

1982

THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE SPHEX CLUB

CONSTITUTIONARTICLE I. Name.

The name of this organization shall be the Sphex Club.

ARTICLE II. Object.

The object of this club shall be, primarily, the intellectual and social culture of its members and, secondarily, the encouragement of philanthropic, educational and civic progress.

ARTICLE III. Membership.

(1) Membership shall be either active or emeritus.

CHANGE FROM INACTIVE⁴

(2) The maximum limit of active membership shall be thirty (30).

SAME AS BEFORE

(3) Any member has the privilege of presenting to the Membership Committee the name of any person for active membership. This committee may consider on its own persons it considers suitable for membership.

(4) If such proposed person receives the unanimous approval of the committee, his name shall then be presented to the club for election. The vote shall be by secret ballot, and two negative votes shall indicate exclusion.

(5) No election of members shall be held unless previous notice of such election shall have been given by the Secretary, in writing, to every member of the club.

(6) Any active member of long service and advanced years, having made known his desire to the Secretary, may, by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting, be made an emeritus member, continuing with all the privileges of active membership, but free of the obligation to read papers, and to attend meetings regularly; provided, however, that such emeritus member be not included within the constitutional limit provided for active membership.

? (7) The name of any member may be dropped by a majority of the total enrolled membership voting affirmatively.

ARTICLE IV. Officers.

(1) The officers of this club shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

(2) Election of officers shall be held annually at the second regular meeting in the fall. Election shall be by ballot, and a majority of the votes cast shall suffice for election. The President shall not be eligible to succeed himself.

(3) In the event of the death or resignation of any officer, the club shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term at its next regular meeting, proceeding in the manner prescribed for the annual election.

ARTICLE V. Committees.

(1) The following committees, consisting of three members each, shall be appointed by the President as soon after his election as possible: (a) Membership Committee; (b) Program Committee.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Membership Committee to consider for active membership all persons proposed by members and those names originating in the Committee. If such person receives the unanimous approval of the Committee, the Committee shall then notify the Secretary as to the date upon which it is proposed that the election be held.

(over)

CONSTITUTION (Cont'd)

ARTICLE V. Committees. (Cont'd)

(3) It shall be the duty of the Program Committee to secure the speaker and make all other provisions for the annual dinner, to assist the Secretary when so requested in arrangements of programs of meetings, and to make all necessary provisions for special meetings of any nature.

(4) It shall be the duty of the Secretary to arrange and publish to the members the schedule of speakers for the regular club meetings for the year, beginning in October, with the assistance of the Program Committee, as provided in Article V, Section 3 above.

ARTICLE VI. Amendments.

All proposed changes in this Constitution shall be presented in writing to the club for discussion. Such proposed changes shall lie over until the following regular meeting, at which time they may, if duly seconded, be adopted by a majority vote of the members present.

BY-LAWS

(1) The club shall meet, as far as practicable, once every two weeks, from October 1st to May 15th, at such time and place as may, from time to time, be designated.

(2) The annual dues of active members shall be such sum as may be found necessary from year to year.

(3) If any member fails to pay such dues and other charges as may be properly assessed against him, his name shall be automatically dropped from the roll of the club six months after the end of the club year during which such indebtedness was incurred; provided, that he shall have been twice previously reminded of this law by the Secretary or Treasurer..

(4) Any emeritus member may, upon his request, be reinstated as an active member by majority vote of the members present at any meeting.

(5) Recognition of decease of members shall be a simple statement of fact concerning the member.

(6) Notwithstanding the provisions above stated of these By-Laws, the majority of members at any meeting may, by special resolution, provide for unusual situations or conditions as may be deemed proper.

(7) All proposed changes in the By-Laws shall be presented in writing at any regular meeting of the club and may be adopted by a majority of the members present.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SPHEX CLUB

Remarks made by Dr. William H. Barney, President, on April 15, 1982, on the occasion of the annual public meeting held at the First Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg, Virginia.

For SpheX Club members the highlight of the year is the annual meeting, at which time we have the honor of entertaining our friends and neighbors in the Lynchburg community. This year - 1982 - the annual meeting takes on added significance, since it is, coincidentally, the 1000th consecutive meeting of the club. And to us, this seems an appropriate time to take a few minutes to review the history of this unique organization.

An historical study of the SpheX is a task made easy by the fact that the minutes of all previous 999 meetings are preserved, intact, in the archives of the club at Jones Memorial Library. Previous secretaries, it appears, have been almost as diligent as is our present Recorder, Ray Williamson, in keeping details and accurate records.

The club was organized on October 5, 1910. Just why the club was founded is not entirely clear. The constitution, adopted later, states that "the object is to promote the intellectual and social culture of its members and to encourage philanthropic, educational and civic progress in the community."

There has been speculation, however, that the real reason for the club's founding was to give the academic community of Randolph-Macon Woman's College and the business and professional men of the city a forum on which they could meet for the exchange of interest and ideas. There is the implication that the friendship between town and gown may not have been as warm in 1910 as it is today and that the club attempted to address that problem. This thought gains credibility upon reading the list of the eleven founders of the club:

Dr. Henry Blackwell, Professor of English, R-MWC
Dr. T. Moody Campbell, Professor of German, R-MWC
Mr. John Craddock, Businessman
Dr. H. W. Drew, Physician
Mr. John G. Haythe, Attorney
Dr. Clinton Kilby, Professor of Physics, R-MWC
Mr. R. A. Long, Attorney
Dr. F. W. Martin, Professor of Chemistry, R-MWC
Dr. Mosby G. Perrow, Director of Public Health
Mr. E. Sydenstricker, Editor of the Advance
Mr. A. F. Thomas, Businessman and State Legislator

During the next year, 17 more members were added, including more educators, doctors, businessmen and others; and also including a judge, an Episcopal bishop and a Presbyterian minister. This brought the total membership to 28, only two short of the constitutional limit of 30, which is maintained to this day.

