

PHI KAPPA UPSILON: ORIGINS

A Narrative By Gary Lowell - Pledged Spring 1964

April 3, 2016

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Russell E. Lawrence, born in 1889 in Terra Haute, IN, displays an aptitude for engineering and graduates with bachelors and masters degrees in engineering from Indiana's Rose Polytechnic Institute. He works at General Electric until the outbreak of World War I when he joins the Research Division of the Army Signal Corp. After the War, in 1918, he accepts a teaching position in the Engineering Department of the University of Detroit.

At U. of D. he institutes a five-year co-op program for all engineering students where they alternate regular industry jobs for a month and classroom work for a month. In 1921, he becomes Dean of Engineering. His force of personality, creativity, enthusiasm, positiveness, and charismatic leadership style puts him at the forefront of many changes on campus – a leader who gathers many followers.¹ In the course of setting up and maintaining the co-op program he befriends the middle managers of many of Detroit's rising industries. His successes allow the administration to give him a relatively free hand in running his department.

Lawrence's personal qualities, industrial community connections, and a working knowledge of educational institutions are a primordial soup awaiting only a spark, which, once activated, creates Lawrence Institute of Technology and the **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity.

1929-1930 School Year

The "roaring twenties" promises that everyone could be rich if only they would invest in the stock market. The promise draws many to the market for the first time where stocks could be bought with little cash. Accounts become increasingly leveraged – a classic bubble economy. The bubble burst on October 29, 1929. The great depression begins setting in motion a chain of events that eventually result in the founding of Lawrence Institute of Technology and the **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity.

In 1929 people get their news from three "professional" paths; newspapers, movie newsreels, and radio - WWJ, Detroit's oldest radio station, had only been on the air since late 1920. Otherwise, news travels by rumor, and rumor is the fastest. After two months of negative economic news – failed banks, plummeting demand and markets, increasing unemployment, bleak forecasts, little prospects, punctuated with debt/shame related suicides, rumors reach the University of Detroit. Dean Lawrence, feels compelled, over two successive weeks, to assure the co-op engineering students that "they would not be seriously affected despite the economic downturn" and the rise in unemployment.²

Context

1889:

- Dakotas, Montana, and Washington admitted to union.
- Thomas Edison shows his 1st motion picture.
- Eifel tower constructed.

1918:

- President Wilson sails for Versailles Peace Conference in France.
- Russian revolutionaries execute the former czar and his family.
- Worldwide Spanish influenza epidemic strikes. By 1920, nearly 20 million are dead. In U.S. alone, 500,000 perish

1921:

- Adolf Hitler becomes Chairman of the Nazi Party in his rise to power and prominence in Germany.
- Albert Einstein receives the Nobel Prize in Physics.
- Boeing obtains orders for aircraft and abandons furniture-making.
- The recession of 1920–21 was characterized by extreme (18%) deflation

1927:

- Socialists riot in Vienna; a general strike follows acquittal of Nazis for political murder.

¹ 38_02_18-Wagener-AWrittenHistoryReply

² 30_01_22-TVN-EngSchoolRumors, 30_02_05-TVN-EngSchoolRumorsII

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At the end of the 1929-1930 school year,

- Detroit cannot escape the downward momentum of the national economy. Many businesses are downsizing or closing.
- U of D has not announced any changes as many believe the downturn is only temporary.
- Students at U of D are hearing rumors that the job part of their co-op education is in jeopardy and there may be changes to their classes as well.
- Dean Lawrence assures the students that the co-op program is healthy and their education will not be affected by the economy.

Over the summer Dean Lawrence continues to have conversations with the leaders and middle managers in industry where his students do their co-op work.

1930-1931 School Year

In the fall of 1930, as the new school year begins and, in response to both the continuing-to-deteriorate economy and ongoing meetings with his industry middle manager contacts, Dean Lawrence announces the creation of free classes for industry foremen – two three-hour classes each week for each of three school years. Students will be nominated for these classes by their middle managers.³ This program is separate from the regular tuition-paying co-op engineering students and, despite reservations from the administration, is allowed to proceed. It fits the church run college's mission, does not seem a burden, and is a way to address the current economic conditions. As the fall enrollment figures come in, while the University as a whole sees a drop in enrollment, the Engineering Department shows a small increase.⁴

