



Convention

Held biennially, Pi Beta Phi conventions provide opportunities for collegians and alumnae to gather in sisterhood, conduct Fraternity business, elect International Officers and celebrate true friendship.

A Time to Gather Together

Conventions have been an integral part of Pi Phi since its very beginning. Just a few short months after the founding of I.C. Sorosis in 1867, the women gathered at Fannie Thompson's home in Oquawka, Illinois, to conduct the business of the Fraternity.

Throughout the years, convention has continued to serve as the legislative body and a time to conduct the formal business of the Fraternity. It provides an opportunity for initiated members to meet to discuss and finalize all

questions, but also to gather in friendship and true sisterhood—joining collegian and alumnae members with International Officers and Headquarters staff. Delegates from large or small alumnae clubs and chapters, dedicated to the same purposes, ideals and goals, vote on legislative decisions that help continue the successes of the Fraternity.

While legislation and other businesses may vary greatly at each convention, certain ceremonies and traditions remain

constant. There is an opening reception held for delegates and visitors, past and present officers are introduced and award winners are announced and recognized. The first Grand March took place at the 1890 Convention and has happened in some form or fashion at every convention since, with four of our founders walking in the 1918 Convention Grand March. In precious years, the convention body was seated for dinner and the elected officers entered the room, walking the wine carpet as their



names were announced. In recent years, Grand Council began to think about how to modernize the Grand March while still honoring tradition and our founders who participated so long ago. In 2023, all attendees were invited to walk the wine carpet—ensuring no Pi Phi walks alone and joins generations of sisters who have worn the golden arrow since 1867.

Other convention traditions include the convention count off to showcase who has attending the most conventions, the Initiation Ceremony for our alumna initiates, Cookie Shines, highlighting literacy service projects supporting Pi Beta Phi Foundation, and of course, recognizing and celebrating the hard work and dedication of alumnae and collegians with awards.

In 1991, the Chapter Banner Parade was introduced to the convention body in St. Louis, and it continues to be held during Dinner by Chapter and is one of the highlights of convention.

Today, convention is an opportunity to come together with sisters across North America with celebrations and cherished traditions such as a Cookie Shine, Dinner by Chapter and member class reunions. It's also an opportunity to present annual awards and new alumnae club and chapter charters. Keynote speakers, workshops and affinity groups have been added to the agenda over the years to provide a professional development and networking opportunity for members.

One of the most important roles of convention is that it provides

an opportunity for members from across North America to gather in friendship and true sisterhood. Whether you have been a member for less than a year or have worn the golden arrow for more than 75 years, there is truly something special about attending a Pi Beta Phi Convention.

Conventions

Poem by Nebraska Beta **MARILYN S. FORD**, who served as *The Arrow* Editor for 21 years

Strangers.

Old. Young. Middle-aged.

Gathering from the far corners

With problems, ideas, hopes, love.

But love especially.

For each other.

In Pi Phi.

And strangers only briefly.

For all are sisters

And wearers of the arrow.

Friends.

Founders and Conventions

In 1893, both **EMMA BROWNLEE KILGORE** and **FANNIE WHITENACK LIBBEY** sent their registration fees and made early reservations, but when the time came, neither was able to attend.

Emma was a special guest of the 1897 Madison Convention. A

delegate said, “Mrs. Kilgore is a charming, little woman, abounding in reminiscences of those early days of ‘67, and her explanations and elaborations were much enjoyed by the listeners, as she is possessed of a quaint humor and a ready wit. ... Of all the pleasures of convention this, of

meeting and talking with Mrs. Kilgore, was one of the greatest.”

In 1904, Emma, Fannie, **LIBBIE BROOK GADDIS AND JENNIE HORNE TURNBULL** attended the St. Louis Convention “with an enthusiasm as fresh and spontaneous as they had for the Fraternity in its early days as I.C. Sorosis, they told, for the delight of the younger members, stories of their college days and the beginnings of Pi Beta Phi.”

