

**Alpha Phi-British Columbia**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: June 14, 1928
* Location: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
* Region: 7

**History:**

In 1877, only six years after British Columbia joined Canada, Superintendent of Education John Jessop submitted a proposal for the formation of a provincial university. The provincial legislature passed An Act Respecting the University of British Columbia in 1890, but disagreements arose over whether to build the university on Vancouver Island or the mainland. The British Columbia University Act of 1908 formally called a provincial university into being, although its location was not specified. The governance was modelled on the provincial University of Toronto Act of 1906 which created a bicameral system of university government consisting of a senate (faculty), responsible for academic policy, and a board of governors (citizens) exercising exclusive control over financial policy and having formal authority in all other matters. The president, appointed by the board, was to provide a link between the two bodies and to perform institutional leadership.

Building on a successful affiliation between Vancouver and Victoria high schools with McGill University, Henry Marshall Tory helped establish the McGill University College of British Columbia. From 1906 to 1915, McGill BC (as it was called) operated as a private institution providing the first few years toward a degree at McGill University or elsewhere.

In 1910, the Point Grey site was chosen, and the government appointed Dr. Frank Fairchild Wesbrook as President in 1913, and Leonard Klinck as Dean of Agriculture in 1914. A declining economy and the outbreak of war in August 1914 compelled the University to postpone plans for building at Point Grey, and instead the former McGill University College site at Fairview became home to the University until 1925. On the first day of lectures was September 30, 1915, the new independent university absorbed McGill University College. The University of British Columbia awarded its first degrees in 1916. By 1928, UBC was considered “the coming University of the West.” Enrollment of women was at approximately 723.

Alpha Phi had its beginnings in a well-established local group called Theta Epsilon, organized in 1919. Many letters of recommendation are a part of the Alpha Phi archive file attesting to the “high qualities of personality, character, and scholarship” of Theta Epsilon members. The November 1928 *ANCHORA* states:

 *"After much inquiry she found Delta Gamma to be her ideal, and so, with Delta Gamma as her ultimate aim, Theta Epsilon began to petition. We met and entertained Delta Gammas from different parts of the country and with everyone we met we knew that we had made no mistake in choosing Delta Gamma; our only fear was that Delta Gamma would not consider us worthy."*

A telegram was received on June 14, 1928 that the charter had been granted. Delta Gamma was the second NPC group to enter the campus.

The biggest controversy in installing these girls seemed to be over their smoking. Delta Gamma's attitude toward the smoking may have alienated some of the girls, but it won over the Dean of Women who was apparently against international Greek groups until she realized how Delta Gamma could help her cause.

The fraternity examination on September 5, 1928, was the first event of the installation weekend. The pledge service was held the following evening, September 6, at the home of Isabel Fortin, Alpha Gamma-Toronto who had written the first letter to Delta Gamma about the University of British Columbia. The service was conducted by Beta-Washington chapter members.

On Friday, September 7, the initiation ceremony was held at the home of Isabel Fortin. An installation banquet followed at the Georgia Hotel. Telegrams of welcome came in "great profusion" much to the surprise of the new Delta Gammas.

Saturday activities included a luncheon given by Mrs. Mildred Brock, (Theta Epsilon Sorority Mother and Alpha Phi patroness) at the Jericho Country Club, and a reception at the Georgia Hotel for University senate members, representatives of college groups, and families and friends of the new Alpha Phis.

In 1929 the chapter offered a cup for inter-sorority scholastic standings, the first reward offered for inter-sorority activities, which set a precedent for other sororities to follow.

Chapter philanthropic work started in 1930 when needy children were entertained at Christmas time.

In 1932 Alpha Phi hosted the Delta Gamma Convention at the Empress Hotel in Victoria, B.C.

In 1946 chapter members took active part in a drive to build a gymnasium to serve as a memorial to the students who served overseas during the war.