

The Cornerstone

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Benjamin, Sallie, and the Shepherd School of Music

By Anne Schnoebelen

Joseph and Idea Kirkland Mullen Emerita Professor of Music

Those who thrill to the splendid concerts and recitals presented by faculty and students of the Shepherd School of Music might wonder about its name, origins and early history before it became one of the jewels in Rice's crown. Due to the munificence of the Shepherd family, of which Benjamin A. Shepherd was the patriarch, and the desire of his musical granddaughter Sallie Shepherd Perkins to honor him, Rice University now has one of the leading music schools in the nation.

Benjamin Armistead Shepherd, according to a document titled "The Transplanted Virginian" written by Sallie Shepherd Perkins, was born May 14, 1814 at "Laughton," Fluvanna County, Virginia. He was next to the youngest in a family of fourteen children. His Anglo-Saxon ancestors had been given large grants of land by the Crown, but the land was poor and the family fortunes were thus diminished. Benjamin left Virginia in 1833 to seek other opportunities, stopping for a time in Nashville and then New Orleans. He arrived in Galveston in 1830, where he met and married Mary Hobson of Tennessee. In 1941 the couple established themselves in Houston where Benjamin became one of the city's founding fathers, and friend of General Sam Houston. Recognized as the pioneer banker of Texas, he was the founder of the First National Bank in Houston.

A touching story from this same document is worth quoting in full because it indicates the innate love of music in the Shepherd family:



Sallie Shepherd Perkins, 1940

"When I was a tiny tot there is a tradition that I ran and got Grandfather Shepherd my baby pillow as I saw him dozing in the chair. It is a gratifying thought that I could do something for him who bestowed so many benefits on me. And on this same visit to us at Palmyra, Virginia, I played for him on my toy piano. He is said to have remarked, 'that child has got to go to Leipsic!'" (No doubt his reference was to Leipzig's famous Hochschule fur Musik founded by Mendelssohn in 1843, one of the leading music conservatories of the late 19th century.)

Sallie, however, did not go to Leipzig, but did graduate in music from Hollins College in Virginia, majoring in piano studies. Music was a large part of her entire life. She presided over the Music Clubs of Virginia for three years, 1922-25, and became a leader in the National Federation of Music Clubs. Her musical talent found its greatest expression in her gift to Rice University (then Rice Institute) in 1950 for a school of music which she called "purely a product of my own mind and heart—the healing powers of music [are] so much needed in this troubled world and I earnestly hope our Southland will be enriched when my dream becomes a reality." The Shepherd School of Music was "dedicated to the Glory of God and in memory of my grandfather and my branch of his family."

The initial gift of Sallie Shepherd Perkins and her husband, Malcolm W. Perkins was \$350,000, made on

Continued on page 3

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IN THIS ISSUE

Benjamin, Sallie, and the Shepherd School of Music 1

Interview with Samuel Jones 4

From the Archives 16



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December 2, 1950. In the Deed of Gift she acknowledges her debt to her grandfather, grateful for his encouraging her in the study of music. "It seems to me fitting, therefore, that I should establish this School of Music at Houston," where her grandfather reared his family and resided until his death. Furthermore, "It also seems to me fitting that the buildings which house this school should perpetuate in Houston the early colonial type of architecture found in Virginia, as a reminder of this and other sons of the Old Dominion who contributed much to the development of Texas. I, therefore, direct that said school should be housed in a group of buildings of the early colonial type of architecture, two of which shall be modeled, respectively, after Crozet House, an historical dwelling in downtown Richmond, Virginia, and the house I own at 2609 Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia, which is a perfect example of early Georgian architecture."

However, evidently being a practical woman, she goes on to say, "I fully realize, however, that the style and architecture of the buildings of this School must be adapted to that of the other buildings located and those planned on the campus of the Institute, and I leave the final determination of this...to the Trustees of the Institute, having full confidence that they will observe my wishes as far as practical." She also required that any design plans be shown to her or her surviving relatives, that recognition be given to the interest in music of herself and her husband, and that a memorial be established to her grandparents, Benjamin Armistead Shepherd and Mary Hobson Shepherd.

The stipulation for colonial architecture may come as a surprise to those who have experienced the magnificent building designed by Ricardo Bofill, dedicated on October 4, 1991, forty-one years after the original gift was made. But it was too soon in 1950 to be concerned about the style of the buildings. It was clear from the start that the moneys would not be sufficient to initiate the new school of music for some time. Mrs. Perkins added to the gift throughout her lifetime until it totaled a little over \$1 million. But only upon her death in 1968 and her bequest of \$4.5 million would it be possible to plan seriously for the Shepherd School. There were, however, lectures presented by the Shepherd Foundation (which was also specified in the early documents) during these early years by such musical luminaries as Howard Hanson, composer and director of the Eastman School of Music, as well as concerts by local chamber music groups and outside artists. Professor Arthur S. Hall, a composer and leader of the musical activities at Christ Church

Cathedral, was brought to Rice in 1953 to oversee the development of what was then the Department of Music, offering some courses in music history and theory and establishing two glee clubs—one for men and one for women. Ann Holmes, Fine Arts Editor for the *Houston Chronicle* wrote on March 24, 1954, "Mr. Hall's lectures on music avoid that cliché, that dilettante aspect called 'appreciation.' This so often implies an outside coating of 'culture' and smattering of ignorance. The Rice music lectures, by contrast, approach the subject scientifically. It is believed that if the minds of these young scholars may be led to understand the architectural structures, the scientific theories of music, real appreciation follows." This was a philosophy that would characterize the school later on as well.

In 1962, Mr. and Mrs. Perkins made an additional gift to the Shepherd School endowment of some property on Calhoun Avenue between Travis and Milam. The gift seems to have inspired serious discussion about the nature of the Shepherd School and its location on the campus. Chancellor Carey Croneis wrote a draft of suggested proposals for the school dated April 10, 1962, based on suggestions supplied by Dean W.H. Masterson and Professor Hall. "It is clear to us that...we should model the Shepherd School after the Yale School of Music. That is, we probably should not go into the applied music field in any very extensive fashion. Most of our music students will, of course, possess some instrumental or vocal aptitudes, and a certain amount of instruction will be required in those fields. Much, if not most of the training desired, however, probably could be provided advantageously through a cooperative arrangement with the University of Houston, which does have a 'professional' school of music." Various other questions were raised in this document, including the amount of endowment needed before erection of a building, the size of the faculty, whether to have one building or two separate buildings, one for "theory" and the other for "practice" and whether such structures would be integrally attached as wings to Hamman Hall. Was the "rather modern style of architecture used in Hamman Hall" offensive to Mrs. Perkins? Just how committed was she to a "modified Georgian" style of building? Etc.

