• Greeks at Georgia Tech are as old as the Institute
  o First charter request made before the Institute ever opened, and first fraternity began operation the moment students set foot on the campus in 1888.
  o Alpha Xi Delta was first sorority, founded by 5 female students in 1954, just 2 years after the first two women were admitted.

• When GT opened, Greeks were controversial for public universities – some felt private organizations had no place on a public campus – but GT believed Greeks could make a positive contribution to student life right from the state. Still believe that today.

• When I was a student in the 60s:
  o Colleges and universities, especially public ones, did not offer much in the way of student recreational facilities or social events.
  o Fraternities, sororities provided campus life by sponsoring intramural sports, parties, dances, and community service activities.
  o Alpha Xi Delta was the only sorority at the time, had an important role.

• Today colleges have extensive recreational and social facilities and programs. Greeks must adapt to new environment:
  o Personal friendship, small support group continues to be important role.
  o Broader campus programs are opportunity for Greek chapters to contribute as groups:
    ▪ Group to hang with when campus events involve “cast of thousands.”
    ▪ Make unique contribution within context of broader event that offers wider visibility, opportunity to polish image. (E.g., helping freshmen move in).
    ▪ Join with other fraternities, sororities to sponsor events like Greek Week.

• As first sorority, Alpha Xi Delta has a leadership role.
  o GT chapter celebrated 50th anniversary last year.
  o Tradition of seeking out strong women who are committed to service and success.
  o Shirley Mewborn and Gay Dull were early members who subsequently devoted considerable effort to help successive generations of sisters succeed.

• Women still in the minority at GT; working hard to change that. Important role for sororities – help create friendly, supportive environment that encourages women to realize their potential.
  o New house important part of that effort to support women, offer leadership opportunities to them.
Location brings you back to your roots: First sponsor was Ella Van Leer, wife of GT president at the time; Alpha Xi Delta met at her home, which was on the site where this new house stands today.

Congratulations!