

Quotes of Bettie Locke Hamilton

I send love and Greetings to each and all Thetas, assembled tonight at your Founders Banquet and want to take this opportunity to thank any Theta for helping me to make KAΘ what it is today—for if bright, courageous girls had not given us their support in the years following our first efforts in establishing the first Greek-letter fraternity, KAΘ could not be what it is today. So again, I thank you, Your oldest sister, Bettie Locke Hamilton, January 18, 1930

Source: Greetings to Detroit Alumnae for 60th anniversary

Dear Theta Girls,

I send greetings of love and a welcome to each of you as you enter the Fraternity with the wish that your scholarship, zeal and loyalty will build up KAΘ to twice its present size and it will go down in history what you have accomplished.

Affectionately, Your oldest sister, Bettie Locke Hamilton, Greencastle, Ind, March 9 1930.

Source: Greetings sent to Eta Chapter on their initiation day, March 15, 1930.

With love and greetings to all Thetas in anticipation of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Kappa Alpha Theta! I wish to send many, many thanks for the gift of fifty lovely roses sent me by the Convention last July, They were a most delightful surprise and their fragrant memory will remain with me the rest of my life.

Source: Founders messages, Kappa Alpha Theta Magazine, January 1920, pg. 103

"For our Founders Day celebration, Alpha entertained Bettie Locke Hamilton. In other words, she entertained us. She read a paper pretending she was Mrs. Rip Van Winkle. When she went to sleep Kappa Alpha Theta had just been founded and so many years later when she woke up ----. Anyway, she told us all to study and wear our overshoes. We wish you all could have been there."

Source: Kappa Alpha Theta Magazine, Alpha Chapter Letter, May 1918, pg. 377.

Love and Greetings to all Thetas, and sincere wishes for the best time and finest Convention ever met in the history of such an "august body." Always your Elder Sister, Mrs. Bettie Locke Hamilton, Greencastle, Ind., June 1917

Source: From an Alpha scrapbook page

These quotes are current as of 1/25/2016. The archive is always looking to add credited quotes, so check with archives@kappaalphatheta.org to see if there is a newer version.

Greencastle, Ind.
Feb. 24, 1925

My Dear Young Friend,

Your Letter, including program, was duly received and afforded me great pleasure. The list of names with the group picture was very satisfactory; I study it over and over again and am able now to place many of the faces that I had remembered—especially Mrs. Wheeler—I had often wondered where she belonged, and now I know. Had such pleasant little visits with her; hope she remembers them, too. Founders week was a happy, lively week for me this year: so many of the letters were from some I had met and remembered at the Convention. The Grand President & Vice President both remembered me, the latter writing a lovely, cordial letter.

Our girls here at the House sent me a lovely bunch of deep red roses and had me down to the house for six o'clock dinner. Just ourselves & no one else, which I enjoyed exceedingly! They had the tables lit with candles in crystal holders, and in serving the cake for dessert, it was cut in squares & each had a tiny candle inserted in it. The Cake was very dark Chocolate, as near black as possible, and the tiny candles yellow. The girls are so happy in their new home, which is very sensible in construction & furnishings no extravagant flourishes or living beyond their means—that ought to be "Theta wisdom" anywhere, don't you think?

There is so much I would like to write, but a pile of other letters waiting to be answered makes me desist. Drop me a line occasionally as I would like to keep in touch with Appleton girls' activities. Am sorry to hear of Dr. Plantz's death—his first wife's family were lifelong friends of my Parents. Give my love to all the girls, especially those I met at the Convention. Tell the new initiates to try and make their Fraternity what they thought it was like before and try above all things to keep up a high standard of Scholarship. Nothing will elevate K.A.Θ. like wonderful Scholarship!

