



Babcock Bulletin



The Official Newsletter of Babcock House September 2006

President's Message

By John Rozum, Alumni Board President

Happy Birthday Babcock House! This issue officially kicks off our year-long celebration of Babcock House's 75th year of operation. That's a lot of history and a lot of lives impacted.

For those of you that have been following Craig Kohn's retelling of the Babcock history over the past few issues, you'll be most interested in this issue's installment. It is a fascinating story - and one that means more when you understand that the same principals of the 1931 Babcock House still apply today.

The full story will be published as part of the 75th Anniversary Alumni Directory, which will be printed prior to the spring banquet.

The date of that banquet is still pending, but should be announced at our annual meeting at Homecoming. This year's Homecoming gala should be a good one, and I hope to see you all there.

We'll have all of the usual agenda items, but we will also be holding elections to find two new Board Members. If you are interested in filling a seat, feel free to contact me or any other Board Member for more information or to get on the ballot.

Even if you can't commit time for monthly meetings, we can still use your help. We are looking at developing several specialized committees to help out on specific projects - fund raising, publicity, building maintenance and improvement, etc.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that we still have a way to go if we are to hit our "75 for 75" goal by the end of the 75th year. Dan Wepner reports in this issue how close we are to our goal. Your gift will help us retire the debt from our bathroom remodel and electrical upgrade. As you know, your donation to Babcock House is tax deductible.

We set this goal a few years back thinking that Babcock alums would come through for the House. Can we count on you?

Homecoming 2006 - Kicking Off a Year to Remember!

Chris Sawyer, 2007 Alumni Treasurer

As fall rapidly approaches, another season of Badger football comes with it. And along with that comes our annual Homecoming festivities.

This year is especially important for Babcock House, as Homecoming officially kicks off our 75th anniversary celebration. The Babcock House Annual Meeting and Homecoming festivities this year will be Saturday, October 14th.

The Annual Meeting will be at Babcock House, and will start at 9:00 am - two hours before kickoff. This is a great opportunity for you to not only find out the current state of the house, and what the board of directors is working on, but an opportunity for you to directly impact the future of Babcock House. Come with your questions and fresh ideas. Food and beverages will be provided, and a small donation is requested.

After the meeting, the Homecoming football game between the Wisconsin Badgers and Minnesota Golden Gophers is scheduled to kick off at 11:00 am. If you are in need of tickets, contact us ASAP, as our allotment traditionally disappears quickly. In the interest of offering tickets to as many alumni as possible, we have instituted a two-ticket limit per alum.

Tickets are being sold for \$42.50 apiece. If you are interested in getting tickets from us, contact Chris Sawyer at sawyer@uwalumni.com (preferred) or 608-245-9490. For those unable to obtain tickets, you are invited to join your fellow alumni and current students in viewing the game at Babcock House.

We look forward to having you there to help us kick off of our 75th anniversary!

Alumni Info Still Needed!

The Babcock House 75th Anniversary Directory project rolls on! Thanks to all of you that have already completed and returned your updated information forms. If we are to re-create the entire list of all past and present Babcock House residents and members, we need to make sure your information is correct!

Another copy of the form is enclosed in this newsletter. If you haven't sent yours in, please do so today.

The updated forms and letters are coming in from Babcockers from around the globe, From South Africa to the Netherlands and from Alaska to Florida!

This directory is truly going to be a special piece - going beyond just a listing of names to include the stories and memories that made our time at the House so great.

You will all have your chance in upcoming newsletters to place an order for your copy of the book.

This is a big project and we can use all the help we can get! Volunteers are needed to start searching for "lost" members who have bad addresses or just lost touch.

If you would like to help us piece together the list to see if anyone is missing from your class or era, please call John Rozum at 608-224-6455 ext 104 or email jrozum@wdexpo.com.

Become a Babcock House Board Member!

Ron Curran, Alumni Board Past President

If you are looking for a challenging, yet truly rewarding experience, I hope you will run for one of the two open positions on the Babcock House Board of Directors. Being a Board member and working with our members and Alumni has been great!

I'm proud of what we have accomplished. At our Annual Meeting, you are going to hear lots of very positive reports. Our finances are excellent, the House is in first-rate physical shape, we are keeping the House full or close to full, we have developed strong Alumni ties resulting in exceptional progress in our 75 for 75 fund raising campaign, the members and the Board work very closely as a team and our House members consistently bring home the trophy for high GPA of all the Ag Houses.