The final version of this document recommended that the Shepherd School of Music be fully activated during the years, 1963–1967 in four stages, each spelled out according to its budget, number of faculty, equipment, etc. Hamman Hall was to be the core, with its auditorium seating 500 and its "unsurpassed acoustical qualities," but the Georgian buildings were still in play, perhaps separated from Hamman Hall "by some little distance." (I should insert here that, while the acoustics of

Hamman Hall are excellent for the spoken word, they are certainly not so for music.) Fields of instruction were to be theory of music, history and literature of music, musicology, and possibly the "exciting new realm of Electronic Music which has been explored at Columbia University and elsewhere." The teaching of instrumental and vocal music (applied music) was to be more or less incidental, in addition to the regular assignments of the faculty. However, some thought was given to such instruction on an accredited basis. Some additional "Texas musicians" might be hired as part time "lecturers," paid a relatively small retainer out of the departmental expense account. "But their recompense largely would accrue in professional prestige..."

However, the department continued to function on a limited basis until the 1970s. Only after Mrs. Perkins' final bequest, which brought the Shepherd School's endowment to about \$6 million including interest, did President Norman Hackerman begin a search for a director for the new school. Among them was Robert Shaw, the well-known American conductor and choral master, who was considering resigning from his position with the Atlanta Symphony. But in spite of a flurry of effort, according to Ann Homes in the *Chronicle* of March 13, 1972, he announced his intention to resume his leadership of that organization. Thus the immediate activation of the Shepherd School was put on hold until 1973, when the young composer-conductor Samuel Jones was appointed director of the school.


With Jones' appointment, the modern era of the Shepherd School of Music began. From the start, he made clear his intention to focus the instruction on orchestral studies, in which the school now excels. The first faculty were hired in 1974 (Paul Cooper, composer, Ronald Patterson, violinist and concertmaster of the Houston Symphony; Anne Schnoebelen, musicologist and pianist). After a year of planning the curriculum, teaching non-major students and the addition of several new faculty, the Shepherd School officially opened its (figurative) doors in September 1975. Though without Georgian style architecture, under the direction of its deans Samuel Jones, Allan Ross, Larry Livingston, Michael Hammond and Robert Yekovich it has brought to splendid fruition the dream of Sallie Shepherd Perkins to honor her grandfather, Benjamin A. Shepherd, with the gift of a music school to Rice University in Houston.



Paul Cooper



Anne Schnoebelen, 1986



Shepherd School of Music of *Rice University*

Arthur E. Hall, *Chairman*

<p>SANDRA BIELAWA, Organist December 13, 1964 2:00 p.m. CHAPEL</p> <p>Works by Walther, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Walcha, Schroeder, Drischner, Peters, Seven Choral Preludes by J. S. Bach and the Prelude and Fugue in D Major by Bach</p> <p>✱</p>	<p>THE BEDFORD SINGERS December 13, 1964 4:00 p.m. HAMMAN HALL</p> <p>Love Came Down at Christmas Cantata by Avinger Seven Preludes Hall Laud To The Nativity by Respighi Rice Chamber Orchestra</p>	<p>LYRIC ART STRING QUARTET December 16, 1964 8:15 p.m. HAMMAN HALL</p> <p>"The Frog", Op. 50, #6 Haydn On Wenlock Edge Vaughan Williams John Druary, Tenor Quartet in D Minor by Anton Dvorak</p> <p>✱</p>
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The next program on the Shepherd Series will be a Lecture-Recital on "The French Six" by
Georges Tzipine, Guest Conductor, Houston Symphony
January 10, 1965

Invitation to Concerts for Shepherd School of Music, 1964

Interview with Samuel Jones, Founding Dean of the Shepherd School of Music, Rice University

By Karen Rogers for Rice Historical Society

Karen Rogers: *What was your background before coming to Rice?*

Samuel Jones: I came to Rice from Rochester, New York, where I had just completed seven years as a conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic. I started there as Assistant Conductor, was promoted to Associate Conductor, then Resident Conductor, and finally they erased all the modifiers and I was named the full conductor, conducting some 85 concerts a year, and also doing a good bit of guest conducting. I had earlier conducted the Saginaw Symphony for three years, and before that I taught for two years at Alma College (in Michigan; my first position out of graduate school). While at Alma, I founded the Alma Symphony, which I'm happy to say is still going strong, in addition to all my other teaching duties. And while in Saginaw—this proved to be interesting and somewhat prophetic in preparing me for the task of founding the Shepherd School—I was appointed to organize a summer festival and conservatory of music at Delta College, a newly established college serving the Tri-City region of Saginaw-Midland-Bay City. (Incidentally, the trumpet teacher I hired for that conservatory was none other than the Shepherd School's eminent trumpet professor, Marie Speziale, in what she says was her first job.) All this time I was continuing to compose. I had done my graduate study at the Eastman School of Music, receiving my Ph.D. in composition in 1960. By the time I came to Rice, I had composed several orchestral works, a piano sonata, and some songs and chamber music, and I was published by Carl Fischer. So you can see I had quite a varied background, combining experience in the profession as well as in education, administration, and composition.

KR: *How old were you (if you don't mind the question)?*

SJ: Not at all. I came to Rice in 1973. I was born in 1935, so I was 38 at that time. When we inaugurated the Shepherd School (on September 19, 1975) I was still a young man at the ripe old age of 40.

Regarding my age, I think you'll be interested in this story. And to tell it properly, I'll have to give a little background.

My first interview for this position was with Frank Vandiver, the esteemed Provost of the University for many years and, as it later developed, my good friend. We



Samuel Jones

met for dinner in Washington, D.C. Frank was there for University business, and I flew down to meet him. We answered each other's questions and discussed together the incredible opportunity posed by the creation of this new school. He said the University would require of the new school only one thing, that it be a school of the first rank, on a par with any in the land. He said the new administrator would have free rein in developing the philosophy of the school and in implementing it. He then told me that he had just been in New York where he had conferred with Helen Thompson, the Manager of the New York Philharmonic and the past-Executive Director of the American Symphony Orchestra League—and who knew seemingly everyone in the musical world—regarding Rice's search for the leader of its new music school. This search had been going on for some two or three years. The University had spoken with several major figures in the music world, including Robert Shaw, Walter Hendl, Wilfred Mellers, and others, and had garnered proposals for the possible thrust of the new school. But for one



Samuel Jones

reason or another, none of these proposals bore fruit. Vandiver was consulting with Helen Thompson because of a coincidence: Mrs. Thompson's son Charles was at that time one of President Hackerman's post-doctoral fellows in chemistry, and Charles, knowing of the University's

increasingly frustrated search, said to Hackerman, "Why don't you talk to my mother?" So Hackerman directed Vandiver to do just that. At our dinner in Washington, Frank told me of his conversation with Helen Thompson. She said (and it sounds just like her), "It seems to me, Dr. Vandiver, that you have two choices. You can either hire a distinguished older man in the sunset of his career, and this will be his valedictory appointment, or you can hire a young man on the rise, and he will take the school up with him." Frank told her, "We would want the young man." She immediately responded, "Then I have your man."