Yours with "lots" of love
Mrs. Bettie Locke Hamilton

Source: BLH to Katharine Pratt [Lison], Alpha Psi/Lawrence, February 24, 1925

The 1924 Grand Convention was held at West Baden, and Bettie Locke Hamilton attended. A short article in the Daily Kite (the Convention newsletter) on July 1, 1924 states:

True to her generosity and loyalty to Fraternity needs, she suggests we give to the scholarship fund what we are now spending to telegraph greetings to her. "I do like the little personal letters," she insisted.

Love and Greetings to all Thetas, and sincere wishes for the best time and finest Convention ever met in the history of such an "august body." Always your Elder Sister, Mrs. Bettie Locke Hamilton, Greencastle, Ind., June 1917

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I feel it is due to Philadelphia and New York Theta clubs to write for the Journal an account of the delightful trip I had with them last Founders Day—tho' so long delayed.

When they sent the invitation, offering to pay all my expenses, I could not well refuse—tho' the weather was bitter cold—still there was nothing for me to do but get on the train here and get off at Philadelphia.

At Philadelphia, I was supplied with a bodyguard wherever I went and was most royally entertained by Miss Mary Sullivan—now Mrs Henry Patterson. The banquet was complete in every detail. While I was in Philadelphia, the New York alumnae club sent word for me to come to their banquet the following Saturday, which I did, and was entertained there until Tuesday at the Panhellenic House, just the place for every Theta when in New York City. Dear Miss Helen Waldo took complete charge of me, providing a drive over the city, showing me the important places of interest, taking me to dinner at Wanamakers, and then sending me back to Philadelphia, then to Atlantic City for a day. While there, Mrs. William Clarke kept me at her home for three days, seeing that I got to Atlantic City safely, then took me to Swarthmore College, over its buildings and grounds.

When I left Greencastle, I expected to be gone three days, but was away two weeks, every minute of the time most enjoyably spent; and now I carry in mind one of the happiest events in my life, and feel as I never did before that it was really worthwhile to struggle as Alice Allen and I did to found the first Greek fraternity for women. Now as Founders Day is again approaching, I want to send love and greetings to each of you at your banquets with many thanks to all of you for what you have done to help me in the growth and success of Kappa Alpha Theta.

Your Elder Sister,
Bettie Locke Hamilton.

Source: Kappa Alpha Theta Magazine, January 1931, pg. 99.

I very much wish to thank all members of this Convention for the cordial welcome given me on arriving here and the constant attention shown me at every turn I make. I have richly enjoyed the many little chats I have had with different groups, only regretting I may never meet them again. Am truly thankful, as never before, that in my girlhood I could do a little something for such lovely girls as I met all along these past fifty years and surely am receiving my reward at this Convention—which I have enjoyed every minute of the time. With love and then some more, Goodbye from your Elder Sister
Bettie Locke Hamilton

Source: Daily Kite, July 1 1924, v. 7, n. 4

We were not especially good looking. It might have been easier for us if we had been. But we were all refined, good girls from good families, and we realized somehow that we weren't going to college just for ourselves, but for all the girls who would follow after us, if we could just win out.

Source: "The First Coeds," Lillian Hughes Neiswanger, ca. 1930s

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I do think that for mature women who have had more experience and in some cases more education—for them Theta should mean something more than a college frat and a pin! I've always felt that the Fraternity should get behind new movements for women as they arise and work for them just as the Fraternity worked for coeducation when it was something to be won.

Source: Kappa Alpha Theta Magazine, Jan. 1936, pg. 120.

You know the Fraternity was always second in my mind to coeducation. It was organized to help the girls win out in their fight to stay in college on a man's campus. We had to make a place for women in a man's world, and the Fraternity was one means to that bigger end.

Source: Kappa Alpha Theta Magazine, Jan. 1936, p. 120

I take this opportunity to thank each and all of you for what you have done to make K. A. Θ. what it is today. For without the efforts of all girls who followed us, our struggles in trying to found a fraternity for women would have been in vain.

Source: Sent to Omega Alumnae Chapter (Portland, Oregon) by Bettie Locke Hamilton (no date)