While the free classes were initially designed to accommodate 250 students, many more apply. To formally welcome the selected students, now referred to interchangeably as "foremen" or "middle managers" and characterized as "ideal students [] hungry for knowledge to this new system of education", Dean Lawrence convenes an initial meeting at the U. of D. Engineering Department. Four hundred thirty five "middle manager" students attend.⁵ By the end of the month, there are 550 students in this new foreman's course. These foremen/students come from 150 different Detroit industrial concerns. It is noted that these tuition-free students get the same education as tuition-paying students minus the "theory".⁶ At a time where U. of D., like all institutions, is

- Charles Lindbergh makes the first nonstop solo transatlantic flight.
- Popular vaudevillian Al Jolson is in *The Jazz Singer*, the first feature-length talkie.
- Philo T. Farnsworth demonstrates the first all-electronic television.
- Ford's Model T production ends in Highland Park. Model A begins at River Rouge.

1929:

- Stock market prices plummet. U.S. securities lose \$26 billion, marking the first financial disaster of the Great Depression.
- St. Valentine's Day gangland massacre in Chicago.
- The Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI opens. President & Mrs. Hoover and Thomas Edison are here for the event.
- Ambassador Bridge opened between Detroit and Windsor – the longest suspension bridge in world when built.
- William S. Paley founds CBS.
- Penicillin is first used to fight an infection.
- Wyatt Earp dies in his sleep at 80.

³ 30_09_24-TVN-FreeCourseForShopmen, 30_12_22-NXX-UofD-FreeTechClasses, 38_02_18-Wagener-AWrittenHistoryReply

⁴ 30_10_01-TVN-Enrol

⁵ 30_10_15-TVN-NewMidMgrsCourses

⁶ 30_10_29-TVN-NightClasses

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only beginning to feel financial pressure, the cost of supporting 550 students rather than 250 figure that sold the program to the administration is not welcome news but also not yet an overwhelming burden.

All the while, the whole Engineering Department continues to be praised.⁷

With the “foreman’s classes” underway, in the time between Thanksgiving and Christmas, Dean Lawrence announces he wants to hold a “foreman’s employment conference” calling upon the large industry officials who have in the past employed the regular engineering co-op students. The desired result of this conference is to determine what adjustments should be made in the “foreman’s classes” curriculum. The character of this advisory board is to be “interesting and informal.”⁸ I believe this advisory board meeting is the seed that will grow into the **Dynamic Club** and eventually into the **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity.

The advisory board meeting is at the Engineering building on December 10, 1930. Thirty-eight industrial executives meet to draw up a standard curriculum for the foreman’s classes with an eye to serving the employment needs industries of those in attendance.⁹

A post-meeting report states that the enrollment for the “foreman’s classes” would be expanded to 2000 students, a formal and ongoing advisory board comprised of these industry leaders in attendance is established, and the seeds of “Theory and Practice” are planted.¹⁰

A month later, on January 14, 1931, the committee’s work results in new detailed curriculum for the foreman’s classes. In completing this work, there continues to grow a closer relationship between Dean Lawrence and Detroit’s industrial leaders.¹¹

On February 11, 1931 Dean Lawrence announces that the co-op arrangement is now to be joined by an option for students to attend classes without the working co-op side. The stated reason is, because of the growing unemployment problem, students could graduate a little earlier and therefore beat other university’s students to a job opportunity. On February 5, 1931, the advisory board meets and works out a plan of classes and, among other things, discusses having regular engineering seniors teach various foremen’s classes.¹²

On April 15, 1931, as Dean Lawrence copes with the deteriorating economic realities, he takes several steps to make sure all understand the direction he is taking with the Engineering Department.

Dean Lawrence gives a spirited 5-point defense of his free “foremen’s classes” in

•US Unemployment rate is 2.9%

1930:

- Detroit is the 4th largest city in the USA
- New University of Detroit High School facility is opens
- Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act is passed by Congress and brings increased tariffs. U.S. foreign trade declines sharply, and the depression intensifies.
- Grant Wood paints American Gothic.
- Turkey renames Constantinople as Istanbul and Angora to Ankara.
- President Hoover says that the stock market crash last year is just a temporary setback, would soon pass, and that the economy would soon bounce back
- Chrysler Building in New York is completed. Costing \$15,000,000 and shows the world that the American auto industry is the best in the world.
- Radio is introduced as a \$130 automobile accessory. The cost of the average new car in 1930 is \$640.
- Forty percent of the workers in Michigan's major cities are unemployed. Michigan's population falls by almost 30 percent.