However, in some ways, the new Board will face even bigger challenges than when I came on five years ago and our main focus was whether we could keep the House open. Some issues the new Board has to tackle:

- Continuing to attract and retain agriculture's brightest young stars
- Accentuating Babcock House's greatest strength – our unique homelike community
- Upgrade the House to appeal to today and tomorrow's students – starting with the kitchen and dining room
- Seeking funding for capital projects by investigating grants available to non-profits
- Continue building and expanding our Alumni network

These are some intimidating issues to deal with, but we have extremely talented returning Board members, a wonderful group of students and an increasingly more active Alumni to work with to solve these problems. And of course our greatest strength – all Babcockers (past and present) are gentlemen, ladies and scholars!

A little on the mechanics of the Babcock Board – there are eight voting members. Five are alumni, a faculty representative and two students (the House President who is selected by the residents and the House Steward who is selected by the Board).

Meetings are generally once a month at Babcock House except in the summer when we generally skip a meeting or two. The meetings have been on week nights, start at 7:00 and usually end by 9:00. We have worked hard to shift day to day decisions to the students so that the Board can concentrate on the big picture.

If you would like more information about becoming a Board member or want to be placed on the ballot, please contact any Board Member listed on the back page of this issue.

**Babcock House 75th Anniversary Directory
Information Update Form**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Would you prefer to receive the Newsletter via email? _____ YES _____ NO

Employer: _____

Occupation: _____

Married? _____ Spouse Name: _____

Graduation Year: _____ Major(s): _____

Original Hometown: _____

What years did you live in the House? _____

Nickname in the House? _____

Favorite House Story (add paper if needed) : _____

Please return ASAP to:

Fax to 608-224-0300
Mail to John Rozum
 3310 Latham Drive
 Madison, WI, 53713

Email for form: jrozum@wdexpo.com

Thanks for taking a few minutes to complete this form. Your information will help ensure that our 75th Anniversary Directory is complete! The information you provide will only be used by the House for the purposes of this printed directory and not sold to any third party in any other form.

75 For 75 Getting Closer, Give Now!!

Dan Wepner, Alumni Treasurer

Our fund raising drive of raising \$75,000 by our 75th anniversary is in its home stretch. \$75,316.04 was borrowed to cover the cost of the bathroom, laundry room and electrical renovations at Babcock House.

The first donations were made in fall of 2003. Since then over 125 Babcock alumni and a few friends of the House have donated \$48,624.17. And another \$7,504 has been pledged. That's close to 75% of our goal! Thank you to all that have contributed so far.

The tax deductible donations have varied from \$20 to \$5,000. Over \$13,000 was given in memory of Dennis Kendall, an active Babcock alum who passed away in 2004. The basement was named "The Mouse House" in his honor. The living room was named "Ken Runlee Entertainment Room" for a generous donation from Ken. Six alumni from the House (Chris Blaken ('02), Brandon Boettcher ('02), Joshua Duesterbeck ('02), Matt Gall ('99), Brain Huenink ('03), and Joshua Schmidt ('99) are giving \$5,000 to name Third Connection officially "Third Connection" because of the special moments they shared together in that room. Naming rights are still available for other rooms at Babcock House. Contact us for details.

If you have already contributed, your donation has been greatly appreciated. If you haven't donated or would like to donate again, now would be a great time to help us get to our goal of \$75,000. Remember, your donation is tax deductible and 100% of your donation goes to pay off principal on the loan. Donations may be sent to Babcock House, c/o 75 for 75, 1936 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53726.

The 75th anniversary will come and it will go, but the board remains dedicated to keeping Babcock House financially sound and a community for our students to call home while attending UW-Madison. That community was there for you in your day, please help keep it there for the future.

Spring Steward's Report

By Craig Kohn, 2006 Steward

This past summer at Babcock House has been ripe with change and activity. Fourteen residents occupied the house over the summer months, the most we've had for quite a while. As such, plans for room renovations were either delayed or done rather quickly.

2nd Freezer was repainted last summer and received new carpeting, furniture, and lighting within the course of a week. New bunk designs were incorporated in order to create more storage underneath the beds, allowing more floor space overall in a room that overall does not have a lot of floor space.

2nd Loft also was the beneficiary of a new bunk design, courtesy of Aaron Wepner, in which the beds hang suspended from beams built into the ceiling, opening the room up and making it seem far larger. It too received a fresh coat of paint, the color selected solely because Jason Russell was hungry and annoying while this author was trying to find a color (said color was in his hand at the time of peak annoyance).

1st Big also received some work, but due to its pace it has become known as the County Project, with completion scheduled for Christmas Break barring any unforeseen disasters. Despite these incidences, all work looks quite good.

