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The Ursinus Weekly, October 1, 1970

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Ursinus College

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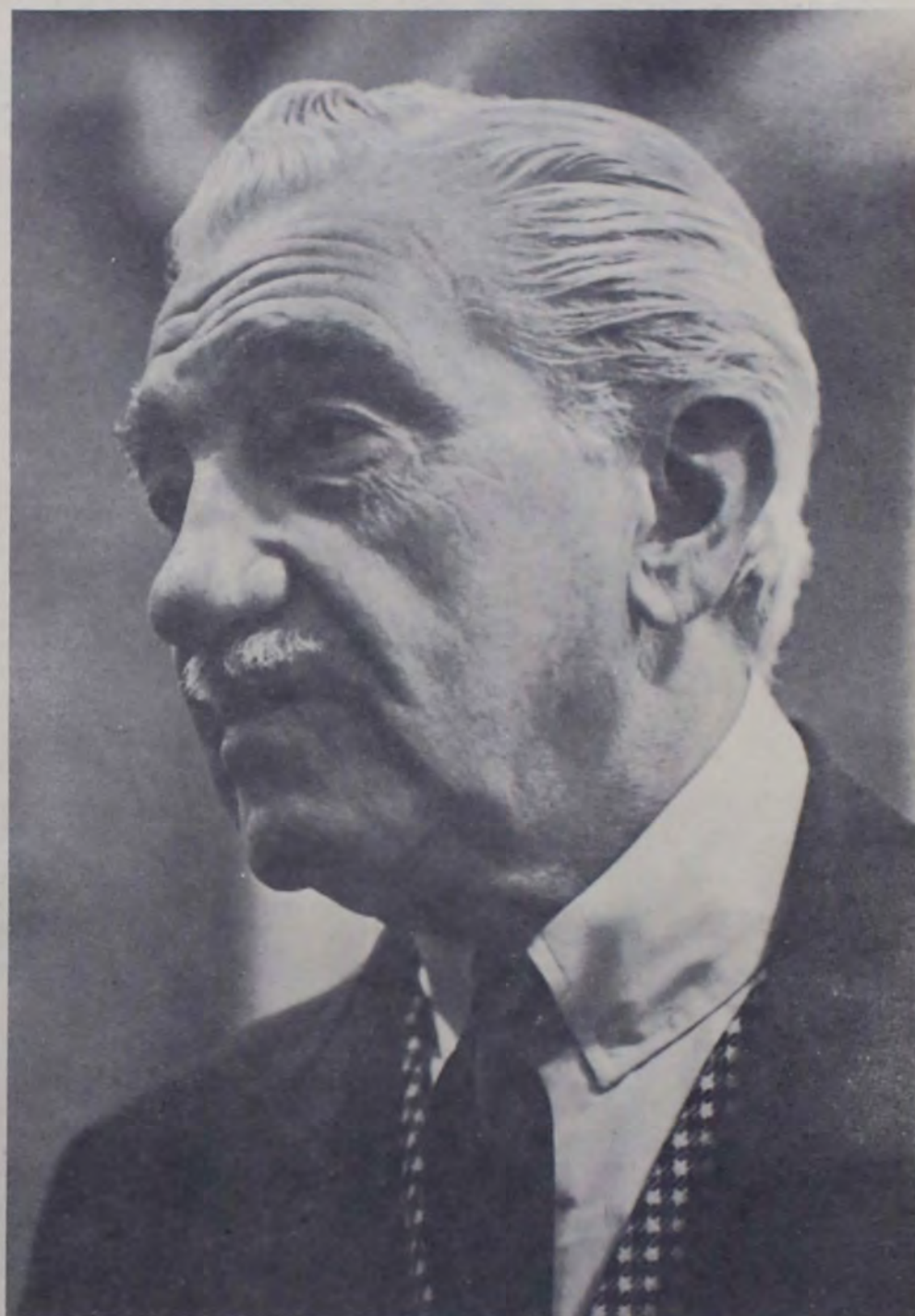
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DR. WILLIAM SCHUYLER PETTIT NAMED TENTH PRESIDENT OF URSINUS COLLEGE TO REPLACE RETIRING D. L. HELFFERICH



DR. WILLIAM S. PETTIT



DR. DONALD L. HELFFERICH

Dr. William Schuyler Pettit has been named the tenth president in the 101-year history of Ursinus College, it was announced by the College Board of Directors following a special meeting on September 25, 1970.