⁷ 30_11_26-TVN-EngSchoolPuff

⁸ 30_12_03-TVN-ConfCalledSoon-DynamicClub

⁹ 30_12_10-TVN-LeaderHoldMtg-DynamicClub

¹⁰ 30_12_17-TVN-IndLeaderBoard

¹¹ 31_01_14-TVN-NewEngCourse, 30_12_13-NN-ForemanClassesAnnounced

¹² 31_02_11-TVN-CourseOpensForEng-DyClubBrdMtg

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an article “Board Studies Labor Problem” for all to see the benefit of his program.

In a separate article in the same edition of the school paper entitled “Proposed Plans Call For Early Expansion of Engineering School”, Dean Lawrence announces that a new research building needs to be added to the existing engineering building in anticipation of 4400 engineering students (currently 1300 engineering students) within the next 5 years, a large portion being the free “foreman’s classes” – now referred to “Minor Executive” classes. He also says that this new research facility will be made available to industrial firms that participate in the co-op program giving these small firms the same research capabilities as large firms. He states that the evening Minor Executive program “welds the university and industry in a hand-clasp of steel.” He further states that it is “my intension to have the enrollment of the free evening school (Minor Executive classes) limited to firms which employ (co-op) students.”

And in a third article in the same issue, “Senior Engineers act as Teachers”, he outlines how regular 5-year co-op engineering students are teaching (unpaid) at night in the Minor Executive classes and calls it a huge success. The arrangement increases the number of classes being taught without “adding to the burden” of the existing (highly paid) faculty.¹³

In April 1931 Dean Lawrence enters the hospital for surgery with the exact nature of the operation undisclosed.¹⁴ What is undisclosed is that he has cancer.

SIDE NOTE: It is announced in an article that appears in the fall of 1931¹⁵, that before the close of last year’s course [during the 1930-1931 school year] “the foremen organized the U of D **Dynamic Club** which promises to be one of the really live organizations on campus”, the nature of the advisory board transforms into the **Dynamic Club** by the inclusion of the foremen. This announcement, appearing at least six months after the event it is reporting, is the first mention of the **Dynamic Club** organization in The Varsity News. It is during this formation period (Winter 1930 to Spring 1931) that a Club logo is developed and jewelry designed and made to be ready for the next fall’s (1931-1932 school year) classes.¹⁶

The “interesting and informal” advisory board meetings continue, monthly through the rest school year. The success of the endeavor is celebrated on June 6, 1931 at the First a **Dynamic Club** Dinner-Dance held at the Book-Cadillac Hotel. At this time “the club is described as being made up of students in the night classes of the university’s engineering school, where 800 foremen and minor executives in the city’s industrial plants are trained for more responsible positions.”¹⁷

- Government and companies implement up to 30% wage cuts on those lucky enough to still be employed.

- Edsel Ford commissions Diego Rivera to paint murals in the Detroit Art Institute. The only rule was the work must relate to the history of Detroit and the development of industry.

- On March 15, George Eastman, founder of Kodak, commits suicide – citing despondency with the economy.

- Five million die of starvation in the USSR as massive famine in takes hold.

- US Unemployment rate is 8.9%

- Doctor Graeffe marries Dean Lawrence’s sister - see (30_05_07-TVN-GraefeMarrage)

1931:

- “The Star Spangled Banner” becomes the official national anthem.

- Gangster Al Capone sentenced to 11 years in prison for tax evasion.

- Nevada legalizes all forms of gambling, providing the impetus for the growth of Las Vegas.

¹³ 31_04_15-TVN-BrdStudiesLaborProb-EngSchoolExpand

¹⁴ 31_04_29-TVN-LawrenceOperation

¹⁵ 31_09_30-TVN-ForemansCourses

¹⁶ 1930UofDDynamicClubPin

¹⁷ 31_06_XX-NXX-DynClub1stDinnerDance, 31_06_XX-Misc-Co-OrdMsg-MinorExecBqt

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At the end of the 1930-1931 school year,

- The national and Detroit economy continue to deteriorate despite many leaders saying “we have reached the bottom” and “better times are on the way.” Auto production continues to plummet.
- U. of D. Engineering Department has a five-year co-op engineering program and a more-successful-than-expected free evening Minor Executive program partially taught, also for free, by the day co-op engineering students. Increasingly there are extensions being granted to all paying U. of D. students who are falling in the arrears for tuition payment and events that have university support – financial or otherwise – are seeing ticket price reductions to help students attend. There also is outright cancellation of some events for “financial” reasons.
- Engineering students at U of D are supportive of the new Minor Executive program. It is ironic that the 5-year co-op regular students, when they do the industry side of the co-op, typically are finding that they work beside the Minor Executive students. The **Dynamic Club** is formed and holds its first Dinner Dance.
- Dean Lawrence collaborates with industry in the creation of the Minor Executive courses. It is a major success – a success that is not bringing money to a U of D. The university, while not without resources, is finding it necessary to mind its expenses. The wild success of the Minor Executive course may be creating resentment among other departments.

