

# THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

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## THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF HUNTER COLLEGE

By E. ADELAIDE HAHN

Hunter's Diamond Jubilee opened on the birthday of the Great Liberator, an appropriate date for an institution that is free in every sense of the word—free in that the students equipped to avail themselves of its opportunities may do so without charge, which is of the very essence of democracy; free in its conduct of business and free in the pursuit of truth, which is of the very essence of scholarship; and dedicated to that type of training which has ever been deemed the suitable one for free men and women, a liberal education.

The opening was in the form of a radio address by President George N. Shuster over Station WNYC, "Seventy-five Years of Hunter College Students". The President described the type of girl that Hunter College trains, and the type of training that it gives her. Sympathetic understanding of the student body, and an unswerving determination to give them of the best, characterized his speech, which could not but make the Hunterites in his unseen audience proud to be so ably and so nobly represented.

This address, on the eve of the celebration proper, opened a week of festivities. The seventy-five-year-old College proper—faculty, students, alumnae—had its big two days on Tuesday, February 13th, and Wednesday, February 14th (the day itself); the Elementary School, founded soon after the College, celebrated on Thursday, and the High School, youngest of the three, on Friday; the Alumnae had a Jubilee Tea for their members on Saturday, and a Jubilee Canteen for the armed forces on Sunday. Meanwhile, the Hunter Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa had its own special Silver Anniversary Celebration on Thursday. All these events are chronicled below.

### OPENING OF THE LIBRARY EXHIBIT

As at its Golden Jubilee, so at its Diamond Jubilee, the City's great public college for women was honored by an exhibit at the City's great public library. This exhibit, consisting of pictures, documents, books, and personal mementos of various kinds, mainly connected with Thomas Hunter, shared the honors with another of equal interest, which showed graphically the absurdity of discriminations based on the fallacious notion of "race". Could finer partner be found for our own institution which has always been happily free from any taint of discrimination?

The official opening of the exhibit, on Tuesday, February 13th, was in the form of a program that began promptly at 10:30 A. M.,

with President Shuster as chairman. In the absence, due to illness, of the Director, Franklin F. Hopper, the Library was officially represented by Mr. Paul North Rice, Chief of its Reference Department, who greeted the audience on behalf of his institution. The Board of Higher Education was represented by its Chairman, Dr. Ordway Tead, who urged that "new times demand new measures and new men"; and the Associate Alumnae by its President, Dr. Ruth Lewinson, who outlined the interests and vocations of our graduates, including various professions, motherhood, and war work. The students had a part in the program through the melodious singing of Ruth Kleinman, accompanied by Ruth Pressburg.

The City of New York had as its representative its Chief Magistrate, Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia, who delivered a dynamic speech. He urged that in our studies we must not forget the past; we must study it in order to keep what it had of good, to avoid its mistakes, and thus to use it as a guide in charting the future. Subjects should not be eliminated or discarded because difficult. "And now," he said solemnly, "I am going to shock some educators; I know of no better exercise for the mind than mathematics or one of the dead languages." To judge by its applause, the audience was not deeply shocked.

In conclusion, the Mayor declared that he was proud of Hunter and of his own part in the improvements of the last ten years. He explained that he was not referring to the new building, but to the fact that the College had been given a new soul, new life—and Dr. Shuster. And the audience showed by its prolonged applause that it shared this pride.

### OPENING OF THE COLLEGE EXHIBIT

A goodly audience of which a large part had hastened up from the Forty-second Street Library for the purpose, filled the Hunter Playhouse—alias the Auditorium—for the official opening, at 12:30 on February 13th, of the Hunter College Exhibit, "As We Were and As We Are".

After the singing of the National Anthem, President Shuster, who presided, read from the Scriptures, and then presented the heroine of the occasion, Professor Edna Wells Luetz of the Art Department, who, as Chairman of the Brochure and Exhibit Committee, and with notable assistance from Mrs. Alva Critchley Cooper, Secretary of the same Department, had spent many weary hours on "the double shift" that the Exhibit might achieve the artistic beauty and fascinating interest which all have found in it. Professor Luetz, "covered", as she put it herself,

liked books; from 1933 on, this was ended, and books were banned and burned. We too shall lose our traditional culture unless we train our youth to write intelligibly and to read intelligently.

