



Director-producer Gus Reid of "Show-Me Showboat" gets an assist from her son Tony Reid.



Singer Flo Waidelech warms up to her big number, "St. Louis Blues."

FACULTY FROLIC



Charles Hudson (foreground) checks with Fred McKinney on script details. The Fortnightly show was presented in Jesse Auditorium.

In the spring a pleasant touch of madness comes over a segment of the University faculty membership. Professors esteemed for their scholarly attainments cavort upon the stage in song and dance. Their wives, some of them faculty colleagues, join in the frivolous antics. About 100 performers, a delightful streak of ham showing in their makeup, put on this almost annual production in which they spoof themselves and everything about them. The show climaxes a Faculty Fun Frolic (which begins with a dinner), and is sponsored by the Fortnightly Club, an organization of faculty women and wives of University faculty men. The audience that goes to Jesse Auditorium for this free extravaganza is regaled with songs, skits, solo numbers, and take-offs on such University topics as fallout shelters, nuclear research, campus personalities, elevators, the Library and other facilities. Anything worth lampooning gets lampooned, if it can be made to fit onto the rhyme of a parody.

What takes place on the Jesse stage has been calculated in advance; a script has been prepared, although it may undergo sudden changes, depending largely on the reliability of the performer's memory. The wonder is that the show comes off at all. Only two or three rehearsals are held, and on each occasion there are cases of absenteeism due to schedule conflicts.

Largely responsible for the lines of the presentation, both spoken and sung, was Mrs. Loren Reid, who is known to her friends as Gus or Gussie (for Augusta). Similarly, she was responsible for the production of two years ago. This time she had able assistance from Mrs. Amy Westveld, who was chairman of the Frolic committee, and Dee Ferguson; together they found humor in a wide range of campus situations. Gus Reid was also producer and director.

"Show-Me Showboat" was the background for the Frolic, which provided the setting for a minstrel show and allowed for a variety of specialties to be presented. Fred McKinney was interlocutor, with Charles Hudson and Bill Taft as end men. Ted Keats and Bob Brooks scored with their solos. Jack Matthews gave an energetic account of himself as one of the Cakewalk Caperers. Flo Waidelich (we're using the names that were printed on the playbill) did "St. Louis Blues." Perhaps the highlight musical number of the evening was the song about Ralph Parker being lost in the enlarged Library building; the audience joined in the lament. Robin Humphrey, Sandy Nash and Jack Jackson did a soft shoe number. There were numerous other feature numbers that were well received.

Running through the show was the plight of the Fortnightly Club searching for a regular meeting place. The quest was led by Fanny Fortnightly (Amy Westveld) accompanied by Newcomer (Lou Henry) and Interest Group Member (Nola Daniel). They were finally forced to wash their chinaware in the technicolor fountains on the Mall, having been cast out from various places by heartless department heads.

The Interest Group girls sang of foods, bridge and art. One song went: "Our cakes are gateaux, our pancakes are crepes, our tuna we cook with sour cream; And if brandy ain't handy to flambé hot dogs, we douse 'em with kerosene."

To the tune of Nelly Gray, Ted Keats got the show off to a solid start when he sang:

There's a woolly M. U. blanket on the nearby Hinkson shore
Where I've spent many hours I've not forgot.
Just a-sittin' and a-neckin' until progress took us o'er
And a Research Center stands upon that spot.
Oh, my grassy Hinkson spot, you have changed an awful lot,
And the 'dozers turn you over more and more,
Neither stadium nor golf course have the memories you've got
Of those banks of that grassy Hinkson shore.

And Bob Brooks pitied the professor to the melody of the Man on the Flying Trapeze:

He goes cross the campus with shuffling pace,
The pre-occupied man with the attache case,
He talks to himself with the gestures he makes
To emphasize points or mistakes.
This professor whose desk is unsightly
And who sits on committees for days
Is wed to a gal in Fortnightly,
So together they go separate ways . . . oh
Once he was carefree, but now he is not,
Like any professor, he's just about shot,
To try to spread knowledge and keep what he's got
Turns in to a circular phase.

Columbia's transportation systems came in for a bit of spoofing to the tune of Rosie O'Grady:

Sweet Cannonball Special
Creaking Centralia way
Good for a gag but not travelers
Except for trunks or hay.
Also the Misery Transit:
Schedules change day by day;
And once Ozark was on time, we've heard,
One night early last May.

Sky-high stadium seating drew this lament:

I'm only the wife of a faculty man
On our Stadium pad—VV;
From the 98th row, I am glad to know
There's a game on that blurry lea.
But I've heard of their launching someone to the moon
And all this nuclear trend,
Till I wonder if I, from my perch in the sky,
Am the one they have chosen to send.

Audience participation soared in the song about the missing librarian (tune, the M.T.A.):

Well let me tell you a story of a man named Parker
On a tragic and fateful day,
He went up to get a book from way back in the stacks,
And somehow he lost his way.
Well did he ever return? No he never returned,
And his fate is still unlearned,
He may wander ever through the halls of learning,
He's a man who never returned.
So nobody knows what rooms are in existence,
Or what might be walled away,
And the library staff keeps shifting the books
Thinking Parker might appear some day.