Indeed, she called me in Rochester right after that conversation and told me about the opportunity in Houston and urged that I contact Dr. Vandiver right away. I did—actually, I think he called me first, I'm not sure, but in any event we had a meeting of the minds in Washington, I flew to Houston for my first visit to the Rice campus and to meet President Hackerman, and later to meet with key people in the University community and the city's musical and arts leadership, including Miss Ima Hogg. These meetings all went very successfully.

KR: *What prompted you to come? Was there one overriding thing or many?*

SJ: It was indeed a hard decision, mainly because it represented such a change of direction in my career. I had assumed I would continue for the foreseeable future on my path as a professional conductor. But I had always had a wide-ranging field of interests, and I found myself intrigued by the huge challenges and opportunities inherent in this new position at Rice. I decided to seek the advice of my former teacher and good friend, Howard Hanson, who of course was one of the greatest figures in 20th century American music and music education, having put the Eastman School of Music on

the map and served as its director for some four decades. I asked Howard if he thought I should move to Houston and accept Rice's offer to head up its new music school. I'll never forget his reply.

"Sam," he told me, "this is the first time since George Eastman called me in Rome and asked me to come to Rochester to head up the Eastman School that I can sense a similar situation. I know Rice, I've lectured there, and it is a first-rate institution. If they want to start a music school, they'll want you to do it right. There is no question about it. You must go."

I took his advice, and I've never regretted it.

KR: *Were you aware of the similarities of your situation with Dr. Lovett's when he came to start the Institute?*

SJ: Yes, I became aware of that after I got to Houston and began to immerse myself in Rice's history and to think about how to get the Shepherd School started. It is truly striking how many parallels there are between Rice's early beginnings and those of the Shepherd School.

I spoke about some of those parallels in my address to the Society of Rice University Women my first year in Houston and in an article *Dreams and Translations*, which was adapted from that speech for the *Rice University Review* (Spring 1974). (I think the article might be interesting reading to anyone who wants to know more about how the Shepherd School got started.) The article reports on the evolution of my thought as I developed the guiding philosophy of the School. Amazingly, that same philosophy has continued to undergird the School's *raison d'être* in almost every detail throughout these three decades of its existence. In it I pointed out the similarities between William Marsh Rice's and Sallie Shepherd Perkins' bequests, and the fact that both philanthropists entrusted it to others to carry out their desire to establish major new institutions. In that article I could have emphasized more, perhaps, the extraordinary opportunity to start with a *tabula rasa*, as it were, which both institutions enjoyed and with which they had to struggle. And I should have mentioned Dr. Lovett's grand tour, visiting the great institutions of Europe to survey the best the world had to offer and to amass ideas and recruit faculty for this new endeavor. My own grand (or I should say, *petit*) tour was more modest—I didn't go to Europe, but I did visit, in several smaller trips, many outstanding schools and conservatories in this country and I definitely felt the parallel with Dr. Lovett's approach.

Let me make one other comment regarding one of these points—the opportunity to start from a blank page.

Incidentally, some would say that that's not true, that it wasn't really a blank page, that Arthur Hall, assisted by

Klaus Kratzenstein and others, was at the helm of a Shepherd School of Music several years before I got here. And I would want to be the first to acknowledge the important service that Professor Hall and his associates rendered to the University in the 1950's, '60s and early '70s. Sallie Shepherd Perkins had made an agreement with Rice in 1950 to endow a music school at Rice after her death when the bulk of her considerable estate would become available. I saw the document bearing her signature and that of George Brown (who chaired the Board at that time) agreeing on behalf of Rice, and I was entrusted to keep that letter of agreement along with her very explicit notes regarding her wishes for the School. That material was in our files and is now, I believe, in the University's archives. She immediately began to transfer some funds to Rice, which enabled the university to set up a small department for offering non-major general music courses. The department had two full positions and one part-time. There was also some funding for a concert series which Professor Hall administered under the name that Mrs. Perkins wanted for her yet-to-be-realized school, the Shepherd School of Music, honoring Benjamin A. Shepherd, her grandfather, a towering early figure in Houston banking. But, although for 20 years or so Houstonians had seen the name "Shepherd School of Music" atop concert programs at Rice, this term was more promissory than actual. Until her death (in 1968) what was referred to as the Shepherd School of Music was actually a small music department, too small to offer a major, but one which gave music a much-needed early foothold in the life of the University.

But back to the tabula rasa. It was actually quite an unusual circumstance that a university of Rice's stature did not already have a fully fleshed-out music department, if not indeed a complete school of music. Although in our early history we were an institute, not a university, it was still an anomaly, especially when one considers that some similar institutions (Carnegie Tech—now Carnegie Mellon University—and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology come readily to mind) boasted fully staffed music schools of outstanding stature. Obviously William Marsh Rice had not intended that the arts be left out of his institute—his very name for it made that clear, the William Marsh Rice Institute for the Advancement of Literature, Science, and Art. But of course when one starts an institution it is impossible to do everything at once. Dr. Lovett guided the Institute to early eminence in science, the middle of those three owls, then later came distinction in letters, the first owl, and only in more recent years, with the School of Architecture, with the Department of Fine Arts, and (of course I'm prejudiced, but I would say especially) with

the Shepherd School of Music, has the University given full wing to the third owl implied in Mr. Rice's title and in Dr. Lovett's carefully designed academic seal.

But, through some quirk of chance, here we were in the seventh decade of the life of a great university with newly acquired funds to establish a music school that all agreed should strive to be one of the best and with a virtual blank slate, with the turf not already divided up and jealously guarded, with the curriculum not already staffed and fought over, with the chance literally to dream one's ideal institution, and with the resources—indeed, the marching orders—to bring it into existence. It was an extraordinary opportunity, one which Howard Hanson sensed immediately, and one toward which I determined, though still a young man, to dedicate myself with all my energies.

