
Guide to the Hammer and Coffin Society Records, 1906-1987

Collection number: SC 228

Department of Special Collections and University Archives
Stanford University Libraries
Stanford, California

Contact Information

- Department of Special Collections
- Green Library
- Stanford University Libraries
- Stanford, CA 94305-6004
- Phone: (650) 725-1022
- Email: speccoll@sulmail.stanford.edu
- URL: <http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/spc/>

Processed by:

Robin Chandler

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Encoded by:

Patricia White

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1899, October 5th.	The first issue of the <i>Chaparral</i> is published in 12 pages with a 2 color cover. The idea to create a college humor magazine came to Bristow Adams, '00, editor of the Sequoia, the campus literary magazine, and Everett Wallace Smith, '99, editor of the Daily Palo Alto, the daily student newspaper, after the demise of the Josh. The Josh was an intercollegiate humor magazine jointly published by the students of Stanford and the University of California at Berkeley. The Josh had appeared for ten issues. Adams chose the name "chaparral," a western scrub-brush, intentionally poking fun at the Sequoia and its high aspirations. Adams and Smith also conceived of the idea of the "Old Boy" as the Chaparral's symbolic editor. The "Old Boy," a jester-like character, adapted his motto from a Tennyson line, "tis better to have lived and laughed than never to have laughed at all."
1905.	Delmar Reynolds, editor of the Chaparral and president of the Press Club, has the idea to form a society to be known as the Hammer and Coffin Society. He purchases a sledge hammer in San Francisco which he has silver plated. A ring is carved in the handle and the names of the Chaparral staff are engraved. A tradition is born.
1906, April 17th.	The Society is officially organized on the eve of the great San Francisco Earthquake by Morris Oppenheim and the staff of the Chaparral. The purpose of the society is to embody the eternal spirit of "the Farm's" literary and artistic talents and to record the wit and humor of the campus. The motto of the society, "we outta sock'em with a hammer, toss'em in a coffin and seal'em away," predicts hard times ahead for students at the University of California at Berkeley.
1918, April.	The Chappie goes overseas as Le Chaparral with a blue background cover featuring the "Old Boy" with hammer over shoulder wandering through the trenches. Le Chaparral was delivered to the Stanford soldiers at the front.
1914-1918.	The Hammer and Coffin Society goes national. The society creates a national collegiate humor organization. Twenty-five chapters in the United States and Canada are begun with names such as the Cal Pelican, the Arizona Kitty Kat, the Northwestern Purple Parrot and the Duke Duke n' Duchess.
1930.	Chaparral editor Barney Gould and Ram's Head (the student drama group) President Paul Speegle organize "Theatre Fund Follies" a gaietes-review to raise money for the Memorial Auditorium. \$5000 is contributed, part of which came from the review.
1935.	Chaparral published a special "Celebrities Issue," collecting material such as a drawing from Walt Disney, an insulting article from Robert Benchley, a sweet letter from Shirley Temple, and a formal reply from Mrs. Roosevelt's secretary explaining why she couldn't contribute.
1935-1940.	The "Now That" club composed of Chaparral and Pelican alumni is organized by Stanford alumnus Milt Hagen. The most memorable meeting is addressed by Somerset Maugham who is made an honorary member. World War II terminates the club's activities.
1941, October 2.	The Hammer and Coffin Society's 35th Anniversary is celebrated by current members and alumni at the San Francisco Press Club.
1943, Feb.	The Chaparral Staff contact alumni family about delivery of the special "Serviceman's Issue." "...to a Stanford man in the service, this Chaparral will be mighty welcome...like meeting an old roommate or fraternity brother...be sure and send this copy to him today..."
1943, Spring.	The Chaparral magazine is suspended and the charter for the Hammer and Coffin Society is revoked for business malpractice on the part of a staff member and an alumnus. The society, the charter, and the magazine are restored the following autumn.

