



**LOOKING FOR ANSWERS:** Melissa Mead works to keep the finer points of University history at her fingertips.

## The Archivist Asks Alumni: What's your class yell?

*And other questions about University history from Melissa Mead, the John M. and Barbara Keil University Archivist and Rochester Special Collections Librarian.*

### We're the Class of . . . !

At last May's commencement ceremony for Arts, Sciences & Engineering, Board of Trustees Chair Ed Hajim '58 boasted, "Better than good, better than great, we're the Class of Fifty-Eight!"

A few minutes later Senior Class Council President Mehr Kashyap '15 replied: "Not just one 'Jacket, we're the whole hive! Feel the sting of Twenty-One-Five!"

While some in the audience on the Eastman Quadrangle may not have known it, these were two

your own memories of Coach Speegle singing, swimming, and coaching in the comments section on the webpage at [livinghistory.lib.rochester.edu/speegle](http://livinghistory.lib.rochester.edu/speegle).

### A fraternity mug for Jane?

While food is discouraged in Special Collections, the University Archives hold a large collection of dinnerware, from Wedgewood dinner plates with campus buildings emblazoned on them—created in 1951 to stock the pantries of loyal sons and daughters of Rochester—to Boar's Head Dinner commemorative glasses.

There are also fraternity and sorority ceramic mugs, each with the crest of a Greek group painted on one side and a name on the other. We were recently contacted about a 1977 Theta Chi mug, with "Jane" as the imprinted name. Since Theta Chi is a fraternity, is this a nickname or a girlfriend's name?

### Chi Rho, Chi Rho, It's Off to School We Go!

Chi Rho began in 1909 as a sophomore honorary group, with members selected at the end of their freshman year. It took as its logo an Egyptian-style mask, and the identities of the new recruits were concealed by the names of Egyptian kings (Ramses, Ptolemy, Necho, and so forth). Only after the selection of new members were the old ones revealed; later, Dandelion Day became the occasion for the (literal) unmasking.

Why "Chi Rho"? Members of the Class of 1909 had their Greek instruction from Professor Ryland Morris Kendrick, himself a member of the Class of 1889, and son of Professor Asahel Clark Kendrick. The Greek letters do have a Christian symbolism, but perhaps they were intended to signify the word *chrestos* which can be translated as "kind" or "good"—a sophomoreic aspiration to *Meliora*?

The group was charged with promoting good fellowship, ensuring that freshmen learned "The Genesee" and other school songs, and with spreading the "Rochester Hello" spirit. But it did not always live up to its good name, and the words Chi Rho "struck terror" in the hearts of "trespassing" (walking on the Quad instead of using the tunnels) frosh.

An ever-better revival of the group occurred in spring 2015, with a dozen rising sophomores once again charged with sharing University traditions and history.

Were you in Chi Rho? If your memories are not too hazy, send them in to teach a new generation about University traditions.



**SONG OF SPEEGLE:** Swimming coach Speed Speegle often entertained students with his memorable song, "Rex, the Piddlin' Pup." While he frequently sang the song with his guitar, the melody has not made its way to the University's archives. Can you hum a few bars?

class "yells," a tradition designed to encourage class spirit that stretches back to 1885. You can find a list at the website: [rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/yells](http://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/yells).

But the records are silent for many years. Do you remember your class yell? Let us hear it!

### Do you remember 'Rex'? And can you sing it?

James Speegle '60, '61 (MA), the son of coach Roman (Speed) Speegle, sent me the words to his father's memorable song "Rex, the Piddling Pup," but we have no record of the tune. The lyrics are posted here: [livinghistory.lib.rochester.edu/speegle](http://livinghistory.lib.rochester.edu/speegle). There's also an audio recording of the first dedication of the Speegle Pool in 1977 in what is now the Goergen Athletic Center, and a letter that Coach Speegle wrote to Rochester students serving in World War II (look for his reference to guitar-playing).

If you remember the tune to "Rex," send an email, or a singing telegram. And you can share

### Know the Answers?

Share your story in an email to [rochrev@rochester.edu](mailto:rochrev@rochester.edu). Please put "Ask the Archivist" in the subject line.