After my first year at Rice, I was asked to become the associate conductor of one of America's major orchestras. Although reassured by the knowledge that I could have resumed my conducting career had I so chosen, it didn't take me two seconds to turn it down. I knew that the endeavor that Rice had entrusted to me was a "high emprise," one that would call forth from me and from all who would be associated with it our very best. I had a great commitment to Rice and to Sallie Shepherd Perkins, one I intended to keep.

KR: *Were you director and then dean? When?*

SJ: When President Hackerman and I had our initial discussions, he asked what title I would like, indicating that it would be up to me to choose whether I wanted to be called dean or director. I chose director, partly influenced by its having been Howard Hanson's title at the Eastman School of Music and also because of the implications of that word in the title "music director," from the world of the symphony orchestra, in which for over a decade I had been working and which I was just now leaving. It only took a short while, however, to realize that in the academic world, and especially at Rice, the term "director" was a rung lower on the ladder than that of "dean." It didn't matter that much to me personally, but I realized this new school needed to be run by a dean, not a director, so that in the perception of the rest of the University it would be accorded the full status of a School. Accordingly, I revisited the subject with Dr. Hackerman who readily agreed with the wisdom of the change. I believe it was first reflected in the 1975–76 General Announcements.

But there's a larger issue implied by your question, that of the authority vested in the new music school's chief administrator. On that question President

Hackerman reiterated what I had been told by Provost Vandiver, namely that I was to have full authority and responsibility for the School. This principle was clear, irrespective of my title. But of course I realized that there were still many restraints on this authority. We obviously had to operate within the strictures of University administrative and budgetary policy, and I came to rely heavily on the knowledge of University procedures possessed by my administrative assistant Gloria Weems and on the administrative help and wisdom of President Hackerman's assistant, Carl MacDowell, as well as, of course, upon the counsel and support of Provost Vandiver and his able assistant, Marian Jordan.

KR: *What decisions did you have to make, how much influence did you have, what decisions had been made prior to your selection? And how did you craft the initial curriculum?*

SJ: There were two major decisions made prior to my selection, both by President Hackerman. First, he did not want us to offer music education, and second, the Shepherd School would be a closed cost center.

I was in complete agreement with not offering music education courses in our curriculum. Hackerman felt that this area was already well served by other universities in Texas and, indeed, in Houston, and he felt whatever we might do would be duplicative effort. For my part, I had taken note of an interesting fact. The Eastman School, with which of course I was very familiar, had at that time some 800 students, and of those 800 approximately 500 were music education majors. The other 300 were preparing for the profession as performance majors, composers, theorists, or music historians. That was the curricular emphasis, even that early in the game, which I felt we should be making, so I looked upon Dr. Hackerman's restriction against our offering music education as Br'er Rabbit did toward being thrown into the briar patch.

I also saw the wisdom of Dr. Hackerman's decision to set the Shepherd School up as a closed cost center. This meant, of course, that all of the money we would spend for the Shepherd School would be earned from the Shepherd endowment, rather than from Rice funds. This had the benefit, particularly in the early years, of reassuring the other schools and departments of the University that their budgets would not be adversely affected by the appearance of this new kid on the block, and as a policy it remained in force (if I remember correctly) through Larry Livingston's deanship and the early Michael Hammond years. Later this policy came to be seen as divisive and parochial, and the Shepherd

School, assets and all, was fully enfolded into the commonwealth of the University.

As to the question of how much influence I had, I believe any objective evaluation would have to say that it was substantial. After all, that was how Dr. Hackerman had set it up to be. He wanted to hire a person to establish the school and trust that person to set the philosophy, hire the faculty, formulate the curriculum, recruit the students, and administer the whole thing. Of course, this is again very much in the Lovett model and is another of those coincidences we spoke about earlier. I must immediately make the point, however, that this was a highly collaborative endeavor. I certainly did not do it in a vacuum. The faculty, especially our early appointees, and the staff also had tremendous influence in setting up the young institution and in making its significant mark upon the life of the University.

Throughout my first year, however (1973–74), the Shepherd School consisted of one faculty member, namely myself, and one staff member, my gifted and dedicated administrative assistant, Gloria Weems. Of course, we had no music majors yet. (Prof. Hall's department continued to operate in Hamman Hall that year, and shortly after his retirement the next year those courses were phased out and the School assumed responsibility for offering courses for both majors and nonmajors.) It was a year of intense planning and travel, and of decisions, each of which was bound to have a profound impact on the direction and evolution of the new institution.

The first decision I had to make was where to put the new School. Of course, space is always an issue and is usually at a premium in any university. It so happened, however, that at this critical juncture Rice had some unused (or at least underutilized) space. We could have renovated and used some space in the Library, which today seems impossible, in view of the Library's burgeoning space needs, but three decades ago there was some available space there. Or I could have chosen one of the Quonset huts on the south side of the campus, and there were several other possibilities as well. But I determined that the best choice was in the two basement floors of the newly built Sewall Hall. Being underground wasn't as depressing as it might sound, with the Sculpture Court to look out upon and the Art Museum on the ground floor. And it was logical to be near the Department of Fine Arts, which was located in Sewall. Most importantly, this location was right in the center of things, in close proximity to Lovett Hall (which then housed the University administrative offices), Allen Center (business offices), and Cohen House (important for faculty contacts). So, the Shepherd School in its early

years found a home in Sewall Hall, and as we expanded we also used space in Hamman Hall, the Nuclear Physics Lab, the basement of Herman Brown Hall, and the Weiss Library. We gave concerts primarily in Hamman Hall, but we performed occasionally in Cohen House and in the Rice Memorial Center. We were the grateful recipients of Milford House to use for recitals and studios. All in all, before the construction of our magnificent Alice Pratt Brown Hall, we occupied space all over the campus. But, as you can tell, I am getting ahead of myself. Back to the decisions that had to be made at the beginning.

