

1950

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMAN'S BOARD

(also known as Pi Epsilon Pi)

On July 28, 1949, Louise C. Goetsch, Grand President of Pi Epsilon Pi Sorority, wrote to Mr. Harold O. Barnes, president of the Settlement Board. The letter stated that Miss Harriet Vittum was an honorary member and that the sorority had met at the Settlement house to learn of present problems and needs. The letter concluded with the request that Pi Epsilon Pi as a chartered sorority in Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin since 1917, be honored with representation on the Central Committee, thereby becoming a part of the Settlement family. Barnes responded with delight at the prospect of a Business Women's Auxiliary Board for the Settlement.

Pi Epsilon Pi began in 1917 at Waller High School, and its certificate of organization in Illinois dated to 1920. Its object was to promote fraternal feelings and sociability and encourage education and charitable enterprises. That is exactly what it has done at Settlement as the Professional and Business Women's Board. Pi Epsilon Pi's by-laws explained the duality of identification: "The principle charitable enterprise of Pi Epsilon Pi shall be Northwestern University Settlement; and for that purpose Pi Epsilon Pi shall be known as the Business and Professional Women's Board of Northwestern Settlement."

The board's first chairman, Miss Frankie Tyrrell (or Frankie, as she was affectionately called) was a longtime friend of Miss Vittum and truly Miss Northwestern University Settlement to the Pi Eps. The officers and the council of Pi Epsilon Pi appointed her as General Chairman of the new Business and Professional Women's Board, and she motivated the sorority's active work for many years. Its first donation in March 1950 as a Settlement Board was \$150 toward Miss Vittum's pension fund

of \$3,600. The same year the sorority pledged \$500 to the Settlement. These were not the first contributions from these professionals. In 1942, Miss Tyrrell had written to Miss Vittum about a \$600 gift that would arrive at the Settlement in a few days.

Pi Epsilon Pi's benefits on behalf of Settlement were many even before it officially became an auxiliary board dating to about 1950. Starting in the 1920s and through the 1950s, card parties, charity ball bazaars, friendship balls, benefit bridge and fashion shows at the Palmer House and Drake Hotel were held to benefit the Settlement. During the 1960s there were Spring Horse Shows as benefits in Morton Grove at the Holdorf Riding School and at Maywood Park. Throughout the years, the Settlement's work and reputation was promoted through the Pi Epsilon Pi news publication, Pi Stuffing. In the memorial issue of March 1954, dedicated to Miss Vittum, Miss Tyrrell's touching tribute said: "Miss Vittum's sole desire was to make the world a better place to live in and from that stems many associations she created as a living monument."

In 1991, the Business and Professional Women's Board was composed primarily of 43 retired women who were still active at the Settlement. Since the 1970s, the board annually sponsored two rummage sales, a Golden Ager party, assisted with serving Thanksgiving dinner and packing of Christmas baskets. The Board and individual members made contributions for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas to help with food at these times. Miss Anita Rueter and Mrs. Harold F. Ost reported an active interest in the Centennial.

SORORITY CHAIRMEN OF PI EPSILON PI

*Sorority Chairmen of Pi Epsilon Pi
Appointed To Serve as Chairmen of the
Business and Professional Women's Board, 1950-1991*

Frances Tyrrell	1950-51
Louise Goetsch	1951-53
Bernice Siekerman	1953-54
Ruth Ost	1954-55
Muriel Tobin Wells	1955-57
Betty Ward	1957-58
Wiltrude Bower	1959-62
Ruth Ost	1962-64
Berness Kuehn	1964-82
Anita Rueter and Mildred Misner	1982-83
Anita Rueter	1983-90
Anita Rueter and Ruth Ost	1990-91
Anita Rueter and Ruth Ost	1991-92



*Left to right:
Muriel Tobin,
Hazel Boostrom,
Frankie Tyrrell,
Ruth Ost
(photo circa 1950)*