and junior high school.

New Park Ave. Building

What to do for permanent quarters? The president and the ardent Associate Alumnae successfully urged re-building on the Park Avenue site. This would make evening and summer session, adult education and public forums, as well as day session classes, readily accessible from all parts of the city. The building was planned, and immediately began to take shape.

Pres. Shuster

In September, 1939, Dr. Colligan took leave of absence and then resigned. In September, 1939, Professor George N. Shuster of Notre Dame and St. Joseph's College for Women came to the college as Academic Dean and acting President. The year 1940, the seventieth year of the college, was a gala year. The cornerstone of the new building was laid, the building was completed, and for the first time in a great many years, all the schools of the college, except the Bronx unit, were gathered together under one roof. In 1940, the college also welcomed the induction of Dr. Shuster as its fifth president. A new building, a new leader, offered richer education, more stimulating vistas. But the delight in the new home was broken in December, 1941 with World War II. The college family turned to civil defense, to active measures of aid. First Aid classes, air warden training were undertaken.

World War II Activities

Ambulances were bought, war orphans adopted, blood for plasma was contributed, war stamps and savings bonds were purchased. The Associate Alumnae conducted a center of wartime activities -- teas for servicemen, Sunday afternoon and evening hospitality, small gifts for all.

"Waves"

In the college more than forty special war-area courses were scheduled. And, because of the serious shortage of nurses, a program for graduate nurses, leading to the Bachelor of Science in nursing education was inaugurated in 1942. From 1943 to 1945 the Bronx campus was used a training center for the WAVES. Bronx students and faculty

Nursing Program

U.N. Assembly

"doubled up" with those already at Park Avenue.

In 1946, we had the honor of housing the first regular sessions of the

Roosevelt
Library

United Nations Council and Assembly on the Bronx campus. This is the Assembly chamber in the Bronx gymnasium building. On their departure, college sessions were resumed in the Bronx buildings. [At this time, the two-family Roosevelt House on East 65th Street was purchased from President Roosevelt as a social and religious center for the college to further "World friendship through understanding." The Association of Neighbors and Friends of Roosevelt House, together with the Alumni Association and other well-wishers, raise the annual budget. The Alumni also maintain their headquarters here, with open house for all students. In 1949, the Alumnae Association initiated a scholarship and Welfare Fund from which to provide financial help for undergraduates.

Alumnae
Group

The changes in the college in the 1940's were academic, rather than physical. Courses were provided for returning veterans, men as well as women, at federal government expense. Following this incursion of men, the Bronx center became co-educational, graduating its first class in June 1955. The veterans' paper merged with Bulletin to create Arrow. 1954 saw the last all-girl "Sing." [In the 40's and 50's, the Alumni grew, both in membership and in activity. Local chapters sprang up, such as this Queens chapter group. These older sisters of ours are interested in strengthening the power and prestige of the college, in helping the students, and in the continuing pleasures of friendship with their former school mates. During this current period of expansion of college opportunities, the Teacher Education Program was formulated to give students a fifth year of training leading to the degree of Master of Arts in education. [Now, too, the School of General Studies united the work of Evening, Extension, and Summer sessions, offering various workshops and experimental activities in addition to the regular courses. The most recent additions to the Hunter curriculum are the Basic College Nursing Program for undergraduates established, in June 1954, offering a Bachelor of Science degree and preparation for the title Registered Nurse.

Nurses'
Group

School of
GENERAL
Studies

In September 1956, our Louis M. Rabinowitz School of Social Work became the first graduate School for Social Work to be conducted under public auspices in New York State. *E*

College
Motto

From 1847 when a free academy for boys presupposed a similar school for girls, to 1870 when Thomas Hunter's educational ideals first took visible form, down the years, the college has grown through the vision of its leaders, the faithfulness of its students, the warm support and devotion of its alumni. To-day, large in number, the college is rich in the diversity of its student body. New York City is but one contributor. From Europe, Asia, Africa, South America; from all the United States, come its students, to play together, to work together, recognizing that "the care of the future is theirs."

Elizabeth Vera Loeb Stern

Written for

Alumnae Day, 1957-