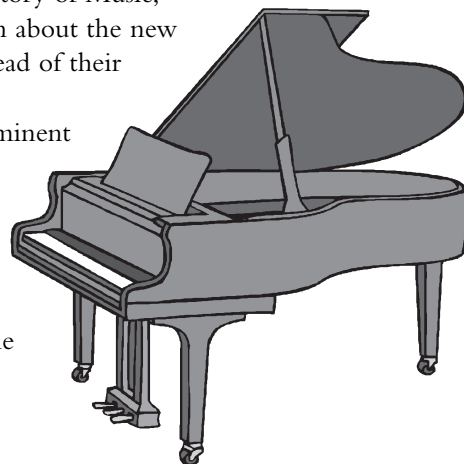
Another early, fateful decision I faced involved questions about our new school's building—when to build it and how it should look. These questions were prompted in part because Sallie Shepherd Perkins had put major emphasis on the building in her negotiations with Rice and because of her preferences for it. She had wanted the building to be designed in a Georgian, Southern plantation style of architecture, and she felt strongly about it—so strongly that it had dominated early discussions of the school's evolution. After thinking about it, I determined that planning for our building at this early stage was premature. Rather than erecting a building and then filling it with a program, I felt we needed to concentrate our energies and resources into creating a compelling, successful program with an outstanding faculty and student body. When this was accomplished, I was certain that it would generate its own pressure for a new building—which is exactly what ultimately happened. I also felt that we could punt the question of the building's style downfield, so to speak, and I had to pray for Mrs. Perkins' forgiveness regarding her beloved Southern architecture. I knew she would rather have us fulfill her wish for a music school of the first level of quality than to start out by shoehorning a plantation style building into Rice's prevailing Italianate style of architecture, and in the early years there wasn't enough money for both. Later in my tenure, we collaborated with the School of Architecture in a project to draw up a list of our space and program needs and to produce several possible models. The results were quite similar, in terms of available spaces, to the building we were ultimately to occupy. But it was to remain for Michael Hammond to conceive of and lead us into the inspired realization which is Alice Pratt Brown Hall.

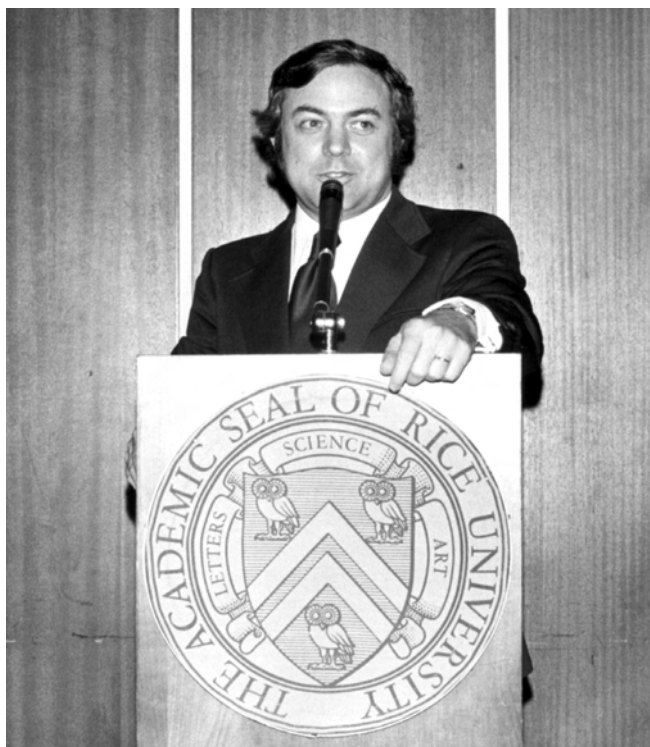
Perhaps the most important question that faced the new school was the question of its philosophical thrust. What exactly was to be our mission? I have already reported in some detail on this aspect of my early planning in *Dreams and Translations*, which reflects the results of my first five months on the job. The guiding principle, the overriding strategy, had already been given

to me by Provost Vandiver and President Hackerman, that is, to make of this a school of the first order. This goal of excellence was always uppermost in my mind, and it constantly informed every decision. I came across an interesting set of statistics that fall. Of the 900 or so music schools and departments in the country, only 20 of them produced 80% of the nation's graduates who went on to become professional musicians. I determined that our goal would be to become one of those 20. It is now generally recognized that we have achieved that goal, if not indeed to have made a place for ourselves on most people's short list of the great music schools in America. That would never have happened had we thought in small terms at the beginning.

With President Hackerman's encouragement and support, I decided to fashion a two-year phase-in period and to aim for officially inaugurating the new school in September, 1975. This meant I had to draw up a two-year timetable for growth. The first year, as I have mentioned, was already embarked upon in a period of intense traveling and planning. I gave much preliminary thought to the curriculum, tackling especially the problems of 1) how to reconcile the need to balance the intense specialization required of a music student with the broad requirements of a liberal education, 2) how to fuse the dichotomous rift between the academic side of music (theory and musicology) and the so-called applied side (actual performance) which was so bedeviling music education at that time (and which in many respects still does), and 3) how to refocus the education of gifted string players to include training and even specialization as an ensemblist and to discard the unfortunate traditional idea that unless they became a soloist they were a failure.

I decided to hire a small group of key faculty to come aboard the second year to help in planning for the specifics of the curriculum and in laying the preliminary groundwork for the School. In my travels I of course looked for candidates to fill these positions. I still remember, while visiting the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, having a discussion about the new school with the head of their Theory/History department, the eminent composer-theoretician Paul Cooper. I explained Rice's charge and commitment to the new school, and I talked about my





Samuel Jones, Shepherd School Inaugural, 1975

plans for the goals and curricular thrust of the new institution. When I asked Dr. Cooper if he knew of anyone he could recommend to head up the theory-composition department, he smiled and blushed a bit, then said, “Is present company included?” I knew it would take some negotiation and arm-twisting—which it did—but I sensed at that moment that I had found our first and one of our most important faculty members. After Paul decided to come to Rice, he highly recommended one of his colleagues at CCM, a brilliant young musicologist, Anne Schnoebelen, to head up our music history department. Anne was also an accomplished pianist, and this very much comported with my desire to amalgamate scholarship with performance. So Dr. Schnoebelen became our second appointment, and she made her plans to move to Houston to join the fledgling enterprise. I now had two people to represent the academic side of our planning, but I needed to add representation from the performance side. And, of course, all this time I was beginning to have discussions and to build rapport with the Houston Symphony and its superb musicians. I found in its concertmaster, Ronald Patterson, not only a gifted performer but also a highly articulate and charismatic leader who was deeply interested in the challenge of creating an integrated curriculum. Later I was able to convince the eminent flutist and pedagogue, Albert Tipton, to take a sabbatical year from his position at Florida State University and come with his wife, the

wonderful pianist Mary Norris, to join our faculty. He became a member of our curriculum committee, and together we all fashioned what I still regard as a masterpiece of curricular planning as we strove to translate into the practicalities of actual courses and degree plans the lofty ideals and integrated goals which we all shared. (As a footnote, let me add that the day I convinced Albert and Mary to stay in Houston beyond his sabbatical leave from FSU and to join us permanently was one of my most exultant as dean.)