Libbie's speech, “The Silver Link, the Silken Tie,” highlighted the 1912 Evanston Convention.



Beginning in 1915, the first Pi Beta Phi Special, a train specifically chartered to transport members to convention, left Chicago with ten cars full of Pi Phis. It became an essential part of subsequent conventions.

In 1918 Libbie, Emma, Fannie and **INEZ SMITH SOULE** attended the Charlevoix Convention. A historical play by Vermont Beta **MABEL BALCH** was presented. Afterwards the founders each gave a talk. Emma won a round of applause with:

“ You scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage
If we chance to fall below
in beauty
Rest assured, we are still on duty
Your founders hold their
heads on high
Because they mother Pi Beta Phi.

Emma, Inez, Fannie and **CLARA BROWNLEE HUTCHINSON** attended the 1921 Charlevoix Convention. **ELLA SMITH HOYT**, an I.C. at Monmouth and sister of Inez, was also present.

Inez was the only founder present at the 1923 Estes Park Convention. Libbie, Inez, and Fannie attended the 1925 Lake of Bays Convention.

Inez, Fannie and Clara attended the 1927 Pequot Convention. Libbie, Clara, Fannie and Inez attended the 1929 Pasadena Convention. In 1931, **FANNIE WHITENACK LIBBEY** and Jennie were present at the Asbury Park Convention. Inez attended the 1934 Yellowstone Park Convention.



At the 1936 Chicago Convention, 1938 Asheville Convention and 1940 Pasadena Convention, Fannie represented the founders. She was the last founder to attend convention. Inez was 94 years old when the 1940 Pasadena Convention took place, and she sent flowers as a regret of her absence.



Conventions At a Glance

Listed as Date, Location Presiding Officer:

1st - August 1867 Oquawka, Illinois
Fannie Thomson's home
Ada Bruen Grier, Illinois Alpha

2nd - 1870 Mt. Pleasant, Iowa
Libbie Brook Gaddis, Illinois Alpha

3rd - June 1872 Greencastle, Indiana
Louise Carithers Morrison, Illinois Alpha

4th - 1878 Indianola, Iowa
Emma Patton Noble, Iowa Beta

5th - October 27-29, 1880 Mt. Pleasant, Iowa
Lillie Cooper Weber, Iowa Alpha

6th - October 11-13, 1882 Burlington Iowa
First M. E. Church Lecture Hall
Cora Panabaker, Iowa Alpha

7th - November 19-21, 1884 Iowa City, Iowa
First M. E. Church Parlors
Nell Custer Swisher, Iowa Zeta

8th - November 25-27, 1885 Lawrence, Kansas
Art League
Elva Plank, Iowa Epsilon

9th - October 19-21, 1886 Indianola, Iowa
Delta Tau Delta Fraternity Hall
Rainie Adamson-Small, Illinois Beta

10th - October 16-18, 1888 Ottumwa, Iowa
Ottumwa Chapter Hall
Rainie Adamson-Small, Illinois Beta

11th - April 1-4, 1890 Galesburg, Illinois
Phi Gamma Delta Hall
Emma Harper Turner, Indiana
Alpha and D.C. Alpha

12th - March 29-31, 1892 Lawrence, Kansas
Phi Delta Theta Hall
Emma Harper Turner, Indiana
Alpha and D.C. Alpha

13th - July 17-21, 1893 Chicago, Illinois
Isabella Club
Emma Harper Turner, Indiana
Alpha and D.C. Alpha

14th - August 27-29, 1895 Boston
Massachusetts, YWCA
Helen Sutliff, Kansas Alpha

15th - July 6-10, 1897 Madison, Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin, Library Hall
Grace Lass Sisson, Illinois Delta

16th - August 29-September 1, 1899 Boulder
Colorado, Chautauqua Auditorium
Grace Lass Sisson, Illinois Delta

