11-15-1963

University of Maine Bulletin for Alumni and Friends, November 1963

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An Historic Occasion

Events which future University of Maine chroniclers will describe as historic and momentous occurred on the Orono campus on the weekend of October 18-19, 1963.

During the 48-hour period, more people visited the campus than during any similar time in the 98-year history of the State University.

The highlight was a visit by President John F. Kennedy, who chose the occasion to deliver a major foreign policy address on the Cold War situation. He spoke at 11 a.m. on Saturday, the 19th, before an estimated 15,000 persons on Alumni Field.

A second major event was the official opening of the handsome new Arthur A. Hauck Auditorium which was dedicated on Friday evening before a packed house.

Everything was perfect for the President’s visit the following day, including the weather. Not a cloud was in sight and the temperature was 80 degrees when the President’s helicopter landed on Alumni Field.

Following his address, President Kennedy was presented with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree by the University.

University President Dr. Lloyd H. Elliott applied a light touch to the ceremony by advising President Kennedy that he was obligated to “stand and sing the Stein Song” whenever he heard the famous tune being played in future years.

Members of the Maine Congressional delegation, University trustees, and faculty and student representatives shared the President’s platform.

Press, radio, and television coverage was widespread as approximately 120 media representatives, including a full planeload of Washington correspondents, came to the campus for the occasion. Seven television stations covered the address on a “live” basis, as did several dozen radio stations.

As a happy conclusion, Maine defeated Connecticut in the Homecoming football game.
The visit of President Kennedy to the University of Maine campus proved to be a popular event, as evidenced when the gates to Alumni Field (upper left) were opened at 9 a.m., two hours before the President's arrival.

When the President's helicopter (left center) landed on the northern end of the field, over 100 television cameramen and newsmen (lower left) were ready to record the event before an estimated 15,000 persons who filled the stands and stood around the field.

Among the members of the platform party who applauded the President (above) as he prepared to speak were, left to right: Maine Congressman Stanley R. Tupper, Senator Edmund S. Muskie, University Trustee Owen H. Smith, and President Lloyd H. Elliott.

After delivering a major foreign policy address (below), President Kennedy listens while Dr. Elliott (upper right) prepares to award him an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. University Registrar George H. Crosby assists Dr. Elliott (middle right) in making President Kennedy an honorary alumnus of the University.

Members of the University committee (lower right) which spent several days in preparing for the occasion were: seated, left to right: Registrar Crosby; Edith G. Wilson, Assistant to the President for Institutional Research; Francis S. McGuire, Director of Plant and Facilities; and Henry L. Doten, Business Manager. Standing, left to right: Howard A. Keyo, Director of Public Information and Central Services; William C. Wells, Director of Residence and Dining Halls; Dr. H. Austin Peck, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Committee Chairman; and Dr. T. Russell Woolley, Executive Director, General Alumni Association.
The University's greatest weekend, as many have called it, began on Thursday evening, Oct. 17, when President and Mrs. Elliott (upper left) greeted faculty members at the annual Faculty Reception.

Dedication of the Arthur A. Hauck Auditorium highlighted Friday's events, as shown in the photos to the left. Among those participating in the ceremony (below) were, l-r: Edward C. Sherry '38, president of the General Alumni Association; Dr. Elliott, Mrs. Hauck, Mrs. Elliott, and President Emeritus Hauck.

Some 9,300 persons, largest crowd in 10 years, turned out Saturday afternoon to watch Maine defeat Connecticut, 35-12, in the annual Homecoming game. The photo below shows Maine's outstanding sophomore quarterback, Dick DeVarney, firing a pass over the outstretched hands of a Connecticut defender.