Another key early decision concerned the size of the school. My first thoughts were that it would be limited to a some 200 to 250 students and be served by some 30 to 35 faculty members. A couple of years later, however, I gave the matter more explicit thought and drew up a careful blueprint of the number of students we would need in each department in order to have a more optimal grouping, particularly for a school that made orchestral training such an important part of its curriculum. The result of these further thoughts was that the School needed to be authorized to grow to 300 students. This was a significant number, of course, because it meant expanding the University by a number approaching 10 per cent. I very carefully drew up my proposal for Dr. Hackerman and presented it as persuasively as I knew how. His approval on the spot was another of my most exultant decanal days and, I felt, one of the most fateful in the life of the new School.

Of course, at this point we were decidedly smaller than that. It is fascinating to recount the growth in the School’s student body in the early years. I have forgotten the exact numbers now, but in 1975 we opened our doors with, I believe, 23 students. The next year we had twice that, and the year after that twice again. We continued to grow, but not, of course, at the same geometric rate. When I stepped down from the deanship, after six years, the School had some 135 students, from all over the country and from several foreign countries, and we had 30 or so faculty members (several of whom were part time). The School continued to grow under my successors, soon leveling off at around 250 students. In recent years enrollment has come in at close to the maximum level Dr. Hackerman and I agreed upon in the beginning.

But in addition to numeric growth, there was an unmistakable and noticeable growth in the quality of the student body every single year of the 24 years in which I was privileged to observe it, and I understand the phenomenon continues to this day. While we have always, from the very first class, had our share of exceptionally gifted “star” students, the proportional number of those outstanding students seems to grow each year, and the

overall aggregate level of the student body has continued through three decades to get higher and higher.

KR: *Was it difficult fitting the liberal arts education in with the music curriculum?*

SJ: Yes, it was. In the traditional college liberal arts course, the first two years are spent in general courses, and the final two years are years of specialization in the major. This of course doesn't work for a music student, because intense specialization is needed from day one. Not only does the music student have to spend many hours practicing one's instrument, but also music's foundational academic courses (theory and history) have to be started right away, too. And time must be allowed for ensemble work—orchestra and chamber music. We knew we wanted to require our students to take the same core courses required of any Rice student, what was then called the distribution courses. But we saw no way to squeeze those courses into the first two years. We came up with a novel solution, namely, to fashion an amalgamated five-year curriculum, at the conclusion of which a student would receive both a Master of Music and a Bachelor of Music degree, and during the course of which the distribution courses could be stretched out, one course per semester. Later, we provided the more traditional plan, making it possible to receive the Bachelors degree independently, but we still retained the five-year curriculum as an Honors program.

KR: *What were your greatest challenges?*

SJ: Greatest challenges? There were so many! I would say one of the greatest was balancing the myriad demands on all fronts at once. It was a period of intense creativity, and it was an extremely exhilarating time for all of us involved in it. I joke that bringing the School into existence was like composing a huge opera. Indeed, there are lots of parallels.

This led, however, to another great challenge, one involving morale. Maintaining the high ideals of our common goal in the face of the actual growth process necessary to get there was not easy and led to inevitable frustrations and disappointments. I dealt with these as best I could and never missed an opportunity to be a sympathetic yet realistic morale booster. I followed a tradition Howard Hanson had instituted at Eastman, that of starting each year with a Convocation setting the tone for the year to come. I always spent a great deal of time on those addresses, often pouring my thoughts into a musical form—one year I remember I used sonata form,

another year, theme and variations, and so on. I remember Ray Fliegel telling me how much those opening sessions used to mean to him.

KR: *Were there significant financial constraints?*

SJ: Not at first, but as time went on our financial needs grew faster than our endowment did, although I must say the Board of Governors was doing its usual amazing job of investing and husbanding our resources. This, too, led inevitably to some faculty disappointments. One of our greatest needs was to have additional funding for scholarships, which is why I started the Shepherd Society.

KR: *I will want to ask you more about that later. But first, were there any other significant challenges you remember?*

SJ: Yes there were. Cross campus relations, admissions battles, getting our new curriculum approved by the general faculty...

KR: *What was your reception like on campus from the other departments?*

SJ: We were welcomed with open arms by many, we were greeted by healthy skepticism by some, and by some we were considered as interlopers, diluting the quality of the Rice experience. Most of my personal relationships on the campus were quite cordial, and I believe the other music faculty felt the same. We worked hard at establishing good relations and at becoming fully participating citizens of the academic community. I became a faculty associate of Lovett College and later at Jones College, and most of our faculty were also associates at the different colleges. And we all served on University faculty committees, as well as, of course, on various committees within our School.

We had extensive meetings with the University Curriculum Committee in explaining the thoughts and planning behind the curriculum we had developed. I remember Jeff Kurtzman and Anne Schnoebelen in particular were very effective in that regard. Then came the fateful meeting in which we had to submit our curriculum to the entire University faculty for its approval. There were many probing questions, some expressing a few of the misgivings I alluded to earlier. But we were able to assuage most of those, and the University faculty approved, almost unanimously, the hard work we had wrought on our curriculum. We were now officially a degree-granting arm of the University.

KR: *What administrators and faculty members do you especially remember?*

SJ: I've already mentioned many of them, of course, as well as members of the staff. The Shepherd School, and Rice itself, has always been blessed with an unbelievable staff, without whom we could not function. But early faculty...all of them were important *dramatis personae*. One of the first I would remember is of course Ray Fliegel, the longtime concertmaster of the Houston Symphony. He was a very special human being and a veritable walking encyclopedia of orchestral string techniques. He was primarily responsible for the greatness of the string section of the Houston Symphony all those years, and I was anxious to have him share his knowledge and his outlook with our students. I invited Wayne Crouse and Shirley Trepel, who were the principal viola and cello, respectively, of the Symphony to join Ray and Ron Patterson to form the Shepherd Quartet, which was an important part of our early teaching and concertgiving. Paul Ellison anchored our string instruction with his inspired teaching and performing on Double Bass. We couldn't hire all the principals of the Symphony, because many of them had taught for years at the University of Houston, and when we hired Wayne and Shirley it caused a major rift for a time between our two universities and resulted in a temporary hiring freeze. But we found great teachers for every instrument—we flew in John deLancie from the Philadelphia Orchestra to teach oboe; Richard Pickar, principal of the Symphony, taught clarinet; Eric Arbiter taught bassoon; Tom Bacon, horn; Mack Guderian, trumpet; Dave Waters, trombone. Richard Brown was one of our earliest appointees and was a special mainstay of the ensemble program. The eminent mezzo soprano Frances Bible taught voice. There have been many great performing faculty through the years, but these were some from the very earliest years. In terms of our academic faculty, Ellsworth Milburn and Arthur Gottschalk joined Paul Cooper in the theory department, and Jeffrey Kurtzman and Marcia Citron joined Anne Schnoebelen in the music history department. In the latter years of my tenure we added other great mainstays of the School, such as Clyde Holloway, our legendary organ professor, and I was particularly proud that we received a major grant from the Starling Foundation to finance the hiring of a preeminent violin instructor. I brought in Eudice Shapiro as the first to fill that position, now held, of course, by Sergiu Luca. Many of these became pillars of the faculty and had much to do with making the Shepherd School the great institution that it is. Of course, my successors, especially Larry Livingston and Michael Hammond, also

made many outstanding faculty and staff appointments, and they have all made major contributions.