1931-1932 School Year

By the end of September, 1931, 880 foremen are enrolled in the Minor Executive program, the formation of the **Dynamic Club** last year is finally announced, and its first monthly meeting of the new school year will be on September 23. The character of the Minor Executive’s classes is further described in a Varsity News article.¹⁸

Also, announced is that engineering students can now elect to skip the industry co-op portion of their education. Student can earn his degree more quickly and therefore enter the job market more quickly is the stated reason for the change. Alternatively, it is not unreasonable to imagine that, as unemployment increased, co-op students were seen as being less valuable to a business than a full-time family man – a perspective not unusual for the time. Now there are three paths for an engineering education at U of D. Path one is the original five-year co-op program for paying students to obtain a bachelor’s degree. The second path is a four-year degree without industry co-op for paying students to obtain a bachelor’s degree. The third path, resulting in a lesser diploma, is the

- Thomas Alva Edison submits his last patent application. On October 18, 1931, he dies at the age of 84.
- US suffers worst ever drought in its history, starting the Dust Bowl years.
- Empire State Building is completed in New York City.
- Sir Malcolm Campbell, in his Blue Bird racer, achieved the world land speed record of 253.96 MPH
- Japan invade Manchuria
- Chicago runs out of money and cannot pay its teachers for 2 months.
- The Robin becomes Michigan’s official state bird.
- US Unemployment rate is 15.9%
- Doctor Graeffe reports his observations about China. The article includes a short Biography (30_05_07-TVN-GraeffeMarrage)

1932:

- 1932: Franklin Delano Roosevelt defeats Hoover for the presidency.
- Nazis lead in German elections but Adolph Hitler loses run-off election for German presidency.
- Amelia Earhart becomes the first female aviator to successfully fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.
- French President Paul Doumer assassinated; is

¹⁸ 31_09_30-TVN-FormansCourses

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Minor Executive courses, given for free.¹⁹

U. of D. finances are beginning to come to the fore in October 1931. The school reports that it has spent over 1 million dollars supporting their education mission. Two hundred thousand is used to build additions to the Engineering facility and another large portion to keep tuition to 1/3 the actual cost of educating a student. As the students find they are unable to pay the tuition in full and in advance, unsecured loans, funded by the university, are being offered. A student placement bureau is set up to help students find jobs to retire their notes to the university.²⁰

A transitioning plan is announced in December 1931 for the freshmen and sophomores who elect not to participate in the work portion of co-op education. It is referred to as an "accelerated course".²¹ Later in the month, a longer article explains the reasons and benefits of this plan are published.²²

When classes resume after the first of the year, an article about seniors teaching night classes for the Minor Executives is published.

In the same issue, there is also a second mention of the **Dynamic Club**. It says that the Detroit **Dynamic Club** will have a "welcome rally" for new initiates and old members on January 27, 1932 at the Masonic Temple. The U. of D. Band will supply the music. The affair will coincide with its regular monthly meeting. "The club is composed", the article states, "of members of the Minor Executives' classes. Robert A. Plumb is president of the organization." It goes on, "Since its inception, a comparatively short time ago, the **Dynamic Club** takes rapid strides in development and furthering of interest of the university. In the beginning of the calendar year, the foremen outlined an ambitious program including field trips, lectures, and other social and academic activities. The club establishes itself as an integral part of the Minor Executive Division."²³

In February, there are two notices that indicate what the **Dynamic Club** monthly meetings were like. At the time of the Feb 10th announcement, Dean Lawrence, says he expected full capacity enrollment in the engineering program and encourages those interested to enroll quickly to secure their spot.²⁴

By mid-February, after a year's existence, The **Dynamic Club** is making quite an impression on the U. of D. campus as evidenced by an editorial in U. of D.'s The Varsity News. It states, "There is a class, of which a great number of students are not aware, that has accomplished excellent results, an organization that can be set up as an example for others to imitate. This class is a dynamic body – it is the Minor Executives division of the College of Engineering." Separate is an

succeeded by Albert Lebrun.