1951, May.	The Chaparral is again suspended for one issue, the "Purple Ape Crash Comics," for its similarities to Playboy Magazine. The University requires that the staff submit a list of conduct rules for determining good taste in editorial matters for approval before permission to publish again is granted.
1954, October.	Chaparral editor Tom Timberlake contacts Hammer and Coffin Trust Fund Member, Northcutt Ely, about funds available for construction of a Chaparral Building.
1955, May.	The Arizona Kitty Kat contacts the Chaparral about reactivating the Hammer and Coffin Society national organization established in 1914.
1958, April 30.	The Chaparral spoof's Sports Illustrated with their version of the national magazine Sports Frustrated.
1961, May.	The Chaparral and editor Brad Efron are suspended for the rest of the academic year for the Chaparral's Playboy parody "Layboy" (Brad Efron later returns to campus Professor of Statistics and wins the MacArthur Award).
1966, April.	The 60th Anniversary of the Hammer and Coffin Society is celebrated at the Leopard Cafe in San Francisco by current members and alumni.
1967, December.	The Chaparral format reflecting changing interests of the student body. Additions to the magazine include articles featuring political and social issues, interviews, political cartoons, poetry, and film reviews.
1968, September.	The Chaparral special election issue includes an article describing the Chicago Democratic Convention and the anti-Vietnam War protests held during the summer and an interview with Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver. This is the last Chaparral to print the copyright statement "published for and officially acknowledged as the humor magazine for the Associated Students of Stanford University."
1970, March.	Michael Sweeney, editor of Chaparral and president of the Hammer and Coffin Society, tells an audience in Dinkelspiel Auditorium, "we'll never be able to drive ROTC from the campus if we just sit and talk about it. We have exhausted the normal procedures. You can't have an ROTC program if you don't have an ROTC building."
1971, September.	The Chaparral breaks tradition as Tina Swent becomes the first woman editor and the monthly magazine becomes a weekly newspaper.
1973, September.	The traditional Chaparral returns with an advertisement stating "the Old Boy is back. The satirical scourge of the Stanford scene is rising from the dead."
1976, April.	The 70th Anniversary of the Hammer and Coffin Society is celebrated once again at the Leopard Cafe in San Francisco. Alumni and current members attend as new members are initiated.
1978, April.	Leslie Mintz becomes the first woman to be initiated into the Hammer & Coffin Society. The initiation results in a schism among alumni, some of whom feel the organization should remain fraternal.
1980, May.	Seven members of the Hammer & Coffin Society plant a fake photograph of themselves holding bowling balls and trophies on the front page of the Stanford Daily. The caption under the photo reads "Tragedy Strikes Bowling Team...None Spared." The hoax results in outcry from the Stanford Community.
1981, April.	More than 115 Chaparral alumni attend the Hammer & coffin 75th Anniversary Reunion at the San Francisco Press Club.
1982, October.	The Chaparral reacts to the bankruptcy of the campus concert program by bringing the Grateful Dead to Stanford. The two sold-out shows in Frost Amphitheater result in the birth of a new concert program (The Concert Network) and in an annual tradition of Grateful Dead concerts.

1985, April.

A slate of four members of the Hammer & Coffin Society is elected to the ASSU Council of Presidents. Three of the four Presidents, Michael Collins, Leslie Leland, and Tim Quirk, donate their entire salaries to the establishment of the Bristow Adams Trust, an endowment for the Chaparral magazine.

1987, March.

The Stanford Chaparral collaborates with the Harvard Lampoon to release an 80-page joint issue on both coasts. It is the first collaboration of the country's two oldest humor magazines.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Hammer and Coffin Society Records, 1906-1987, document the development of the society from a humor society to a national student organization. The materials are arranged in nine series by type of document and include correspondence, minutes, reports, records, scrapbooks, photographs, and prints. The majority of the collection concerns the period between 1944 and 1965. The collection is stored in 11 boxes for a total of 9 linear ft. Whenever possible the collection was arranged according to the order in which it arrived.

The correspondence includes business and personal letters which are arranged by in-coming and out-going sub-series. The reports include documents from the auditor, the business manager, the circulation manager, and the editor. These are separated by type and arranged chronologically. There are also financial records including bank and budget statements which are arranged chronologically. The business records include statements of copyright and drafts of the society constitution. The scrapbooks contain the society's minutes (c. 1940-1960), newspaper clippings and correspondence of importance. The photographs describe staff and alumni and are arranged chronologically. The miscellaneous papers include materials from anniversary banquets, plays, programs, scripts, and sketches.