KR: *Now back to the Shepherd Society. What do you remember about its founding?*

SJ: Lots of things. I remember its very first gathering, a lovely organizational luncheon that my wife Kristin and I hosted in the Rice Memorial Center and for which Gloria Weems lent her usual flawless assistance. My experience in the symphony world had taught me how valuable a loyal community support organization could be. (They were once called women's committees, but after the '60s most such groups expanded their membership to include both men and women. We did so with the Shepherd Society from the beginning.) We had already developed the nucleus of a support group when we enlisted the help of some dedicated Rice supporters who were active in music circles in the community—especially in the Houston Symphony and Houston Grand Opera—to assist us in drawing up an invitation list for the Inaugural Concert of the Shepherd School in September, 1975. That gala event was anchored by a concert of the Houston Symphony which I conducted and at which President Hackerman officially christened our new School. I remember Catherine Hannah and Genevieve Demme were especially helpful in that early group.

We spent a great deal of time in planning for the Shepherd Society and in bringing it into existence. All the invitees at that inaugural luncheon voted to support the new endeavor and to become the nucleus of an Organizational Committee which then got to work in earnest. I drafted a set of bylaws which the group carefully thrashed over and which Malcolm Lovett (Dr. Lovett's son—another tie with the past) put into final form. I wrote a rather lofty but very heartfelt Preamble to embody the goals of the organization. We drew up plans for an auspicious inaugural Membership Concert, held on December 1, 1977. We used the invitation list we had developed for the School's inaugural concert two years earlier and expanded it to become one of the city's most complete data bases of music and Rice supporters. We sent out handsome invitations to become Charter Members, a call that was answered by over 300 responses (323, to be exact). Many of these were couples, so as the Society formally began its operations we had over 500 people included in the endeavor, a group which included many of the city's most influential patrons of the arts and all of whom believed in our new School and were prepared to help it succeed.

KR: *Who are some of its members that you especially remember?*

SJ: There are so many who were indispensable to the group that it is impossible to list them all. In addition to those mentioned above, Ellen Kelley, Jerry Priest, Helen Worden, Phyllis Tucker, Gene Hackerman, Louisa Sarofim, and Elva Kalb Dumas come readily to mind. Elva gave us our very first endowed scholarship, which at that time required a gift of \$10,000, soon followed by Mr. And Mrs. Erwin Heinen and by Mrs. Patti Cooper. My good friend Robert A. Shepherd, Jr. (a distant relative of Sallie Shepherd Perkins) agreed to become the first president of the Society. Malcolm Lovett, Gen. Maurice Hirsch, Dr. Harvey Gordon, Ralph Anderson and Bill Bland were some of the men who were on the Organizational Committee. That committee, which was co-chaired by Helen Worden and Gene Hackerman, became, upon the adoption of the bylaws, the first board of directors of the society. After the inaugural concert, which we billed as a Shepherd School Showcase, the audience all moved from Hamman Hall to the President's House where Dr. and Mrs. Hackerman hosted an elegant reception.

I wanted to include as one of the group's stated purposes the raising of funds not only for scholarships but also for a new building. One member of the group felt strongly, however, that all our financial support should go to scholarships, and a majority of the group agreed with her. I remember feeling somewhat disappointed, but I nonetheless readily acquiesced, happy beyond words at the scholarship support. Once again, I felt that at the right time additional support from the group toward a new building would spontaneously arise. Indeed, that was the case. When the time came to fund our new building, the Shepherd Society raised a million dollars toward the total cost, over and above their generous annual scholarship support.

It can't be stressed enough what a great asset the Shepherd Society is to the Shepherd School and to Rice. To my knowledge, it is by far the most successful support group for a music school in the nation.

KR: *Can you characterize the status of the Houston cultural scene in the mid-seventies? What was the overall mood of the city?*

SJ: It was a time of optimism and growth. Houston was a young, vital city, characterized in many ways by the powerful stimulation which NASA provided to the imagination. Our arts organizations, though seasoned and mature, were influenced by that same vitality, and Houston was beginning to think of itself as (and to aspire

to the status of) a world-class city. I often remarked that how it felt to live in New York or Philadelphia a century ago must have been similar to how it felt to live in Houston now with our city in its young maturity, confidently growing and achieving. It was a wonderful time and place in which to be building a new institution.

KR: *What did you foresee/realize as the place of the Shepherd School within the Houston community?*

SJ: As one can tell from the final paragraphs of *Dreams and Translations*, I envisioned a deeply important role for the Shepherd School within both the University and our larger community. Many cities in the country possessed strong performing arts organizations, but the greatest music centers in the country had something else as well—a major school for partnering with those organizations to create a center that could attract gifted young artists and provide a means for the city's professionals to reflect upon and pass along accumulated insights. The New York Philharmonic had such a relationship with Juilliard; the Philadelphia Orchestra, with Curtis; the Boston Symphony, with the New England Conservatory. Many of us in the community sensed the possibility of a similarly outstanding role for the Shepherd School in Houston. And Rice—though not everyone realized it at the time—desperately needed the salutary effect of great music on its campus. And it happened, rather quickly. After all, three decades is a short time in the life of an institution, isn't it?

And, speaking of short times, my term as Dean just flew by. Or, I should say, in some ways it did. In other ways, it was so full, so active, that it seemed suspended in time. And that's an interesting thing...you asked earlier about the greatest challenges. I would have to say that perhaps the greatest of all was knowing when to step down. I remember speaking to the faculty early in my sixth year and reviewing our joint accomplishments. I remember the private thought that pushed almost frighteningly into my awareness then, even while I was speaking to them. That thought said, "You know, you might have to think about the fact that you have done for this School what you set out to do. It's now firmly established in the life of the University—the tap root is down. You've taken it from zero to 135 students. You've built a great faculty. The dream of the School has now been translated into reality. Perhaps you've finished your work as dean."

