

A Reason to Be Proud:

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE KAPPA CHAPTER OF PHI SIGMA KAPPA

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For John Shaw '29, His Phi Sig Memories Give Him a Reason to Be Proud

Bill DeGrandis '77, and John Bacon '78, recently visited John Shaw '29 in Falls Church, VA. Mr. Shaw is 101 years old, and is the oldest living Kappa Chapter alum.

He lived in the present house when it first opened in 1927.

John Bacon is a reporter for USA Today, and John wrote this story after this visit...

John Shaw's memories of the Phi Sig house are pretty standard fare - drinking beers and playing music with his buddies, gaining confidence and maturity as he grew into adulthood. But nobody's Phi Sig memories go back further than Shaw's. We believe he is the only living Phi Sig who lived in the present house when it first opened 80 years ago. John was a civil engineering major, class of 1929.

Shaw, now 101, says he came to Penn State after meeting a professor's wife who said she had a spot for him as a violinist in the school's orchestra. "She told me I was a good prospect for Phi Sigma Kappa," Shaw remembers. "That's how I became a member."

"It's important to keep the house in tip-top shape for the present actives and for future generations."

Shaw says he was a strong student, and the relationships he built at Phi Sig expanded his social circle and helped him grow as a person. "I knew some musicians and some engineers,

but I was a shy guy when I got there, not very forward," he recalled. "Joining the fraternity helped broaden my comfort zone with people."

Among his Phi Sig buddies was Tom Krum, also an engineering major. They would golf, play music together and "drink a few beers, definitely!" Shaw said.

Shaw, from Altoona, met his wife there when he was 19. His post-Penn State years included time in the Navy and with AT&T. His wife died in February, but he still lives in the Falls Church, Va. home they built and shared for 57 years. He's still sharp, and strong enough to walk around his yard with brothers who come by for a visit.

He says he feels privileged to have been a "founder" of Phi Sig's current house. He has a message to Kappa Chapter brothers about the current *Reason to Be Proud* campaign to renovate the chapter house. "It's important to keep the house in tip-top shape for the present actives and for future generations," he said.



John Shaw '29



Bill DeGrandis '77 and John Shaw '29



John Bacon '78 and John Shaw '29