- Japan invades China.
- The Communist Party of America organizes a "March on Hunger" in Detroit.
- Daughters of American Revolution ask for deportation of jobless aliens
- Charles A. Lindbergh's baby son kidnapped, killed.
- The parking meter is invented in Oklahoma
- Edwin Land invents polarizing glass.
- Since the 1929 "Crash", 2500 banks in the US fail.
- Four protesters are killed during a riot at the Ford plant in Dearborn, MI.
- New York Mayor Jimmy Walker resigns under charges of corruption.
- Ford introduces the Flathead V-8.
- US Unemployment rate is 23.6%

1933:

- Nation repeals the prohibition; Alcohol can now be sold.
- Reichstag fire in Berlin; Nazi terror begins.
- Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany.
- Adolf Hitler announces the state sponsored "People's Car" - "Volkswagen"

¹⁹ 31_09_30-TVN-FormansCourses

²⁰ 31_10_07-TVN-EngTuitionLoans

²¹ 31_12_09-TVN-AccelEngCourse

²² 31_12_16-TVN-NewEngPlan

²³ 32_01_20-TVN-EngStudentTeachers, 31_01_23-NXX-StudentTeachClass

²⁴ 32_02_03-TVN-MinorExecClubMtgA, 32_02_10-TVN-MinorExecClubMtgB

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announcement of the next general meeting of the club with one of the topics being the annual **Dynamic Club** Diner-Dance to be held later in the Spring.²⁵

In March 1932 we find that The Minor Executives and the Dynamic Club contribute a large sum of money for a new flagpole fund drive at U. of D. and that plans are progressing for the second annual **Dynamic Club** Dinner-Dance.²⁶ Later that month articles appear that show increasing engineering enrollment²⁷ followed on April 6, 1932 by further Dinner-Dance plans.²⁸

A spark is applied to the primordial soup the week of April 17, 1932. Dean Lawrence and twelve other lay (non-clergy) faculty are told their contracts would not be renewed for the next fall. In response, Dean Lawrence tenders his resignation. Rev. Albert Poetker, S. J., president of the university, says the moves were purely economic. Enrollment at the university dropped 800 to 1000 students from the fall of 1929. "It is not practical and almost an economic impossibility to maintain the teaching staff we employed at that (1929) time." As news breaks around campus, there are student protests, particularly in the Engineering Department where petitions for Dean Lawrence's return are circulated among students.²⁹ His resignation is effective at the end of the school year.

Left unknown is the background for the decision. Is Poetker (an acting president, substituting for the ailing president of U. of D.) brought in to clean house; is the burden of offering free classes to the Minor Executives, despite being taught by unpaid volunteers, creating too much financial strain on U. of D.; is the character of the university being threatened by the influx of Minor Executives - or worse being a party to self-guided rather than administration-guided curriculum; is it politically untenable for the Engineering department to show steady or increasing enrollment whereas the other programs are losing students, or is it a fatal combination of Dean Lawrence being widely popular with students while exhibiting ever increasing personal and autonomous ties to Detroit industry leaders that help a staid Catholic institution to include his name on those not being offered a contract to return?

Meanwhile the **Dynamic Club**, approximately two weeks after the resignation is announced, on May 7th holds its second annual Dinner-Dance. The event gives all of Dean Lawrence supporters a way to show their support. Over 600 people attend.³⁰

- Germany and Japan withdraw from League of Nations.
 - Wiley Post completes the first successful solo around-the-world flight.
 - The number of lynchings of blacks in the United States during the Great Depression peaks at twenty-eight.
 - Roosevelt inaugurated ("the only thing we have to fear is fear itself"); launches New Deal.
 - Glass-Steagall Act bans banks from dealing in stocks and bonds.
 - Michigan governor William Comstock orders all banks in the state to close for eight days.
 - Edwin Armstrong introduces frequency modulation (FM) radio transmission.
 - US Unemployment rate is 24.9%
- 1934:**
- Dust storms ruin about 100 million acres of cropland in Kansas, Texas, Colorado, and Oklahoma
 - Lawmen in Louisiana ambush and kill Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker.
 - John Dillinger is shot outside Chicago movie

