

"CATCH THE HIGHER VISION"

AS TOLD BY BOB THACKER

"By bus or bug or bust" was the attitude. Tom Morgan, Doug Janky, Terry Stents, Ed Berwin, Bob Cherny, Art Conti, group advisor and your's truly, Bob Thacker, took us to the National Order of the Arrow Conference sight in August.

Because Art drives a Simca, two of the guys took a bus to the Conference sight in Champaign-Urbana, Ill. The other five of us "sardined" into Art's car, and off we sped to the "Prairie State". To spend three days "Catching the higher Vision".

After almost two days on the road, we arrived on the University of Illinois campus, in time to register and get rooms. And then the fun began!

Almost immediately, Ed and Terry became "Council Correspondents" which got them admission and front row seats to almost everything. While the rest of us had to be content to be just spectators.

After getting our room assignments, we decided to unpack and wander around.

The campus itself was as flat as the proverbial "pan cako" and it sprawled all over. Because of a disease, some years earlier, there were no trees at all. This caused the sun to blaze down on us. But there was just too much more to do, than to even get hot!

After our first meal, we discovered that the food was delicious all of the time that we were there.

The Assembly Hall was the most striking building on campus. Shaped like a huge flying saucer, it had a portable stage, with huge curtains suspended from the ceiling some one-hundred feet from the ground. After a beautiful opening pageant, all stood with lighted candles and recited the Order of the Arrow Obligation. The effect obtained with 3,000 twinkling candles was nothing less than breathtaking.

After being greeted and welcomed by the National Chief and various dignitaries, and then more pageantry, we returned to our dorm to swap patches and go to bed.

The next morning, our first day of classes began. And because all of the buildings were built on the same style, we had quite a time finding the right building. But after a while it became routine.

Activities at the Conference were almost unlimited. There were classes covering everything from beadworking to Lodge publications. There was a Sports Olympic Day, Indian Dancing, free time and, of course, the National Pastime for Scout Conventions, patch swapping.

Of the afternoon activities, the most interesting, to me, was the Campercraft fair. Foods were a specialty at this event. All of it cooked over open fires, we ate everything from a stack of wild rice pancakes from the North, to an assortment of seafood from the Pacific Northwest, to fried alligator tails, which tasted like fried pork, to hush puppies from the Deep South. Also after standing in line for an hour we had the honor of shaking hands with Dr. E. Urner Goodman, and then having him sign our patches.

In the evening there were more programs. Things such as Indian Dancing on the second night, and a talent show on the last. At the last program, we saw some very professional entertainment on the part of some of our national brothers.

All too soon, the final day came. With pageantry as beautiful as that we saw on the first evening, the story of the Order of the Arrow was again reviewed to us. Then Dr. Goodman gave us all a challenge. After receiving this challenge, we returned to Nebraska, having "caught the higher vision", to help our lodge to help itself.

 LODGE OFFICERS:
 Lodge adviser: HERB KIMBALL
 Lodge Chief: TOM MORGAN
 Lodge Secretary: JOHN TOPHAM
 Lodge Treasure: GAYLORD WILCOX