Dr. Pettit, longtime Academic Dean at Ursinus, succeeds Dr. Donald L. Helfferich, who formally retired from office after 12 years in the post at the conclusion of the college's Centennial celebration in June, 1970.

Helfferich Named Chancellor

In a related board action, Dr. Helfferich was appointed to the post of Chancellor of Ursinus College. He will be the first man in the history of the college to serve in this position.

The new Ursinus president joined the college faculty in 1933 as an instructor in Chemistry. He was named Assistant Professor of Chemistry in 1938 and was promoted to full professor in 1944. He served as assistant registrar from 1948-1952 and was Dean of Admissions from 1952-1954.

Appointed Academic Dean

In 1954, he was named Dean of the College succeeding the late Dr. Maurice W. Armstrong.

In a 1969 campus administrative re-organization, he was named Vice President for Academic Affairs in addition to his post as Academic Dean; and despite his many administrative duties over the past 20 years, Dr. Pettit has continued to teach a course in Organic Chemistry.

President's Academic Affiliations

Dr. Pettit is a member of Alpha Chi Sigma, national Chemistry society; Society of Sigma Xi; American Chemical Society; is past president of the

Norristown Chemists Club; American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers; Eastern Association of Deans and Advisers of Men.

In addition, he is a member of the Newcomen Society; a Trustee of the Montgomery County Historical Society; and is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Montgomery County Health and Welfare Council.

He is former vice-chairman of the Montgomery County Red Cross, former president of the Worcester School Authority, and former chairman of the Worcester-Lower Providence School Authority. Dr. Pettit is a member of St. James Protestant Episcopal Church, Evansburg, Pa. and formerly a vestryman.

Native of New Jersey

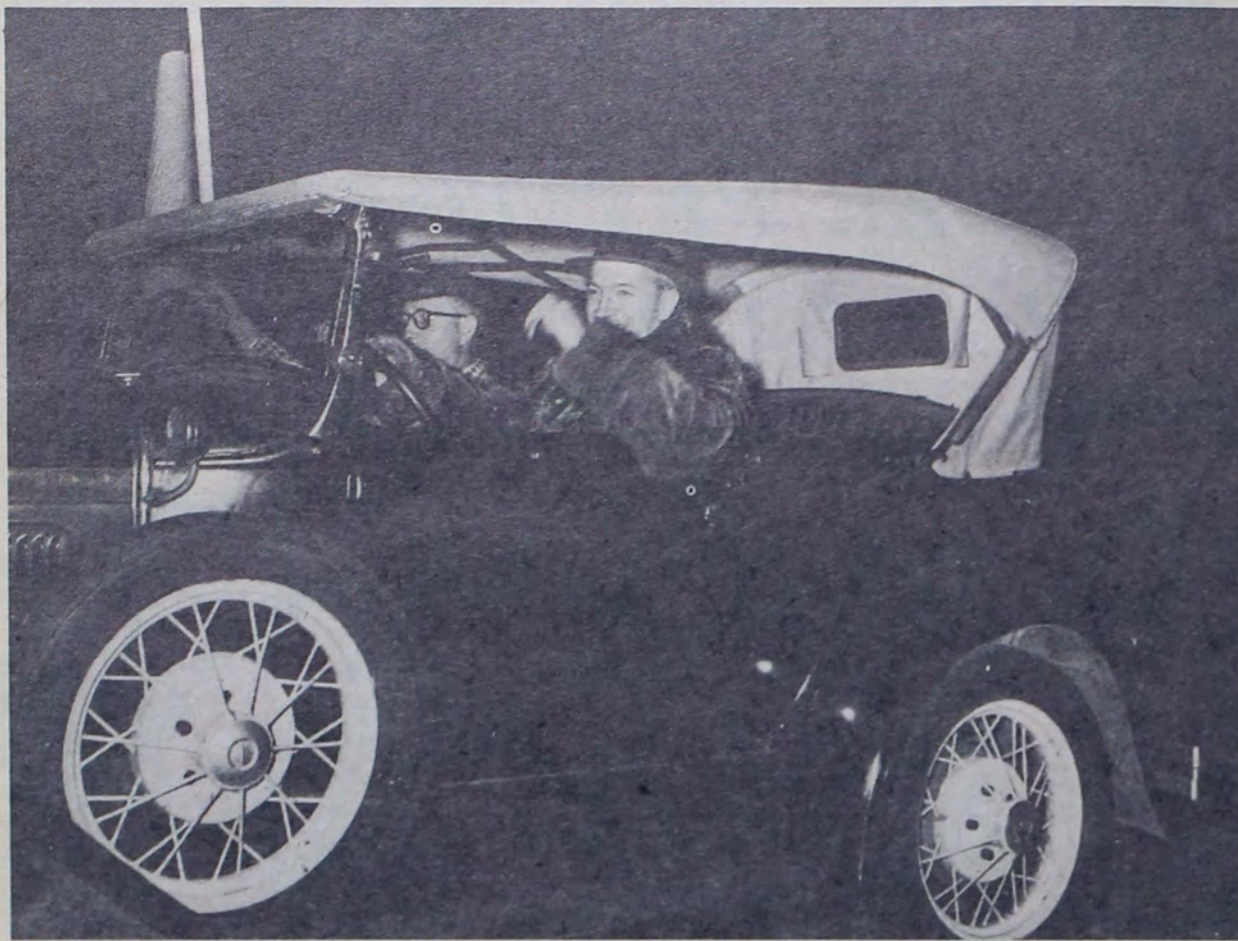
Dr. Pettit is a native of Burlington, New Jersey where he was born March 19, 1909, son of the late Ivans and Irene Schuyler Pettit. He was graduated from Burlington High School and earned a B.S. in Chemistry and an M.S. in Chemistry from the University of Pennsylvania. In November, 1969, Ursinus College awarded an Honorary Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) degree to him.