In May, our long-time cook Barb Matthews handed in her two-week notice in order to pursue her dream of opening her own restaurant. All of us at the house wish her the best of luck and would like to thank her for her years of dedicated service in creating delectable home-cooked meals and many of our members' first real Cajun experiences. Her successor will be selected before classes begin.

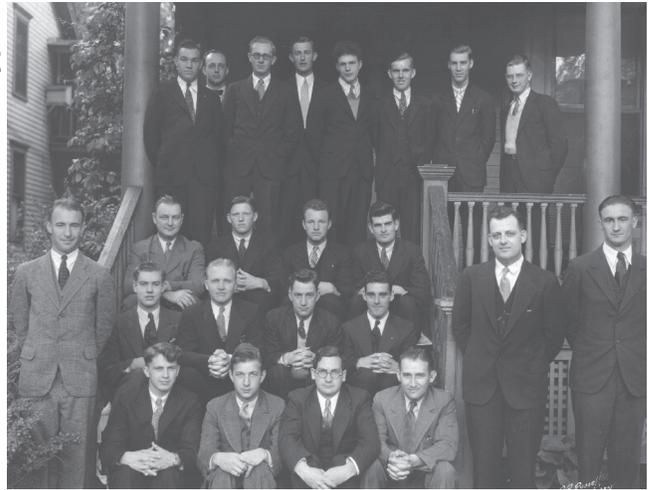
June marked the end of year-long tenures for our resident State FFA Officers, Andrea Bloom and Mike Stranz. Congrats to both on their success and experiences.

We're looking forward to a busy and full year, with 23 members in the house at press-time and a large number of potential chompers. Interest in out-of-house membership is also high due to information distributed at freshmen orientation sessions this summer. Some minor projects are slated for the few weeks prior to classes starting on September 5th. In sum, the house is busy, full, changing, and the Steward is having no trouble finding ways to earn his keep.

This is the House that Babcock Built Part 4: “The Cooperative Revolution”

Author’s Note: This is the fourth part of a multi-part series about the life of Dr. Stephen Babcock and the history of his namesake’s organization, Babcock House. References courtesy of the UW Archives and the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

By Craig A. Kohn, 2006 Steward



“A college can help you get an education but it cannot give you one” – Dean Ira Baldwin

Dr. Babcock had been laid to rest for only a handful of days when word reached the press that the majority of his will would be left to the University. The July 8, 1931 edition of the Wisconsin State Journal was headlined by “U.W. Legatee in Babcock’s \$133,000 Will”, stating that the funds would go towards books and scholarships. However, \$8000 of this amount was tied up in his property, and the house remained empty throughout the month of July awaiting action from UW. In short, the University had no plan of action for the house at the time.

Shortly prior to Babcock’s death, the key members of the College of Agriculture met to discuss a very serious crisis within the college. By this point, the nation had been in the grip of its worst economic catastrophe for almost two years. The public had little money for even food and clothing, let alone college tuition. Especially hard hit were rural students, the very same who made up the majority of college’s population. The agricultural student population had dropped ‘dramatically’ by this time and was showing no signs of getting better; in fact, it looked as though it would get much worse.

On the committee were, V. E. Kivlin, associate dean of the college, A. J. Haas, executive secretary, J. A. James, chair of Ag Education, and E. R. Jones, chair of Ag Engineering (suitably enough, both are still well represented majors in the house). Dean Ira Baldwin would play a later role on the committee. They realized in their work that the biggest expense in attending college at UW was that of room and board. Reducing this cost soon became their focus, and they decided to do so by providing a self-governed, student operated house. In other words, they intended to form a student cooperative, the first of its kind in Madison.

They originally planned on buying a midsized house, but soon found that the ‘For Rent’ pages contained either unsuitable or too expensive houses. By the time Babcock’s will had been released to the public, the committee consisted of some rather discouraged individuals to say the least. It was Prof. Sumner of Ag Journalism who would change this.

While giving a ride to Prof. Jones after work one day in mid-July, it was Sumner who suggested Babcock’s house to the committee. J. M. Hanks, administrator of the Babcock estate, agreed the next day that it was an excellent idea and transferred control of the estate to the committee.

However, the house remained empty and unequipped, and in one month it would not only have to be furnished, but two dozen students would also have to be recruited to fill it and pay rent to sustain it. It also lacked any idea of structure or governance. The committee resolved all these issues with remarkable swiftness. Regarding furniture, the committee learned that university housing was discarding several bunks from Barnard and Chadbourne halls. They were offered the bunks free of charge but were also told they’d be responsible for moving them. So it was that the city of Madison was treated to the sight of several of its most distinguished professors in overalls, personally moving the bunks, mattresses, and furniture onto trucks to Ag Hall, where they were kept until the house was ready.

