

From Kappa chapter - Barbara Brown, 1st V.P., EEC chairman

A Founders' Day Ceremony compiled by Joanne Scholen from DKG materials for the May 16, 2015 Kappa meeting.

Sources:

1. Optional section from the "Contemporary Initiation Ceremony" by the International Membership Committee, p. 8. ; Ceremonies DKG, revised 2012
2. "Founders Day Ceremonies" information, p. 50; Ceremonies DKG, rev. 2012
3. The DKG International website for founders information.
4. Founder information in the skit, "A Delta Kappa Gamma Carol" by Rosemary Quarles and Phi Chapter of South Carolina State; Quadrant Workshop handbook, compiled by Alpha Sigma State leadership team for Quadrant 3 workshop, for representatives from our Area IV chapters: March 16, 2013 at the Olympia Red Lion Hotel

Program committee members and the president presented the readings, and a white candle was lit before reading about each founder.

After the ceremony, we had a birthday party – including four activity centers hosted by committee members: decorating a cupcake, making a party hat, making a bookmark and sharing a favorite book, and a game center. We concluded with singing "Happy Birthday" to DKG, eating our cupcakes and awarding raffle prizes! This was a fun meeting to plan, and it provided opportunities to socialize and interact with others, as well as honoring DKG's founding.

Founder's Day Ceremony

On May 11, 1929, Dr. Annie Webb Blanton and eleven other women educators, representing a cross-section of the teaching profession, gathered at the University of Austin's Faculty Women's Club to establish The Delta Kappa Gamma Society. This event only came after several years of discussion and planning on how to meet the many hardships women educators faced at that time, especially unequal pay and the lack of freedoms we enjoy and take for granted today as women educators. Their vision was an organization, which would work towards several goals - including high educational standards, gender equity in pay, professional advancement and recognition, and opportunities for continuing education.

Today we remember and honor the vision and dedication of those founders...

Dr. Annie Webb Blanton originated the idea of an honorary organization for women educators, and invited eleven educators from Texas to help her create The Delta Kappa Gamma Society. After the

founding, she did much of the work of organizing in other states. By 1941 she had helped the organization expand into 35 states and 80 chapters. Dr. Blanton was a longtime supporter of women's rights and an outstanding leader. Among her many accomplishments was becoming the first woman to be elected president of the Texas State Teachers Association in 1916, while teaching English at North Texas Teachers' College. Two years later she became the first woman elected to public office in Texas when she won the statewide election to State Superintendent of Public Instruction. It's important to remember that this was at a time when women had just gained the right to vote in primaries *but* were still barred from voting in general elections! During her four years as state superintendent, she instituted a free textbook policy, revised certification requirements, expanded the scope of rural education and was instrumental in increasing public teachers' salaries by an average of 54%. After leaving office, she earned her Master's degree from the University of Texas in 1923 and became a professor of school administration there. Four years later, she earned her PhD in sociology and rural education at Cornell University and returned to the University of Texas as Professor of Rural Education.

Mamie Sue Bastian successfully worked to establish a teacher retirement system in Texas, formed the Classroom Teachers Association to promote higher salaries for teachers, and when she became a principal –organized the Houston Principals Association.

Ruby Cole worked for better schools and teacher welfare through committee efforts of the Texas State Teachers Association and through committees of Delta Kappa Gamma and the San Antonio Principals Association. She encouraged DKG to work with civic organizations to promote the status of women and educational progress.

Mabel Grizzard was an elementary school teacher and then a principal, working tirelessly for the youth of her community and for civic improvement. She served on the Texas Centennial Celebration board and was Texas state chairman for the restoration of Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

Dr. Anna Hiss was prominent in the field of physical education – organizing the State Assoc. of the Athletic Federation of College Women and the State Assoc. of Physical Education for College Women. The gymnasium at the University of Texas in Austin, which she helped design, was named in her honor.

Miss Ray King was the first DKG treasurer, serving as both national and state treasurer for 9 years. She taught 5th and 6th grade and later, high school history.

Miss Sue King was Ray's sister. As a high school Latin teacher and later a history teacher, she inspired her students to become model citizens. She was one of the three women instrumental in getting Dr. Blanton elected president of the Texas State Teachers Assoc. Sadly, she died at age 44, before realizing her plans to write illustrated children's books.

Dr. Helen Koch was a professor of child psychology at the U. of Texas, director of the University of Chicago Nursery School and served twice as an exchange professor at Frankfurt. Dr. Koch was a celebrated researcher too. In 1966 her book "Twins and Twin Relations" was published following 10 years of research.

Mrs. Ruby Terrill Lomax As a young woman in 1908, Ruby had graduated from the University of Texas with the highest academic average achieved up to that time. She was a Latin teacher for 9 years at Dallas High School, and served as Dean of Women and Professor of Classical Languages at East Texas State Teachers College and the University of Texas.

Dr. Cora Martin produced a series of five "Real Life Readers" based on meaningful content for children. She was professor of Elementary Education at North Texas Normal College and the University of Texas. Dr. Martin was a delegate to the mid-century White House Conference for Children and Youth as well as a charter member of the United States Committee Of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education.

Mrs. Lala M. Odom faced being denied a regular teaching contract just because she got married. Her refusal to accept the substitute position offered married teachers in the Austin schools helped break barriers of discrimination, and the policy was overturned. She was a mathematics teacher and author of “Intuitive Geometry for the Seventh Grade” (One of her students became a famous person: Will Rogers was her music student and friend!)

Miss Lela Lee Williams served as the first president of the Dallas Grade Teachers Association and was an organizer of the Texas State Teachers Association. Her main interests were upgrading training and certification for elementary teachers. She also promoted equity in salary schedules and worked to improve rural schools.

Much has changed in our world since 1929: our mode of dress, modern conveniences, technological advances, and more. Much has changed in Delta Kappa Gamma as well. Our Society is well established, with approximately 90,000 members and 2,600 chapters in 17 countries. We focus less on the colors and symbols and more on the values they represent: courage, loyalty, learning, and perseverance. However we are still bound together by a common vision: bringing together qualified and diverse women educators serving in a broad spectrum of educational fields, strengthening them and pursuing worthwhile projects that make a difference in communities around the world.