The new Ursinus President is interested in Colonial history, antiques and their restoration, bronze stencilling, tile work, and painting. In the latter, he works in water and oil, and more recently in acrylics.

Ursinus' First Family

Dr. Pettit is married to the former Marion Burgstresser; and is the father of one daughter, Isabelle, a 1967 graduate of Wilson College. The Pettits reside at 368 E. Ninth Avenue, Collegeville, Pennsylvania; and maintain a summer home on Nantucket Island.

URSINUS COLLEGE'S TENTH PRESIDENT



William S. Pettit and H. Lloyd Jones revisit the past in a 1932 Model "A" Ford Phaeton, the restoration of which is a hobby of Ursinus' new president.



Dean William S. Pettit teaching Organic Chemistry, a role in which hundreds of Ursinus students have known him during the past twenty years.

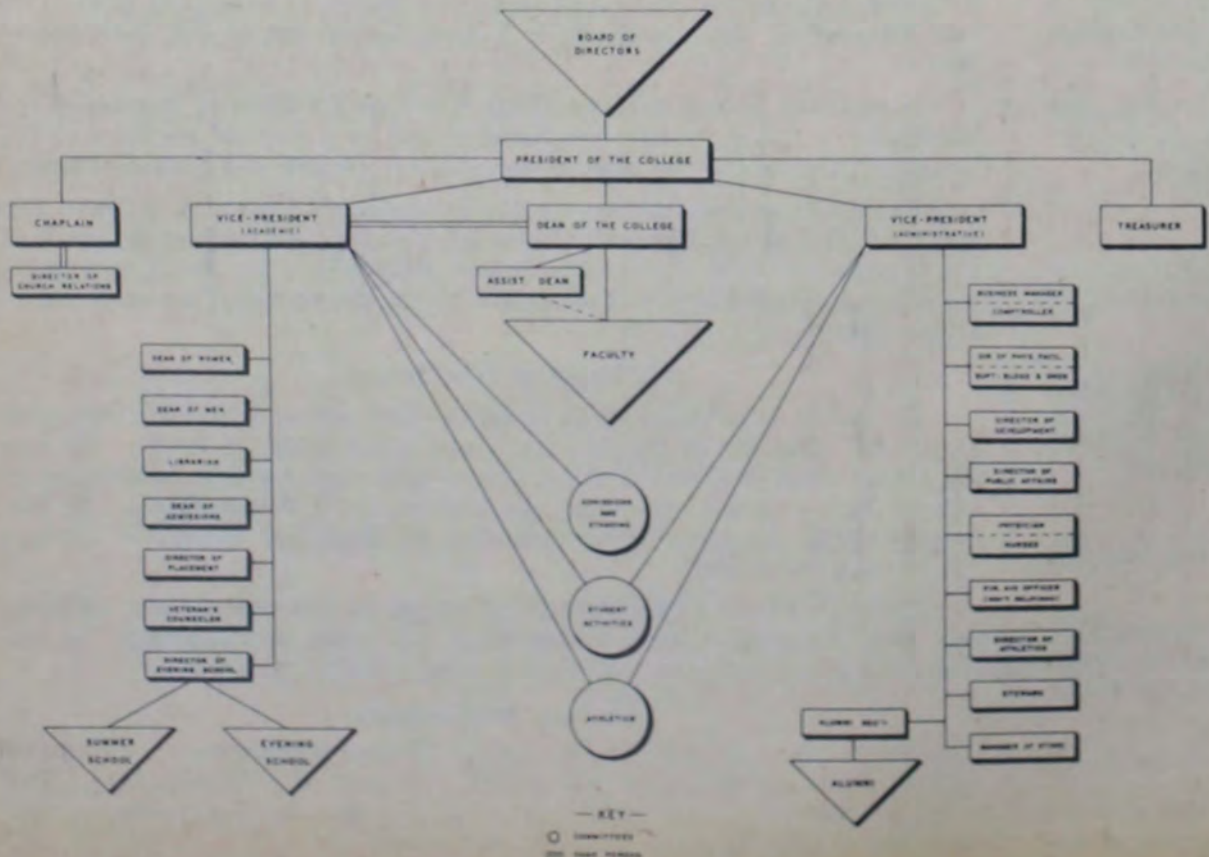


Dean Pettit confers with a member of the Ursinus College Board of Directors following Commencement exercises in 1965.



Dean Pettit crowns an Ursinus beauty queen at one of the many campus social functions he attends.

URSINUS COLLEGE -- GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



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THE HELFFERICH YEARS: 1958-1970

"I Am A Member Of This Class . . ."

Dr. Donald L. Helfferich, President of Ursinus College since 1958, made formal announcement of his decision to retire in his address to the graduating Class of 1970.

"In a very real sense I am a member of this class," Dr. Helfferich told the gathering on June 8, "I cease to be president of Ursinus as they cease to be students of Ursinus. Here where the memory of the evil that I did lives after me, it may be reckoned on the good side that I leave with this centennial class. I have little to offer my classmates on this occasion except affection and sympathy. My wisdom I squandered over their four years. But I do have thoughts on some vexing problems which I now share.