17th - July 2-5, 1901 Syracuse, New York
Syracuse University Buildings
Elise Bradford Johnson, D.C. Alpha

18th - June 28-July 2, 1904 St. Louis, Missouri
Forest Park University Gymnasium
Elizabeth Gamble, Colorado Alpha

19th - June 26-30, 1906 Indianapolis, Indiana
Claypool Hotel
Elizabeth Gamble, Colorado Alpha

20th - Dec. 30, 1907-Jan. 3, 1908 New Orleans
Louisiana, Hotel Denechaud
Elizabeth Gamble, Colorado Alpha

21st - June 27-30, 1910 Swarthmore
Pennsylvania, Presbyterian Chapel
May Lansfield Keller, Maryland Alpha

22nd - June 25-29, 1912 Evanston, Illinois
Annie May Swift Hall, Northwestern
May Lansfield Keller, Maryland Alpha

23rd - July 5-10, 1915 Berkeley, California
Twentieth Century Club
May Lansfield Keller, Maryland Alpha

24th - June 28-July 5, 1918 Charlevoix
Michigan, The Inn
May Lansfield Keller, Maryland Alpha

25th - July 1-6, 1921 Charlevoix, Michigan
The Inn
Anna Lytle Tannahill Brannon, Nebraska Beta

26th - June 25-30, 1923 Estes Park, Colorado
Hotel Stanley
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

27th - June 22-27, 1925 Lake of Bays, Ontario
Canada, Bigwin Inn
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

28th - June 26-July 1, 1927 Pequot, Minnesota
Breezy Point Lodge
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

29th - June 30-July 5, 1929 Pasadena
California, Huntington Hotel
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

31st - June 24-30, 1934 Yellowstone National
Park, Wyoming, Old Faithful Inn
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

32nd - June 21-26, 1936 Chicago, Illinois
Edgewater Beach Hotel
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

33rd - June 27-July 1, 1938 Asheville
North Carolina, Grove Park Inn
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

34th - June 30-July 6, 1940 Pasadena
California, Huntington Hotel
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

35th - June 23-29, 1946 Swampscott
Massachusetts, New Ocean House
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

36th - June 27-July 3, 1948 French Lick, Indiana
French Lick Springs Hotel
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

37th - June 25-July 1, 1950 Jasper National
Park, Alberta, Canada, Jasper Park Lodge
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

38th - July 7-13, 1952 Houston, Texas
Shamrock Hotel
Amy Burnham Onken, Illinois Epsilon

39th - July 5-11, 1954 Miami Beach, Florida
Roney Plaza Hotel
Marianne Reid Wild, Kansas Alpha

40th - June 24-30, 1956 Pasadena, California
Huntington Sheraton Hotel
Marianne Reid Wild, Kansas Alpha

41st - June 22-28, 1958 Swampscott
Massachusetts, New Ocean House
Marianne Reid Wild, Kansas Alpha

42nd - June 19-25, 1960 Hot Springs, Arkansas
Arlington Hotel
Alice Weber Mansfield Johnson, Missouri Beta

43rd - June 24-30, 1962 Washington, D.C.
Mayflower Hotel
Alice Weber Mansfield Johnson, Missouri Beta

44th - June 21-27, 1964 Victoria, British
Columbia, Canada, Empress Hotel
Alice Weber Mansfield Johnson, Missouri Beta

45th - June 19-23, 1966 Gatlinburg, Tennessee
Civic Auditorium
Alice Weber Mansfield Johnson, Missouri Beta

46th - June 25-July 1, 1967 Chicago, Illinois
Edgewater Beach Hotel
Alice Weber Mansfield Johnson, Missouri Beta

47th - June 22-27, 1969 Pasadena, California
Huntington Sheraton Hotel
Dorothy Weaver Morgan, Nebraska Beta

48th - June 25-July 1, 1971 San Antonio, Texas
Hilton Palacio Del Rio
Sarahjane Paulson Vanasse, Washington Beta