Babcock Story, Continued

Regarding governance, it was Dean Kivlin and Al Haas who suggested making the Babcock House a cooperative. Haas assumed control over the rest of the details and was made responsible for hiring a steward, cook, etc. until the students could assume the responsibility.

Little is known to this author of how the ideas for Babcock House originated. There was nothing on campus at that time or before to model it after. There were few, if any permanent student cooperatives across the nation. In short, the idea was one of a kind, and highly modeled after its creation. By 1939, an article entitled "Can Cooperative Living Work" by Otto Mueller, Director of University Housing, stated that there were over 50 cooperatives; three followed the Babcock model exactly. The idea was praised by several publications. The Wisconsin Alumni magazine praised the College's ingenuity for reducing prices, and in the post-war boom of the late 1940's, the trend set by Babcock House became a notable and necessary facet given the excess number of students in attendance.

Yet, while the idea quickly took off, it's something of a mystery of how the structure of the house came to be. However, a small notation in the commemorative articles after Dean Baldwin's death may give some insight to the mystery. In many ways, Dean Baldwin was a driving force behind this new student house, and his past experiences may give insight as to why this would be.

Dean Baldwin is one of the more ambitious characters in UW history. He held positions as chair of the Department of Bacteriology, dean of the Graduate School, dean and director of the College of Agriculture, university vice president for academic affairs, and special assistant to the president. Dean Baldwin came to UW in the summer of 1917 to work for the Heinz Company on a project involving a better cultivation of pickles to allow for more commercialization of the project. Anyone who enjoys relish on their burgers can appreciate this novel approach because prior to the Heinz Company's work, the pickle cultivation that existed could only be found behind your mother's garden fence. The company worked with the Agricultural Experiment Station to perfect their work, and soon housing became an issue for their employees. To alleviate this problem, the students collaborated to rent a house together, each assigning tasks such as cleaning, cooking, finances, etc.

"This was a great experience for me because I worked with graduate students who were working towards their doctor's degrees in entomology and plant pathology," said Baldwin, continuing, "Some of those people I remained friends with as long as they lived. . . . We lived in the same house; they sort of took me in. It was a home where they were living, right next to the campus, and they found a room for me in the same place. So I got to know many of them very well, and I suspect that had as much influence in my deciding to go ahead and do graduate work as anything that ever happened."

Sounds oddly familiar, now doesn't it? And with these humble yet somewhat revolutionary beginnings, Babcock House emerged onto the collegiate stage as the foremost leader and founder of what would in a few decades be known as the cooperative revolution in the city of Madison, a city who today leads the nation and the world for the number of cooperatives per capita.

Next: Part 5 – "An Established House, An Exciting Home"

President's Corner

*Aaron Wepner,
Student President*

Hello, my name is Aaron Wepner and I am the new student president for the upcoming year at Babcock House. This will be my fourth year of school and fourth year of living at the house. I am majoring in Biological Systems Engineering with a power machinery emphasis.

I have held many of the offices here at Babcock House and as house president I hope to guide the incoming class through many of the house traditions. One constant through my years of living at Babcock is the help I could count on from the older residents. I like to think of the house as my family away from home. Although 20 to 24 members is a large family to deal with on a day to day basis, I find it helpful to think of the house this way. As we work, eat, live together here, we need to take care of each other too. I would like to teach the incoming class this family attitude above all us because it makes living together much easier.

We have a lot to look forward to at the house with many new members this year. Football Saturdays are always great to help new members get their heads out of the books for a while. And as the semester winds down, we have fall formal and a certain Christmas themed exam for all the freshmen to take. I would like to thank the alumni for all the donations. The house looks better every year thanks to you. It should be a great year. Thanks again.

The Memories Are In the "Name"

Ron "Weed" Wiederholt

Class of '89 but should have been the class of '87

This past spring I was standing in my open garage door. Just watching and inhaling. It was that first spring rain smell that triggered the memory. I was in a park shelter with a bunch of other Babcockers and their dates at spring formal trying to get a grill going so we could enjoy some burnt hot dogs, when a fellow 'Cocker came in out of the misty rain to tell me that my date was having problems with her kite.

I never know when a Babcock memory is going to come back to me. Usually though, the memories are connected to a name. Not just any name, but a Babcock moniker. Not everybody got a nickname when they came into the house but when they did, it became their identity.

