Ask the Archivist: How Did a Yellowjacket Buzz Its Way into Wilson Commons?

A question for Melissa Mead, the John M. and Barbara Keil University Archivist and Rochester Collections Librarian.

I am an editor for the Campus Times. I am working on a story about the wooden statue of the yellowjacket found in the corner of Hirst Lounge, and was wondering if you had any information on it. I’ve been trying to figure out where it came from and if Jeremy Glick’s fraternity played a role in the creation of the wood carving.—Melanie Earle ’23

Campus Times staff often consult the University Archives for historical background and photographs, but usually the answer can be found in existing files. Tracking down the story of this wonderful sculpture truly required a “hive mind” approach, and Earle has graciously agreed to have her story scooped in Review.

The large, intricately carved sculpture depicting the University’s mascot and flower currently sits in the corner of Hirst Lounge near the six clocks depicting time at sites around the world (a gift of the Class of 2007) and the plaques honoring Rochester alumni and staff who died while serving in the armed services during wartime. An inscription on its surface reads:

Way to go Glick
9-11-2001

Jeremy Glick ’93 was one of six Rochester alumni who died in the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The others were Brendan Dolan ‘86, Aram Iskenderian ’82, Jean Hoadley Peterson ’69N, Jeffrey Smith ’87, ’88S (MBA), and Zhe (Zack) Zheng ’95, ’98S (MBA) (see pages 40–43).

Along with Peterson and her husband, Donald, Glick was one of the passengers on Flight 93, and he was honored for his heroism in the counterattack which ended in the plane’s crash in Pennsylvania.

The Archives holds photographs of the sculpture in its original location on Faculty Road near Gilbert Hall. The descriptive information embedded in the photos dates them to 2011 and makes particular note of the inscription. Glick served as president of the Rochester chapter of Alpha Delta Phi, so it seemed reasonable at first to conclude that it might have been commissioned by his fraternity. In 2002, a scholarship in Glick’s name was established to provide financial assistance to students in fraternities and sororities. But inquiries to a wide range of Alpha Dels, spearheaded by John Braund ’53, did not reveal any connection.

Staff in several University offices were contacted, but their records did not include the piece or its funding source. The medium of the sculpture, and its original location helped lead to the answer.

Shawn Casey, former manager of properties and contracts at the University, suggested contacting Dan Schied, now director of grounds at Cornell University. He is well remembered for his many contributions at Rochester, including expanding the horticultural variety on

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For more photographs of the Yellowjacket sculpture, visit https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/blog/ATA-Summer2021.