²⁵ 32_02_17-TVN-DynamicClubEditorial

²⁶ 32_03_09-TVN-MinorExecFlagpoleDrive-DyClub, 38_02_18-Wagener-AWrittenHistoryReply

²⁷ 32_03_16-TVN-EngEnrollIncr

²⁸ 32_04_06-TVN-DynamicClubMay7DinDan

²⁹ 32_04_20-TVN-LawrenceOut, 32_04_22-NXX-UofDStudentsProtestLawrenceGone, 32_04_19-NF-LawrenceResigns

³⁰ 32_05_04-TVN-DynamicClub, 32_05_11-TVN-DynamicClub, 32_05_07DynamicClubDinnerDance

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On May 8, 1932 the U. of D. replacement Engineering Dean is announced.³¹

At the end of the 1931-1932 school year,

- The economy continues its downward spiral and Detroit's vital auto production continues to plummet. By the end of 1931, production is at 1.3 million cars, a 75% drop from the 5.3 million produced in 1929.
- U. of D., despite the success of the Minor Executive course and steady Engineering enrollment, sees a decline in overall student enrollment.
- When U of D elects not to renew Dean Lawrence's contract, he resigns and makes plans to start his own school.
- Engineering students embrace the new **Dynamic Club** and students protest Dean Lawrence leaving U of D. The **Dynamic Club** is a large contributor to the flag pole fund, in a newspaper editorial earns plaudits for its activities, and holds its 2nd dinner-dance.

Summer 1932 and 1932-1933 School Year

Relatives of Russell E. Lawrence file Incorporation papers for Lawrence Institute of Technology with the state on May 12, 1932. On June 1 the L.I.T. trustees meet for the first time.

Cards are sent out to perspective students "relative to the registration and election of temporary officers for students intending to transfer from U. of D." and an organizational meeting is called for July 12. One hundred thirteen attend, including Russell E. Lawrence and many **Dynamic Club** (and soon to be **Phi Kappa Upsilon**) members. One of the first topics of discussion is what to call the organization since it is "inadvisable" to continue using The **Dynamic Club** name. The next meeting was set for August 16, 1932

Eighty people attended the August 16, 1932 meeting and hear three new organization names proposed: "Acies" (Latin) *Power of Vision*, "Ciwost" (English abbreviated) *Citizens Workers Students*, and Phi Kappa Epsilon (Greek) *Fraternity and Progress*. Discussion follows and they select the Greek option. A constitution for the new organization is discussed, altered, and accepted. A proposed original organization fraternity song is played and adopted. Lawrence outlines plans for the night engineering course (now called Industrial Executive course) and financial plans are announced. Collections amounting to \$7.85 are turned over to the Secretary due to the treasure's absence. The next meeting is September 2, 1932.

Sixty-eight people attend the September 2nd meeting. The name of **Phi Kappa Upsilon** is suggested because Phi Kappa Epsilon was already in use. Mr. Al Wagener reports on the Industrial Executive courses and the fact that they will be offered for free. Lawrence makes some announcements and names some of the faculty. Registration of charter members of the fraternity is started and a discussion is initiated "regarding the function of the fraternity in connection with

theater.

- Security and Exchange Commission and Federal Communication Commission are created.

- Alcatraz prison opens.

- Chancellor Dollfuss of Austria is assassinated by Nazis.

- King Alexander of Yugoslavia assassinated in Marseilles, France.

- Adolph Hitler becomes Führer when chancellorship and presidency are united.

- Adolph Hitler eliminates embarrassing friends and foes: 77 people executed.

- Wayne State University is organized, absorbs Detroit City College.

- George Richards (owner of WJR) buys the Portsmouth Spartans and moves them to Detroit. He renames the team the Detroit Lions as a nod to the Detroit Tigers.

- US Unemployment rate is 21.7%

1935:

- Nazis repudiate Versailles Treaty, introduce compulsory military service.

- Mussolini invades Ethiopia; League of Nations invokes sanctions.

- Nazi government revokes German citizenship of Jews. Heinrich Himmler starts breeding program to produce "Aryan super race."

- Senator Huey Long is assassinated in Louisiana.

³¹ 32_05_18-TVN-NewEngDean

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the school." The next meeting is set for September 16, 1932.

Lawrence Institute of Technology opens its doors on September 10, 1932 at the former Henry Ford Trade School on Woodward Avenue in Highland Park. Eight hundred students are expected.³²

Thirty-eight attend regular first meeting of the newly named **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity on September 16th. Incorporation procedures are discussed and 9:30 pm on Friday nights is determined the best to accommodate class schedules for the regular meetings. September 30, 1932 is set as the next meeting.

