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Illinois State University

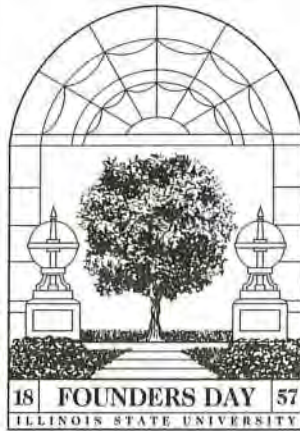
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Founders Day then and...



By Jo Ann Rayfield
University Archivist

FOUNDERS DAY WAS INAUGURATED IN 1909, JUST two years after the 50th anniversary of the University and the publication of *Semi-Centennial History of the Illinois State Normal University, 1857-1907*. The annual observance continued until the character of the University changed in the 1960s.

The 326 persons who attended the first Founders Day banquet dined on chicken patties, baked ham, glazed sweet potatoes, brown bread sandwiches, ginger ice cream, cake, and black coffee. They heard toasts from Charles S. Deneen, Illinois governor; from David Felmley, university president; and from students representing various classes. J. H. Burnham, a member of the Class of 1861, delivered an address titled "Some of the Influences which Led to the Founding of the Normal University." Tickets were \$1. The organizing committee cleared \$18.30, which it used to print copies of Burnham's address.

Portraits of Arnold Tompkins and Charles E. Hovey—fifth and first university presidents respectively—which have hung in various campus buildings through the years, were presented to the University during Founders Day activities: Tompkins in 1910, Hovey in 1913.

Founders Day programs, the Hovey sword, and other memorabilia—on display during this year's festivities in Bone Student Center—were given to the University in 1913 by the first president's widow, Harriette Spofford Hovey.

Founders Day continued to include toasts and speeches from students, graduates, faculty, governing

board members, and—frequently—the governor. The annual celebration often had a theme. In 1912 it was the career of Henry McCormick, who was retiring after 43 years at the University. In 1914 Founders Day coincided with the dedication of the Thomas Metcalf Building (now Moulton Hall). In 1915 H. H. Schroeder delivered an address titled "The History of the Peace Movement."

Usually, however, the day was devoted to a celebration of the University and the accomplishments of its distinguished graduates and faculty, who were building a reputation for excellence and service to education in the state. It was—in contemporary parlance—a bonding experience. During the lean years of the 1930s and the war years of the 1940s, Founders Day was reduced to an address to the student body at convocation or to general exercises. Increasingly in later years the banquet was held off campus.

In 1957—as the University celebrated its centennial—senior Donald F. McHenry, who subsequently served as United States ambassador to the United Nations and who is guest speaker at this year's Founders Day, spoke on behalf of his graduating class. Other speakers included members of the Classes of 1882, 1907, and 1932.

In the 1960s, when Illinois State Normal University became Illinois State University with a new and multi-purpose mandate, the celebration of past greatness became less important than the need to define the future of the institution.

The last celebration of Founders Day was in 1966.

ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY



The University Hymn

Glory hast thou, might and power.
Proud the halls of I S U
Deeds that live in song and story.
Loyal sons and daughters true
So shalt thou in years increasing
Send thy sons of honest worth,
Forth to bear with zeal unceasing
Wisdom's torch throughout the earth.

The University Hymn was written in 1926 by
Wanda Neiswanger and Jennie Whitten,
members of the faculty

The music, the "Emperor's Hymn" or
the "Austrian National Hymn"
was composed by Franz Joseph Haydn and
later used by him in his String Quartet, Op., 76, #3.