49th - June 24-29, 1973 Hot Springs, Arkansas
Arlington Hotel
Sarahjane Paulson Vanasse, Washington Beta

50th - June 22-27, 1975, Miami, Florida
Doral Country Club
Elizabeth Turner Orr, Oregon Alpha

51st - June 18-23, 1977, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Radisson South Hotel
Elizabeth Turner Orr, Oregon Alpha



52nd - June 17–22, 1979 Phoenix, Arizona
Del Webb Townehouse
Elizabeth Turner Orr, Oregon Alpha

53rd - June 20–25, 1981 Dallas, Texas
Loew's Anatole Hotel
Jean Wirths Scott, Pennsylvania Beta

54th - June 18–23, 1983 Louisville, Kentucky
Galt House
Jean Wirths Scott, Pennsylvania Beta

55th - June 22–27, 1985 Kansas City, Missouri
Westin Crown Center
Jean Wirths Scott, Pennsylvania Beta

56th - June 20–25, 1987 New Orleans
Louisiana, Fairmont Hotel
Carolyn Helman Lichtenberg, Ohio Alpha

57th - June 17–22, 1989 San Diego, California
Sheraton Hotel on Harbor Island
Carolyn Helman Lichtenberg, Ohio Alpha
58th - June 22–27, 1991 St. Louis, Missouri
Adam's Mark Hotel
Carolyn Helman Lichtenberg, Ohio Alpha

59th - June 19–24, 1993 Orlando, Florida
Stouffer Orlando Resort
Jo Ann Minor Roderick, Oklahoma Beta

60th - June 24–29, 1995 Palm Desert
California Marriott Desert Springs Resort
Jo Ann Minor Roderick, Oklahoma Beta

61st - June 28–July 2, 1997 Atlanta, Georgia
Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel
Beth van Maanen Beatty, Texas Gamma

62nd - June 25–29, 1999 Houston, Texas
Westin Galleria/Westin Oaks Hotels
Beth van Maanen Beatty, Texas Gamma

63rd - June 29–July 3, 2001 Denver, Colorado
Adam's Mark Hotel
Beth van Maanen Beatty, Texas Gamma

64th - June 20–24, 2003 Anaheim, California
Anaheim Marriot Hotel
Sarah Ruth "Sis" Mullis, South Carolina Alpha

65th - June 24–28, 2005 Tampa, Florida
Waterside Marriot
Emily Russell Tarr, Texas Beta

66th - June 22–27, 2007 Phoenix, Arizona
Westin Kierland Resort and Spa
Emily Russell Tarr, Texas Beta

67th - June 26–30, 2009 Grapevine, Texas
Gaylord Texan
Emily Russell Tarr, Texas Beta

68th - June 24–28, 2011 Orlando, Florida
Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista Hotel
Mary Loy Tatum, Oklahoma Beta

69th - June 28–July 1, 2013 San Diego
California, Sheraton San Diego
Hotel & Marina
Mary Loy Tatum, Oklahoma Beta

70th - June 26–30, 2015 Chicago, Illinois
Hilton Chicago
Paula Pace Shepherd, Texas Epsilon

71st - June 23–27, 2017 St. Louis, Missouri
Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch
Paula Pace Shepherd, Texas Epsilon

72nd - June 28–July 2, 2019 Washington, D.C.
Washington Marriott Wardman Park
Paula Pace Shepherd, Texas Epsilon

73rd - June 25–26, 2021 Virtual Convention
Business hosted at Pi Beta Phi Headquarters
Marla Neelly Wulf, Kansas Beta

74th - July 7–10, 2023 Phoenix, Arizona
JW Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge
Lisa Gamel Scott, Colorado Alpha

75th - June 19–21, 2025 Louisville, Kentucky
Galt House Hotel
Lisa Gamel Scott, Colorado Alpha