"Some of you parents and grandparents were in Bomberger Hall on a hot Saturday afternoon in September of 1966 when I welcomed you and the members of this class to the Ursinus campus. If I may indulge in the unpardonable taste of quoting myself, my favorite author of course, I quote several statements I made on that day.

"We know this is an important day for you. It is the day against which you have invested years of thought, effort and affection and committed yourself to a lot of money. We are grateful that you are entrusting your sons and daughters to our academic programs and disciplines. It is our plan to change them. We doubt if you will recognize them after they have been battle scarred by professors and examinations, and probably most of all by the rigors of their own recreation.

"The end product of a liberal education defies description. Its utility never has the same size and shape for every student. It will train students to think and prevent them from all thinking alike.

"Half the specific knowledge of today's scientists will be obsolete in a decade, as was the knowledge we had a decade ago, and half of what we need to know then has not as yet been discovered. Under those circumstances our job is to prepare you to meet the impossible.

"The pursuit of raw information in this generation and those foreseeable ahead will prove as irrelevant as offering a dying man a ten-year's subscription to the Wall Street Journal."

"On that day in September, 1966, I did not know the intensity of the Black Revolution, the extent of our involvement in Southeast Asia, the explorations of the moon's surface, the sit-ins and other-ins on campuses, or the exciting conflict between supporters of mini, midi and maxi skirts.