The three speakers on these three great disciplines—the fourth, that of the Social Studies, was omitted, as the chairman explained, because it combines the method of Science with the symbols of the Humanities—were followed by Dr. Lillian H. Gilbreth, Consulting Engineer, to whom was assigned a general synthesis under the head “The Educated Woman”. She urged that the education of women take cognizance of five different aspects of the individual, physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual; and that it have as its aim the turning out of a final product “socially adjusted, physically fit, mentally alert, and emotionally serene to participate in life to-day”.

At the close of the formal addresses the Chairman gave an opportunity for questions directed to the different speakers. The audience had evidently been stimulated by the four thought-provoking addresses to which they had been listening, so that their questions, answered graciously by the speakers, were stimulating in their turn. Thus concluded a fruitful program well worthy of the grand old Platonic epithets of *Academic* and *Symposium*.

#### THE JUBILEE DINNER

Faculty, alumnae, and students eleven hundred strong filled the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria to overflowing for the Jubilee Dinner on Tuesday evening, February 13th, at seven o'clock.

As usual, Hunterites had occasion to be proud of their two Presidents. Dr. Shuster as usual presided with characteristic grace and charm, lightened by humor and deepened by sympathy. Dr. Lewinson, also as usual, gave an admirably clear and carefully-organized address; she stressed the close relations of the Alumnae with the College, and suggested the formation of an advisory group of alumnae representing various professions to counsel the undergraduates in their choice of their life-work.

The audience also had a chance to pay tribute to the Alumnae Past President, Helen L. Simis, gallant and diligent Chairman of the Jubilee Committee.

The two guest-speakers, President Henry Noble MacCracken of Vassar College and President Victor L. Butterfield of Wesleyan University, presented an interesting contrast in educational philosophy. President MacCracken, of the school known as progressive, conceives of all subject-matter as chosen with an eye to direct utilitarian results, namely, service to the community; he frankly envisages the college of the future as a “political” institution, and as frankly urges “indoctrination” of the students—with the ideas and ideals that in his opinion constitute Americanism. President Butterfield on

the other hand is of the older school which stresses liberal as opposed to practical education; he deplores the heavy emphasis laid to-day on vocational education, and believes the best (and most efficient) thing for the liberal arts college to do with this is to forget about it (for instance, a future business executive needs to attain a large vocabulary rather than to take courses in “business English”); the proper aim in his opinion is to understand and appreciate the world we live in without much attention to the question of “use”; and he hopes the liberal arts colleges will regain their basic position and integrity by revitalizing their function, and thus truly make life full of “social significance”.

A message from another great college president was brought by our special guest of honor Miss Jenny Hunter, who declared that “Father believed in women’s education” and gave several reminiscences of our loved and revered Founder. More reminiscences came from our oldest living graduate, Mrs. Harriet Eagleson of 1871, who recalled for us the happenings of that memorable day February 14, 1870, and delightfully shared other precious memories of our Alma Mater’s early youth. The Golden Class of 1895 in the absence of its president Mrs. Mulligan was ably represented by Miss Mary E. S. Davidson, who announced the forthcoming celebration of the class at the Spring Reunion. The Silver Class of 1920 celebrated then and there, with 57 present of its 150, and with an effective spokesman in its president Miss Margaret Meade, who announced the class gift of \$600. Finally to bring matters down to the present a youthful Ensign of the U. S. Naval Reserve, Miss Ruth McFarland, made a charming little speech in behalf of the Class of 1944.

Another recent graduate whose career has brought distinction to her Alma Mater, Regina Resnik, new soprano of the Metropolitan Opera Company, sang for us with the same superb voice and the same modest demeanor that characterized her when as an undergraduate she charmed her audiences at Alumnae Day and other college functions. Organ music was provided by Natalie Gutekunst, highly talented guest organist.

The Invocation was delivered by the Right Reverend Monsignor William H. Scully, Secretary of Education for the Archdiocese of New York; and the Benediction by Rabbi Henry M. Rosenthal, Director of B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation of Hunter College.

Souvenirs at the dinner were copies of “Jubilee Facts and Figures”, a summary of the results of the questionnaires prepared by Professor Hobart Bushey and Mrs. Irene L. Feaster of the Mathematics Department; and of the handsome and artistic Brochure designed by Professor Edna Wells Luetz, containing an admirable history of the College by Dr. Margaret R. Grennan of the English Department, and many fine photographs, mainly the work of Mr. Alfred Luetz of the Evening Session Art Department.