The collection provides an excellent view into the workings of a student magazine. Issues concerning copyright, distribution, production cost, and accountability to the administration of the university are documented. The materials also reflect the student body as their attitudes and concerns change over time.

RELATED MATERIAL

Original issues of the *Chaparral* from the first publication on October 5, 1899 to the present are housed separately in the Stanford University Archives. Issues are both bound and unbound. Articles in Stanford publications relating the history of the Society can also be found in the archives.

Series I: Correspondence

Box 1, Folder 1 **Correspondence, Incoming A-G**

Note

[Includes letter from ASSU, January 1940 regarding use of Hammer as symbol, removed from H & C scrapbook, 1930's through 1940's, p.84]

Box 1, Folder 2 **Correspondence, Incoming H-M**

Box 1, Folder 3 **Correspondence, N-Y**

Box 1, Folder 4 **Correspondence, Outgoing 1916-1975**

Box 1, Folder 5 **Correspondence, Chaparral Vendors, 1957-1958, 1961**

Box 1, Folder 6 **Correspondence, Copyright**

Box 1, Folder 7 **Correspondence, Feature Article "\$125,000 Grandstand Play" [see Series VIII, Photographs, for more information]**

Box 1, Folder 8 **Correspondence, Hammer and Coffin Trust Fund, 1954-1965**

Box 1, Folder 9 **Correspondence, Libel and Slander Insurance, 1960**

Box 1, Folder 10 **Correspondence, National Distribution of Chaparral**

Box 1, Folder 11 **Correspondence, Serviceman's Issue, February 1943**

Series II: Minutes

Box 1, Folder 1 **Minutes, 1947, 1948**[Minutes can also be found in Series VII (Scrapbooks)].

Series III: Reports

Box 1, Folder 1	Audit Report, 1946, 1947, 1950-1952, 1955-1958
Box 1, Folder 2	Business Manager's Report, 1946-1947, 1948-1949, 1955-1956, 1956-1957, 1957-1958, 1958-1959, 1959-1960, 1966
Box 2, Folder 3	Circulation Report, 1944-1945, 1951-1952
Box 2, Folder 4	Circulation Report, 1954-1955, 1955-1956
Box 2, Folder 5	Circulation Report, 1956-1957, 1957-1958, 1964-1965
Box 2, Folder 6	Special Circulation Report, 1960
Box 2, Folder 7	Editor's Report, 1958-1959, 1959-1960, 1964-1965

Series IV: Financial Records

- Box 2, Folder 1 **ASSU Publications Fund 1956-1957 through 1959-1960**
- Box 2, Folder 2 **Bank Account Statements: 1960-1961 Chaparral, Hammer and Coffin Building Fund, Hammer and Coffin Improvement Fund, Hammer and Coffin Special Fund**
- Box 2, Folder 3 **Budget Statements: 1947, 1957-1958, 1958-1959, 1959-1960, 1960-1961, 1962-1963**
- Box 2, Folder 4 **Itemized list of photographic costs, 1959-1960**
- Box 2, Folder 5 **Reserve Trust Fund Agreement, 1937**

Note

(removed from scrapbook: H & C 1930's & 1940's, p.41)

- Box 2, Folder 6 **Trial Balance, 1963-1964, 1964-1965, 1965-1966, 1966-1967**

Series V: Business Records

- Box 2, Folder 1 **Advertising, Chaparral: rate card 1959,accounts receivable 1960-1961**
Box 2, Folder 2 **Business Manager's Office Inventory, 1955-1956, 1957-1958, 1958-1959, 1962-1963, 1963-1964, 1964-1965**
Box 2, Folder 3 **Constitution, 1906, 1937, 1952, 1953, 1960, 1961, 1987**

Note

[Amendment II, Article 3, Section A, 1953 was removed from H & C scrapbook 1943 through 1960's, p.18; Amendment II, Article 3, Section A, was removed from H & C scrapbook 1943 through 1960's, p. 118]