In addition to that, as deep as the friendships of all of us who started the School had become and as intensely as we had collaborated, it was perhaps inevitable that some strains and disappointments would emerge. And I realized that my own style of leadership, though strongly

collaborative and inclusive, was modeled by the approach to administration which I had seen embodied by Hanson and which Hackerman himself practiced, that of a strong central authority. I had not been in academia during the revolutions of the '60s, and I found it difficult to share with the faculty the final responsibility for the School that some of them felt, in increasing measure, was their due. Frustration with my leadership began to grow in some quarters, and I began to sense that perhaps it was time now for someone who was a professional administrator to assume the mantle. After all, I am basically a creator, a composer. The School had needed someone to compose it, and that I had done. Now it needed an executant. And I needed to become a musician again, and a teacher. I needed now to join my colleagues in helping to shape the School from within the ranks.

It's probably no accident that sabbaticals come when they do, at a time somehow naturally endowed as the

time for a break, a caesura, a perfect authentic cadence. It was time to draw the double bar and go on to the next movement. This symphony was just getting started.

Editor's Note: After six years as the first Dean of the Shepherd School of Music, Samuel Jones stepped down from that position at the conclusion of the 1978-79 school year and took a sabbatical leave during which he composed his opera A Christmas Memory. He continued his association with Rice and the Shepherd School as Professor of Composition and Conducting, and he served for many years as Director of Graduate Studies. He spent the 1988-89 academic year as Director of Orchestral Studies at Carnegie Mellon University. He retired from Rice in 1997 after 24 years of service to the University, and he and his wife moved to the Seattle area where he was appointed Composer in Residence of the Seattle Symphony. He is currently in his tenth year in that position.

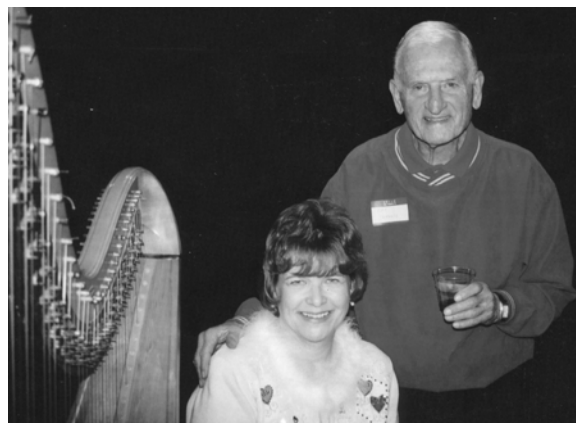
Valentine Party

Support for the Woodson Research Center

Many thanks to the many contributors to the Rice Historical Society/Juliet's event on Valentine's Day at Star Motor Cars. Because of the generosity of our members, the society is able to donate \$1,569 to the Woodson Research Center in Fondren Library for the preservation of Rice history. *Thank you so much!*



Carla Homan and Martine LePaulee



Harpist Mary Jane Sinclair with Pat Samuels



Rosamay Davis, Ellis Rudy, and Van Ballard

Holiday Party at the Home of Betty and Bob Bixby

Photos courtesy of Greg Davis



Denise Fischer and Bonnie Sue Wooldridge



Mary DeAnda and Grace Bunch



Greg Davis, Lee Seureau, and Pam Devine



Bartenders extraordinaire: Alan Bath and Glenn Seureau

FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Alan Bath



“The Malady”

The *Thresher* reported on December 8, 1948 that once again “The Malady” had attacked the campus. One hundred sixty students had reported to the infirmary for treatment. The first outbreak had come during the weekend of the A&M game.

Almost the entire football team was sick and had to be doctored on the way to the game. This attack reached its peak between midnight and 6 o’clock Monday morning, with symptoms lasting generally about 24 hours. No cause had yet been found, but food and water are being checked.

More than ten years later another major attack of “The Malady” hit in March 1959 when approximately 80 percent of dorm students were affected. Again, the water supply was thought to be the culprit.

Election Polls

In a Presidential straw poll, designed “to stimulate interest among Rice students in current national issues,” the students overwhelmingly chose Franklin Delano Roosevelt over Herbert Hoover. They also voted overwhelmingly for the repeal of prohibition.

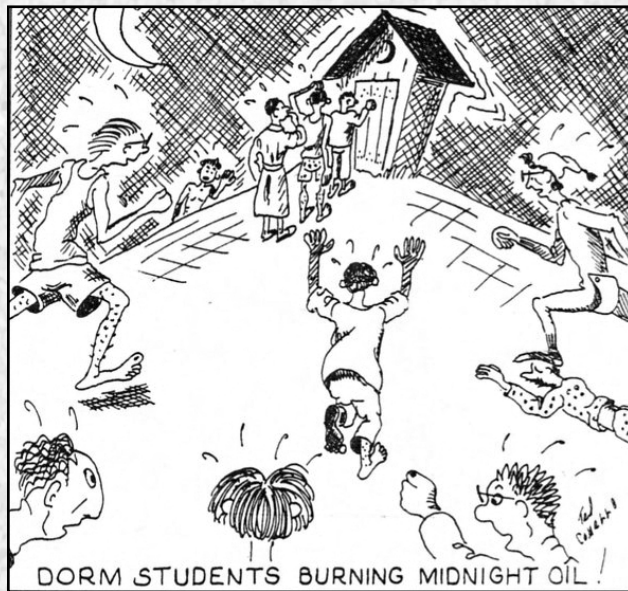
—*Thresher*, October 21 1932

Rice on Parade

At the suggestion of Lyndon B. Johnson, state director for the National Youth Administration, Dr. Edgar O. Lovett, President of Rice Institute, sent the NYA the blue and grey pennant of the Institute to be carried in the January 20, 1937, Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C.

Those Were the Days

The annual Sadie Hawkins dance will be held this Saturday night (November 6, 1948). Boys are to dress as L’il Abner, girls as Daisy Mae or Moonbeam McSwine. Girls ask the boys, but those boys who don’t get asked can come stag. The Girl’s Club has labeled this one “Sadie’s Last Chance.”



The Malady, 1948

Owl Club Formed

The October 7, 1949 issue of the *Thresher* announced the formation of the Owl Club, an organization of Rice Institute alumni and friends with the aim of promoting “closer fellowship between Rice Institute supporters and the greater enjoyment of all athletics at the Institute.” The group will meet one night each week during the football season with the coaching staff to meet the players and learn about coaching methods and strategy. Coach Jess Nealy will lead the discussions.

More Headlines

“Chess Club Organized for Mental Ones”

—*Thresher*, April 23, 1926