The September 30 meeting is attended by 54 who hear of the formation of a new "Minute Men" committee, the Education Committee (apparently handling L.I.T. education business) report that there were 200 students in the Industrial Executive Course. Also all are reminded of "the necessity of members in regard to addressing all instructors and faculty members without undue familiarity in order to maintain respect." Comments on fraternity pin/insignia designs are heard and October 28, 1932 is set as "the last day of registration of Charter members." A motion to incorporate is passed unanimously. The date for the Annual meeting (Convention) is set for October 28, 1932 at which time elections would be held. Dr. Glauner reports concerning the prospects at L.I.T. and his European trip. The next regular meeting is set for October 21, 1932.

At the October 21st meeting, a representative of Alpha Gamma Upsilon national fraternity makes a presentation of the advantages of affiliating with a national fraternity. The Education committee reports smooth running of classes and schedules at L.I.T. The next meeting is set for November 18, 1932.

On November 18th, it is reported that **Phi Kappa Upsilon** had \$85.10 in the treasury. The Education committee reports that students need to pay attention to the instructors and that some Physics class schedules need readjusting. There are 48 paid and 58 unpaid members and negotiations are ongoing with Bauer Lemke Co., fraternity jewelers, on design and cost of the new pins. The Dramatics committee plans to copyright the fraternity song. There is extensive discussion on joining Alpha Gamma Upsilon, but a decision is made to defer any action indefinitely. Meeting times are changed to 8:00pm.³³

By the spring of 1933, the first issue of the L.I.T. newspaper is published with an article about the founding of Phi Kappa Upsilon which has 116 charter members from the Junior Executive courses at L.I.T., students from U of D, and Detroit City College.³⁴ The 3rd issue of the Lawrence Tech News covers a meeting of Phi Kappa Upsilon.³⁵

- The Boulder (Hoover) Dam is completed.
- The United States Social Security Act is signed into law.
- Babe Ruth retires from baseball after hitting his 714th home-run.
- The United Automobile Workers of America (UAW) is organized in Detroit.
- Detroit Tigers win World Series
- Du Pont chemist Wallace Hume Carothers creates nylon, the first completely synthetic fabric.
- Aircraft-detecting radar is pioneered by Robert Watson-Watt in England.
- US Unemployment rate is 20.1%

1936:

- FDR is reelected in a landslide. The Electoral College vote is 523-8.
- Rome-Berlin Axis is proclaimed (Japan to join in 1940).
- King George V dies; succeeded by son, Edward VIII, who soon abdicates to marry an American-born divorcée, and is succeeded by brother, George VI.
- Japan and Germany sign anti-Comintern pact; joined by Italy in 1937.
- The British Broadcasting

³² 32_09_10-NN-LIT-Opens

³³ 32_07_12-FirstPKUMeeting-Min, 32_07_12-FirstPKUMeeting-Officers, 32_11_21-AlphaCharterMembersList, 32_08_16-OP-OrigProposedConstitution

³⁴ 33_04_05-PKU FoundingAnnouncement

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At the end of the 1932-1933 school year,

- The economy does not improve with the national unemployment ultimately topping out at almost 25%.
- Russell E. Lawrence starts his own school, Lawrence Institute of Technology.
- The U. of D. **Dynamic Club** members move to L.I.T. and become the **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity under the guidance of Russell E. Lawrence.
- **Phi Kappa Upsilon** members help run and manage L.I.T.³⁶

Beyond Spring 1933

On June 15, 1934, Russell E. Lawrence, at the age of 44, dies and is buried in Terra Haute, IN. His brother, E. George Lawrence, at the age of 26, has the fledgling L.I.T. thrust upon his shoulders as he becomes president. And the relationship between the President of L.I.T., the institution of L.I.T., and the men of the **Phi Kappa Upsilon** is never quite the same.

Phi Kappa Upsilon sponsors a tribute dinner for faculty, students, alumni, and Detroit industrial leaders. Robert A. Plumb, the first **Dynamic Club** president is the toastmaster.³⁷

Where once there was a sense of adventure, a shared burden, a shared mission, a partnership – kindred spirits doing good work together with the true warmth and enjoyment of each other’s company – is now gone. The younger Lawrence is a good man who’s businesslike demeanor, needs to concentrate on donations and other fund seeking activities to help stem the tide of red ink, and lack of any long-established and endearing relationship with the fraternity, all resulted in a settling in of a more “professional”, more typical, relationship between a school and a fraternity.

