

**Rho-Syracuse**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: May 23, 1901
* Location: Syracuse, New York
* Region: 1

**History:**

In 1899 eight young women at Syracuse formed the Delta Sigma society with the hope of petitioning Delta Gamma for a charter. These girls were: Adelaide Crim, Edith Cobb, Blanche Gunn, Helen Griffith, Fanny Morgan, Edith McKinley, Bertha Wilson and Josephine Warren.

The Delta Sigmas petitioned Delta Gamma in 1900. The petition was presented at Convention that year, but unfortunately a charter was not granted because of two negative votes. Later that year, one negative vote was recanted, so the women of Delta Sigma needed only conquer the one other negative vote.

Council asked Ada Comstock Notestein, Lambda-Minnesota, to come to Syracuse to look over the university and the petitioning group. She was not impressed by both the university or the girls. Few charters were granted, particularly in the east. Psi II-Goucher and Chi-Cornell were the only eastern chapters in 1900.

When Mrs. Notestein’s decision was brought back to Council, ANCHORA editor and member of Council Joanna Ross Pancoast, Psi-Goucher, asked that she be allowed to visit Syracuse before a final vote was taken. Joanna came and was quite in favor of the university and thought the girls had good material with which to start a chapter.

Early in May 1901, a charter was granted to Delta Sigma. In honor of all of the efforts of Joanna Ross, the chapter was named Rho, the nearest the Greek alphabet came to the name of Ross. On May 23, 1901 Miss Ross arrived during the reception to pledge the eight charter members with bronze, pink and blue bows of Delta Gamma.

The following semester, Rho succeeded in pledging five more girls, but happiness was not long-lasting. On Christmas night each member received a telegram saying that the chapter house had burned that morning. Fortunately, much was saved, and a renovation allowed them to move back in February.

Major milestones in Rho’s life were duly celebrated. At the 25th anniversary Mrs. Pancoast was the special guest and main speaker at the banquet.

At the golden anniversary of Rho’s founding in 1951, Mrs. Pancoast was again our guest of honor.

In 1976, at the 75th celebration, Angeline Golly Woolsey, 1901, was especially honored for her 75 years of membership.

Rho canceled its 100th anniversary celebration in 2001 due to the tragedy of the September 11, 2001 attacks. However, the September 15 dedication of the 12-foot bronze sculpture created by Rodger Mack, entitled “Gamma,” to the university from the chapter still went on as planned.

Some of the much beloved traditions of Rho chapter include the Happy Pappy weekend, DG Weekend, and an annual Christmas party for underprivileged children.

At the start of term in September 1901, six women occupied the first chapter house at 209 University Place. As the chapter grew, a larger house was needed. In 1906 Rho moved to 712 Irving Avenue, followed shortly thereafter in 1913 to 744 Comstock Avenue. A final move in 1934 was to their present location, 901 Walnut Avenue. In 1941 the house was completely remodeled with the addition of eight rooms and rearrangement of the dining room, kitchen and chaperone’s apartment. In the 50s dormitory sleeping was discontinued and this third floor was made into combined study and sleeping room, as were the other rooms.