- Box 2, Folder 4 **Copyright Certificates**
Box 2, Folder 5 **National Hammer and Coffin Society: Constitution 1955, 1961,memos 1903-1965**
Box 2, Folder 6 **Notes from the editor regarding Chaparral suspension, May 1951**

Note

[removed frm H & C Scrapbook, 1943-1960's]

- Box 2, Folder 7 **Subscription and Advertising materials c. 1900-1910**

Series VI: Miscellaneous

- Box 3, Folder 1 **Anniversary Banquets: Date unknown, Anniversary, 19th Anniversary Banquet 1925,35th Anniversary 1941,40th Anniversary 1946,50th Anniversary 1956[additional information regarding 50th Anniversary Banquet can be found in Series 7, Scrapbooks]**
- Box 3, Folder 2 **Anniversary Banquets: 60th Anniversary 1966,Halfway Between 60th and 70th Anniversary 1973,70th Anniversary 1976,**
- Box 3, Folder 3 **Anniversary Banquets: 75th Anniversary 1981,76th Anniversary [1982],77th Anniversary [1983], 78th Anniversary 1984,80th Anniversary 1986**
- Box 3, Folder 4 **Anniversary Publications: 30th Anniversary 1936,Quad Quips, 75th Anniversary 1981,The Stanford Alumni Almanac, January 1981**
- Box 3, Folder 5 **Chaparral Porno Issue "Craparral: Life Begins at 40" April 17th, 1946**
- Box 3, Folder 6 **Lists: distribution 1963, 1964,dorm 1965-1966,exchange list, Former Chaparral Editors and Business Managers, Staff List by Volume and summer addresses, subscriptions paid, vendors, volumes 1949-1965**
- Box 3, Folder 7 **Miscellaneous: designs for letterhead, notes for humorous stories**
- Box 3, Folder 8 **Newspaper clippings**
- Box 3, Folder 9 **Plays: program, scripts**
- Box 3, Folder 10 **Sketch for Proposed Chaparral Building, 1938**
- Box 3, Folder 11 **Initiation Ceremony, "Ritual of Hammer and Coffin Society," November 1, 1916**
- Box 3, Folder 12 **"Sermon on Humor," by Stephen Leacock, c. 1922**
- Box 3, Folder 13 **'Tis Better," article relating the history of the Hammer and Coffin Society, published in the Stanford Illustrated Review, February 1939**
- Box 3, Folder 14 **Chaparral "Album of Cartoons"**
- Box 3, Folder 15 **Campus Map spoof, 1976**
- Box 3, Folder 16 **Pre-Reg Packet spoof**
- Box 3, Folder 17 **Advertising leaflets**
- Box 3, Folder 18 **Stanford Chaparral Publishing Support Trust, Articles of Corporation, undated copy**

Series VII: Scrapbooks

Box 4 **The Old Boy's Scrapbook--For the Edification of Posterity, April 1927 to June 1928**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- newspaper articles regarding the Chaparral
- subscription applications
- correspondence with alumni, includes letterhead of period
- correspondence/memos with contributors
- 1923/1924 advertisements for Chaparral
- H & C Christmas Number, June 1927
- photographs

Box 4 **Volume XXX 1928-1929, Jack Shoup Editor, Dick Holt Business Manager**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- -Chaparral magazine covers
- -advertisements
- -correspondence with alumni
- -correspondence with contributors
- -newspaper articles regarding Chaparral
- -subscription forms
- -minutes of the 1928-1929 Annual Convention of the Western Association of College Comics
- -photographs: H & C staff, 1928-1929

Box 4 **Hammer and Coffin Minutes from 30's and 40's (1938-1941)**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- -responsibility of Secretary and Treasurer, p.1
- -Business Trust and Charter, 1937-1939, p.1-41
- -responsibility of Managing Editor, p. 28
- -ASSU Constitution & By-Laws, 1943, p.36
- -minutes, p.55-71
- -funds, p.68-70
- -amendments to Business Trust & Charter, p.73-74
- -annual meeting minutes, p.79-81
- -list of members since 1899, p.97 to end