In March 1936, the local and national economy, though slightly improved, continues to challenge L.I.T. E. George Lawrence reached out to Ben Comfort, a well know educator who had been the longtime principal of Cass Technical High School and who is well-connected to local industry, to offer him a deanship predicated upon helping with the schools debt. He declines³⁸

On July 20, 1936, E George Lawrence reaches out to the organization that his brother had been intimately involved with and depended upon, the **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity. He asks for assistance in finding “good reliable sincere students” for L.I.T.³⁹

In 1938, Albert M. Wagener, a **Dynamic Club** member, a founding member of the

Corporation (BBC) debuts the world's first television service with three hours of programming a day.

- Jesse Owens, a black Alabama native educated at Ohio State University, wins four gold medals (breaks Olympic and world records) in Berlin. Adolph Hitler refuses to recognize the American's achievements.

- Famous sit-down strike happens at General Motors Corporation plants in Flint.

- US Unemployment rate is 16.9%

1937:

- Japan invades China, conquers most of coastal area.

- The dirigible "Hindenburg" explodes at Lakehurst, N.J., killing 36

- Amelia Earhart and co-pilot Fred Noonan vanish over the Pacific Ocean on their Round-the-World Flight.

- Joe Louis becomes heavyweight champ.

- The Golden Gate Bridge is completed.

- Frank Lloyd Wright builds "Fallingwater."

- US Unemployment rate is 14.3%

³⁵ 33_05_08-TN-MinMen-PKUMtg,

³⁷ 34_06_34-NX-RELtributeByPKU

³⁸ 36_03_03-WholsBenComfort, 36_03_03-BenComfortLetterDecliningDeanship

³⁹ 36_07_30GLawrenceLetterAppealToPKUforHelp

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Phi Kappa Upsilon fraternity, and a friend to (and was inspired by) Russell E. Lawrence is asked to write out his recollections of the events of those formative years. His narrative reveals a love, a mutual dependence, an admiration, and an appreciation for Russell E. Lawrence and his personal vehicle for carrying on his pursuit, the **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity.⁴⁰

Legacy

Russell E. Lawrence is revealed to be an inspiring leader, friend, and visionary who has an idea of how to serve a population of men, eager to learn but of modest means, by finding a way to educate them. He does so through a failing economy and while coping with a loss of the platform from which to deliver that education. He does it by transforming those he was trying to serve into first, an advisory board, then a **Dynamic Club**, and finally a **Phi Kappa Upsilon** fraternity, and together, they create and sustain a nascent Lawrence Institute of Technology.

Afterward

It is difficult to know exactly the lasting impact of living in those times and being part of the intimately intertwined birth of Lawrence Institute of Technology and **Phi Kappa Upsilon**. But you can get an idea of that impact from the 1964 obituary of first president of the **Dynamic Club**, Richard A. Plumb who also spoke at Russell E. Lawrence's Memorial Service. The obituary lists several of his vocations, "Owned this company, managed that department, and worked for the other." However, about 1/3 of the space was reserved for something that those close to him must have felt described his avocation - the thing that gave him purpose, peace, and pleasure. It said "He was a founder and past president of the Alpha Chapter and the Supreme Council of the PKU Fraternity at Lawrence Tech and the first president of the University of Detroit Dynamic Club."⁴¹

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1938:

- Adolph Hitler marches into Austria; political and geographical union of Germany and Austria proclaimed.
- Nazis destroy Jewish shops, homes, synagogues in Kristallnacht riots; 20,000-30,000 sent to concentration camps.
- Munich Pact—Britain, France, and Italy agree to let Germany partition Czechoslovakia.
- Orson Welles broadcasts his adaptation of H.G. Wells' War of the Worlds, creating a nationwide panic as listeners believe that aliens have landed in New Jersey.
- Aviator Howard Hughes flies around the world in 3 days and 19 hours, setting a new record.
- Seabiscuit beats War Admiral in the "Race of the Century."
- George and Ladislav Biro invent the ballpoint pen.
- Chester F. Carlson produces the first xerographic print.
- US Unemployment rate is 19.09%

⁴⁰ 38_02_18-Wagener-AWrittenHistoryReply

⁴¹ 64_XX_XX-NXX-RobertAPlumbObit