Although the club was organized on October 5th, the first formal meeting was on October 11th, but is numbered Meeting #2. The photocopy at each of your places is of the minutes of that 2nd meeting. What I take to be the minutes of

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SPHEX CLUB Page 2

the October 5th, or 1st meeting, consist only of a list of the charter members.

The 2nd meeting was held at the home of Dr. Perrow and was devoted almost entirely to the adoption of a constitution. Because of the length of the business meeting, the paper of the evening, scheduled for Dr. Martin, was postponed until October 25th. This original paper by the Randolph-Macon Professor of Chemistry was titled, "Science as the Rationalizing Element of the Curriculum," and the theme of this paper was that science was the major discipline which held together the educational process, a notion which was rejected not very politely by some of the other members.

The club meets every other Thursday from early fall until spring, averaging about 15 meetings per year; and the format has always followed that of the original meeting - that is the presentation by a member of a paper on a subject of his choosing with ample time left for discussion by other members. The club adheres to a strict limit of one hour and forty five minutes at each meeting.

Through the years, the club has met at many places. For a long time, it met in the office of the Board of Health; later, in the YMCA. It has met in the homes and offices of members, in hospitals, at colleges and in recent years in the corporate board room of one of our members.

The idea of an annual meeting (or public meeting as it was first called) was mentioned in the minutes several times in the first few years. And finally, the 43rd meeting on January 31, 1913 marked the institution of the annual occasion. The meeting was held at the old Piedmont Club which stood at Tenth and Church Streets and the speaker was Dr. Henry Lewis Smith, President of Washington & Lee University, whose subject was, "A Worldwide Transformation." The minutes leave to speculation what that transformation was, but they do report that in addition to SpheX Club members, there were 22 guests present, many of whom joined in the discussion.

It was also reported that at that first annual meeting, dinner commenced at 9:30 p.m. and that the paper and discussion followed. I would suggest that the hour of the meeting is very likely the only thing which has changed in the 72 year history of the SpheX, an item for which I suspect our sponsors are eternally grateful.

Since that first public meeting, there have been, including tonight, a total of 63; and there have been a long list of outstanding speakers. The names of a few of recent years will be recognized by many of you:

Governor Cogby W. Darden, Jr.
Virginia S. Dabney
Charles McDowell
Judge Harold R. Medina
Senator John Sherman Cooper
McGeorge Bundy
W. S. (Pete) White
John D. deButts
C. H. Hummelstine
Walter S. Robertson
William Mc. Martin, Jr.

John Landis
Admiral Lewis L. Strouse
General John McGruder

and we continue that distinguished list for you tonight.

The name, SpheX, has always been of intriguing interest. On the frontpiece of the first minute book, is a design in which the words appear vertically, with the first letter of each word underlined.

Social
Philosophy
Education
Civics
Science

SPECS - Specs.

At the bottom of the page is a note that II for history should be added. SPHECS - still pronounced Specs. But by the time of the 2nd meeting, you will note from the minutes that the spelling is SpheX, probably because someone had discovered that a SpheX is a greek word for a stinging insect, such as a wasp, which very substantially describes the stinging comments to which member's papers are sometimes subjected.

One final note, if the first S for Social refers to social functioning, it has never been a big item with the club. In fact, except for this annual meeting, social functions are nonexistent. Sometimes at regular meetings, it is even difficult for the speaker to find a glass of water to moisten his parched throat.

So we now suggest that the letters stand for:

S for Science
P for Philosophy
II for History
E for Education
X well like the mathematical equation, X is for the unknown quantity, the unresolved problem, the unanswered questions to which we also address ourselves.

S P H E X - SpheX.

October 11th, 1910.

At 8 o'clock on Tuesday evening, Oct. 11, the members of the SpheX Club assembled at the residence of Dr. Perrow. In addition to those present at the first meeting the following gentlemen were there: Mr. A. W. Lutz, Dr. H. W. Dyer, Mr. J. W. Crockett, Mr. E. S. Dinsmore, Mr. S. J. Thomas, Mr. J. S. Mayhew. After the introductions of such members as were not already acquainted then followed an informal and general conversation on various topics of interest. It was then suggested that the Club should take the consideration of the business of the evening. Dr. Kelly took the chair and opened the session by suggesting the reading of the minutes of the first meeting. It was then moved and carried that the selection of a name for the organization and the election of permanent officers be postponed until the following session, and that the present session confine itself to the consideration of a constitution. Dr. Martin then presented the constitution prepared by his committee and the Club decided to vote on each separate article. The constitution was then read, article for article by the secretary, and after a good deal of discussion and some important amendments it was adopted. By this time it was 10 o'clock and Dr. Martin was requested to keep over his paper until the subsequent meeting in order to allow longer time for discussion. He stated the subject of his paper as follows: Science as a Rationalizing Element in the Curriculum. After some discussion about the best place for writing Dr. Kelly suggested that the Club have some regular meeting place in town, except as its members might not have time to time to provide a place by special invitation. This suggestion met with general approval.

The members of the Club were then invited to the dining room by Dr. Perrow, where they were served with delicious refreshments. A final adjournment was reached about 11 o'clock, and before Dr. Martin had voiced the unanimous sentiment of the members in proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs. and Dr. Perrow for their hospitable entertainment.

Adjourned to meet at 8 P. M. Oct 25, in the J. H. C. A.
J. H. Campbell Sec.