Box 5 **Hammer and Coffin from 1940's forward into 1960's (1942-1967)**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- -minutes, p.1-65
- -correspondence concerning suspension, W.J. Sterling, Winbigler, p.43
- -letters to the "Old Boy"
- -memo from Editor regarding the moral tone of Chaparral & Administration in Volume 51; concerning possible suspension.
- -operating statement, 1950-1951, p.75
- -constitution
- -ASSU Publication Board By-Laws
- -newspaper clippings regarding suspension of Chappie and Editor, the 1961 "Layboy" issue.

Box 6 **50th Anniversary Banquet, 1956**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- -correspondence
- -invitations

Box 7 **[Scrapbook 1973-1980]**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- -publication promotionals/advertisements
- -newspaper clippings regarding Chaparral Radio Show and Chaparral Quiz
- -Hammer & Coffin campaign slate for the Council of Presidents (1976)
- -article regarding Chappie sweep of ASSU Senate race (1976)
- -fake campus map distributed to incoming freshmen during orientation (1976)

Box 7 **[Scrapbook 1980-1982]**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- -correspondence regarding the *New Yorker* magazine publication of Chaparral cartoon in December 1980 issue
- -newspaper clippings regarding ASSU concert program conflicts
- -correspondence from Newsweek magazine's College Digest regarding inclusion of Chaparral articles
- -photographs of Chaparral staff, 1980-1981
- -newspaper clipping regarding Chaparral alum William Clark, deputy secretary of state under Ronald Reagan
- -newspaper clippings regarding Chaparral spoof of San Francisco Chronicle's "Datebook" and the CBS television network's "Dallas" with "Who Shot RR," (Ronald Reagan) controversy gets considerable local press
- -newspaper clippings regarding celebration of 75th Anniversary

Box 7 **[Scrapbook 1982-1987]**

Scope and Content Note

Subjects include:

- -newspaper clippings regarding formation of concert network
- -articles regarding Chaparral "Mickey Mouse and the clock tower prank"
- -advertisements for Chaparral
- -newspaper clippings regarding Chaparral alums Brad Efron and Doodles Weaver
- -campaign literature and articles regarding the victorious Hammer and Coffin Council of President's slate (1985)
- -history of the Great Sacred Hammer Robbery
- -articles regarding joint issue of the Stanford Chaparral and the Harvard Lampoon in 1987

Series VIII: Photographs

Note

[Names and dates are available on some images. Some photographs are also stored in scrapbooks]

Box 8, Folder 1 **Chaparral Staff, Alumni, and Western Association of College Comics, 1919 and ca. 1927-1950's,**
Physical Description: black and white prints

Box 8, Folder 2 **Feature Article "\$125,000 Grandstand Play" 1960,**
Physical Description: black and white prints

Box 8, Folder 3 **60th Anniversary Banquet, April 1966, Leopard Cafe in San Francisco,**
Physical Description: color slides

Box 8, Folder 4 **Chaparral Staff and Alumni, ca. 1969-1980,**
Physical Description: black and white prints

Box 8, Folder 5 **Chaparral Staff and Alumni, ca. 1970's,**
Physical Description: color prints

Box 8, Folder 6 **78th Anniversary Reunion, Spring 1984,**
Physical Description: color prints

Box 9 **35mm color negatives describing Chaparral Staff, ca. 1970's.**

Scope and Content Note

Many of the images appear to have been at the Leopard Cafe in San Francisco, CA. There is also a black and white line negative describing the Chaparral billhead.

Note

Also available is a 9x12 inch black and white group portrait portraying the Hamper and Coffin Society in 1921. All members are identified in this photograph. This image is stored in the oversize photographs collection area under the Society's name.

Series IX: Prints

Scope and Content Note

One 24x32 inch document outlining the purposes and policies of the trust for the Stanford Chaparral Chapter of the Hammer and Coffin Society. Dated as approved by the Stanford Board of Trustees, September 23, 1937. This item is stored with the oversize art prints as Print # 223.