Whenever I hear Jimi Hendrix, I immediately think of Pooh, Norm, Otter, Jethro and myself hanging out in the second floor big room after bar time listening to Hendrix until the sun came up. How can I not think of Aack and his love affair with Sting when I hear a Police song.

Whenever I see an advertisement for chewing tobacco I think of Curtis trying snuff for the first time. And how Pokey and Zelmo kept supplying him with more because he said it just kept disappearing. I believe there might be a photo or two of the end result in a scrapbook somewhere in the mail room of the House.

When I donate blood, I think of the time coming back from Union South discussing with Squid, Rollie and Rip how giving blood was part of the triumvirate rites of passage for manhood, the other two being able to vote and legally buying beer. On a more serious note, it also was how Simba found out he had a kidney disorder.

On the sports front, how can a beautiful fall day not trigger memories of football Saturdays and how Fink and Captain Chaos could get the crowd in Section P fired up because the play of the Badgers at the time certainly wouldn't have done it. When the Packers pull off a big win (unfortunately last season was devoid of any) I can't help but remember Hogie heading down to the Badger Tavern wearing a plastic ice cream bucket on his head, a pair of shorts and cowboy boots. All this after watching the Pack shock the Redskins with a last minute field goal on one of their rare Monday night appearances years before the Brett Favre era.

Anytime someone mentions playing cards, how can I not remember all the games of sheeps-head played after dinner with the host of guys already mentioned as well as Buster, Rosy, Gramps, Cookie, Romy, Grimace, Woody, Spike, Jake and Sharky, all of whom should have been studying too. Or Chuck's booming voice echoing down the hall from the stewards room after Kermie beat him again at cribbage.

I'm not sure my memories would be as vivid had I not spent all those years with a bunch of regular named guys. It is probably the colorful aspect of the nicknames that helped cement these events, and many more, into the recesses of my brain.

To this day, whenever I see someone flying a kite, I always remind my wife how I had to rescue her and her kite after Chuck (his real name) informed me of her troubles that rainy spring day. How she got her kite tangled in a bunch of brush and burdocks in her hair, I have never been able to figure out.

Editor's note - Feel free to submit stories! News, memories, anecdotes, updates - anything that you feel Babcock Alumni would be interested in reading. Submissions of almost any length will be considered. Thanks to Ron for this great story!

-editor

In Memoriam - Kenneth Runlee, Class of 1955

Ken Runlee, one of Babcock House's strongest supporters, passed away Monday, April 10, 2006. Ken served several terms on the Babcock Alumni Board over the years and his no-nonsense attitude and business experience were always a welcome addition. Ken helped the House through financially difficult times, as well, by personally co-signing loans to keep things going through some rough years. His support of the "75 for 75" campaign was also above and beyond - committing to a \$10,000 donation to the fund. His legacy will live on at Babcock through the naming of the Ken Runlee Entertainment Room. Past and present members of Babcock House send their thoughts and condolences to Ken's wife Joyce and his daughters.

Who is the Babcock Alumni Board?

If you've got questions about the House, suggestions or would like to volunteer to serve on the Board, committee or special projects, please contact any Board Member.

John Rozum, '95, President - 608-831-5055
Ron Curran, '87, Past President - 608-233-9779
Dan Wepner, '79, Treasurer - 920-922-4376
Chris Sawyer, '00, Treasurer-Elect - 608-245-9490
Kevin Shinnars, '73, Faculty Advisor - 608-263-0756
Timm Johnson, '72, Secretary - 715-248-3277
Craig Kohn, House Steward - 608-238-7395
Aaron Wepner, House President - 608-238-7384

Feel free to contact the Alumni Board with any House questions you might have or to get more involved.

Your Donations Are Tax Deductible!

Remember that Babcock House is a not-for-profit organization and that your donations to the House are tax deductible. Please contact your tax advisor for full details!



Babcock House
1936 University Ave
Madison, WI 53726

Thanks To Our "75 for 75" Donors!

\$500

Raymond Bula
Robert Cattelino

\$300

Lynn Kopitzke

\$75

Herman Schwarz

Special thanks, too, to those who donated to Babcock House in honor of Ken Runlee:

Phillip Tichenor, \$300
Robert Ellingson, John Suttie, \$75
John Gaynor, Peter Roe, \$50
Bernie Heinemann, \$40
Maynard Marshall, \$30
William Breene, Carl Huber, William Miller, \$25
Jenny Daniels and Family, Charlie Pulvermacher,
Dave Ellingson, Jerry Endres, Rollie Schaefer, \$20