"On that day in September, 1966, I did know:

"That you parents and grandparents are remarkable people. You defeated epidemics of typhus, diphtheria, small pox, tuberculosis, and polio. You lived through the great depression. Many of you know what it is to be poor, hungry, and cold. You have reduced work to fewer hours, created leisure time for this generation to follow their life's ambitions. You built schools, trained teachers, made higher education a possibility for millions of youngsters where once it was only the dream of a wealthy few. In fact you have made the United States the strongest, greatest nation on the earth and have given it a compassion beyond understanding.

"While you have done all these things, you have had some failures. You have not found an alternative for war nor for racial hatred. Perhaps, you the members of this class of 1970, will perfect the social mechanisms by which all men may follow their ambitions without the threat of force, so that there will no longer be need for police to enforce the laws nor armies to prevent men from trespassing against other men.

"There are those who believe that the colleges today must take direct

action in the public arena to bring about desired changes. But how much service of this kind can a good college render without ceasing to be one?

"A good college will serve society best by doing well those things it is uniquely qualified to do. It is above all else a center of understanding where representatives of the great intellectual disciplines and their students come together in the common effort to discover the reasonable life.

"Against the palpable lunacies to which all nations are committed, a small college such as Ursinus seems to avail little. But I have great confidence that the search for sanity on this campus will go on."

Like most of the nation's graduating college seniors, Ursinus students chose a visual protest against the war and Dr. Helfferich made the following comments:

"... you have noticed that some of the seniors—and some of their instructors—are wearing symbols on their arms. They are doing so with my approval. In this year of national doubt and turmoil, Ursinus students have expressed their opinions and feelings in moderate and reasonable forms. I therefore feel it is appropriate that some of the members of the academic community of Ursinus College be permitted to speak to the gathering in their symbolic language—a shorthand of responsible concern for the welfare of our society.

"Those wearing arm bands are saying to you that they protest America's involvement in Vietnam and Cambodia, which they consider unwarranted and unnecessary. They oppose the violence by students and armed troops which led to the death of fellow students at Kent State and at Jackson State. They ask that resources being spent on war be used instead to solve pressing domestic problems. They hope that their testimony will contribute to the continued action of all people to obtain national and international peace and understanding.

"Members of the graduating class without armbands have their private views on these grave matters. I know some agree and others disagree with all or part of the position I have stated. Some may not agree with my decision to make the armbands an approved part of this ceremony.

"However, I stand convinced that all men of reason can agree that the search for sanity in the world's affairs must go on." Dr. Helfferich then asked the audience, while

remaining seated, to join in a moment of silence in which to contemplate the tragedies we have seen and the pressing need for the healing powers of human understanding and divine guidance.

As he neared the end of his speech, Dr. Helfferich added, "I have one more minute to offer some special advice to my classmates. Never underestimate yourself. You are good! You are important! You are more important to the world than compact cars or credit cards. In fact you are essential to the origin of all new things and essential to making them obsolete. You are equipped to become successful in the world of affairs. You are equipped to move with confidence and skill in many areas. But please spend some time in artistic creation and mystical contemplation.

"There is absolutely nothing wrong in becoming wealthy. Just don't think of achievement only as measured by acres, stocks and bonds or bank balances for real worth is not properly equated with a triple A credit rating or the size of a private swimming pool.

"Remember, freedom and equality are not and never will be synonymous and they do not necessarily go together. You are far from equal in capacity for energy and intellect, but you can all strive for superiority. There will always be superior individuals and a true democracy depends upon this form of aristocracy.

"Ursinus College can never escape from the reputation of its graduates and if your college declines in respect, goodness and importance, your degree has correspondingly less lustre.

"Although all of us differ greatly, all of us have one thing in common. We carry the same label, Ursinus graduate, and we will carry this for life. We are listed as belonging to Ursinus College. There is no divorce from this relationship. The College considers this with pride. So should each of you.

"As we are about to leave this campus, I charge you and me to be loyal to Ursinus and to all that is best in its tradition;

"I charge you to work courageously, unselfishly;

"I charge you to work with men of good will in every land;

"I charge you to be good citizens of our country.

"And now, with the assurance of our pride and confidence in you, I bid you farewell and wish you God's blessing. I declare the 100th academic year closed."



The Presidential Portrait of Dr. Donald L. Helfferich

Former First Family



DR. AND MRS. DONALD L. HELFFERICH



Former President Helfferich surveys the progress of the construction of the new Myrin Library during the final days of his administration.

... A MAN NOT SOON FORGOTTEN

