

July 2, 1976

Madeleine Rossi, Sam Watson, and Sonia Groenveld

**Intro:**

**Sam:** Good afternoon, welcome to Tufts University. My name is Sam.

**Madeleine:** I'm Madeleine,

**Sonia:** and I'm Sonia and we will be your tour guides today, July 2, 1976.

**Sam:** I'm sure you are all very eager, bright eyed and bushy tailed to get started with this tour and learn more about the place that you could potentially be calling home soon. So let's get right into it.

**Student Life:**

**Sam:** I know that most of you want to hear about what the students are like and what they do, and well student life here is very vibrant. The university generously provides us with a lot of on campus entertainment. There are always movie showings, student bands, comedy shows, sporting events, art shows, etc. We have high hopes that our football team will actually start winning this year. Last year was their centennial anniversary and they did alright, so it looks promising. But if you couldn't care less about sports, there are a plethora of other events going on every weekend. We have movie showings every week on campus, and there are plenty of places off campus to go to as well.<sup>1</sup> But the MacPhie Pub, which is our on campus pub is one of the most popular hangout spots.<sup>2</sup> At the pub you can get meals, drinks (legally of course), and be entertained by a variety of both student and outside groups. One of the most interesting acts are our very own Beelzebub, which is our all male acapella group. Bubs in the Pub is a very fun

---

<sup>1</sup> The Observer: 1975

<sup>2</sup> The Observer: 1970

night for Tufts students<sup>3</sup>. There are many parties on and off campus usually hosted by the fraternities or other groups on campus that you can attend or you can event host your own.

### **Admissions:**

**Sam:** Now while this all sounds fun and great you're all probably wondering "How do I get accepted to Tufts so I can start doing all these fun things?"<sup>4</sup> Well i'm going to let you all in on a little secret. When deciding amongst its applicants Tufts primarily looks at your "potential for academic success"<sup>5</sup> However; they also want to ensure that their students are genuinely intellectually curious, creative, responsible, have the capacity for friendship, loyalty, and leadership amongst many things. In order to find out more information about admissions to Tufts please request a bulletin at the Admissions Office.

### **Financial Aid:**

**Sam:** Now if you are fortunate enough to be accepted you will probably be wondering about how you will afford tufts.. Or maybe not but for those of you who are...Tuition will run you about 5000 dollars this year, and it has been and will probably continue to increase every year. Last year the state of Massachusetts was trying to place a tax on meals which would raise the boarding cost for us students up to 40 dollars more on a 20 a week meal plan.<sup>6</sup> Students have been speaking out against it, unfortunately to no avail. If this presents a financial burden for you and your family, Tufts does provide financial aid to as many students as it can. It is available in the form of scholarships, loans, and employment. The applications will be available starting in February and will be due in April. If you have any other questions or would like more

---

<sup>3</sup> The Observer: 1975

<sup>4</sup> Tufts Bulletin 1971-72

<sup>5</sup> Tufts Bulletin 1971-72

<sup>6</sup> The Observer: 1975

information about aid and affording Tufts, please feel free to visit the financial aid office which is located in Ballou Hall.

### **Dining:**

**Sam:** Speaking of meals, here at Tufts we have a few choices in meal plans that students can take advantage of. You can choose from 20, 15, 14, or 7 meals a week at Carmichael, Dewick, and Hodgdon Dining Halls. <sup>7</sup>Whichever meal plan you choose will be apart of your board charge. You can also use cash to get food at one of the snack bars or food carts around campus. There is a snack bar in Curtis Hall and an evening snack bar in Dewick. However; the most popular one is The Rez which is located near Eaton Hall.

### **Demographics:**

**Sam:** Many of the students that currently attend our school are from Massachusetts/ the Greater New England area, New York, and New Jersey.<sup>8</sup> However, while most of our student population comes from the Northeast we do have a handful of people from California and the West Coast.

### **Academics/ Graduation Requirements:**

**Sam:** Once you begin to attend Tufts, there are a good amount of distribution, foundation, and major requirements you must fulfill in order to apply for graduation. Tufts has a heavy focus in the liberal arts because we believe that “an educated man or woman needs to not only have a knowledge of himself, but also to cultivate a working relationship with the world around him, with the legacy of the past, and with some vision of the future.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore we put an emphasis on learning another language/culture, writing, humanities, social sciences, maths,

---

<sup>7</sup> Tufts Bulletin 1971-72

<sup>8</sup> Tufts Bulletin 1971-72

<sup>9</sup> Tufts Bulletin 1971-72

natural sciences and as a student you have to complete an adequate amount of classes in each of these disciplines. If anyone is interested in learning more, you can read more about it in the Tufts Bulletin in the Admissions Office.

### **Medford/Somerville Relations:**

**Sam:** Now that you have gotten to know a little bit about what on campus and student life is like. I'm going to tell you about what the relationship between the students and neighborhood residents is like. It is very tense at this time. Tufts was planning to build a new dormitory on College Ave, in order to accommodate more residential students. However, our Medford and Somerville neighbors were very unhappy about it. They staged a protest against it and it is one of the reasons why there is still some tension between the residents and students despite Tufts being such a significant part of the community. Also, in the past few years the Tufts police have received an exorbitant amount of phone calls and complaints from neighborhood residents, which predominantly revolved around students parking their cars in their private driveways and the noise from parties.<sup>10</sup> Some students here seem to forget that there are real people living nearby and end up disturbing them by being rowdy college kids, which doesn't help change the communities perception of Tufts students nor rebuild our relationship with them.

### **Tufts as a Hub:**

**Sam:** However, despite that, here at Tufts we care not only about what is going on in our own bubble but what is going on in the world on a larger scale. Tufts is truly a very powerful and active hub when it comes to activism and standing up against injustice and inequality. There are

---

<sup>10</sup> The Observer:1975

a bunch of clubs and groups on campus that are centered around activism, due to the current political climate in the world. Many students have been partaking or organizing anti-war protests on campus. There has also been a large movement that supports the gay the black communities on campus. The majority of the student body is very liberal leaning and can truly dedicate themselves to a cause.

### **The Vietnam War/Nixon's Presidency**

**Madeleine:** As Sam mentioned, our campus is very activism focused. In the past few years a big part of political activism at Tufts has centered around Nixon's presidency and the Vietnam war. You can imagine it was a great relief to many when he finally left office two years ago. Almost all of campus identifies as democrats, so it can be hard for some of the more republican leaning students. Some students are annoyed by how anti-Nixon our community is, they see it as religiously glorifying a certain political stance and leaving no room for other opinions. It's almost as though our campus sanctifies democratic viewpoints, like a Temple for liberal ideas. Most speakers that come here to talk about Nixon or the war are in opposition. It can be hard to find a voice if you are dissenting to the popular opinion. Even though former president Hallowell said that it was "against the universities moral essence to oppose a political viewpoint", it seems that students didn't get that memo.<sup>11</sup>

**Madeleine:** I can sometimes see the annoyance, especially in the past few years with Nixon as president many political articles have been written in the Observer, almost none have favored his presidency.<sup>12</sup> Our campus, like many around the US has been very anti-war and very anti-Nixon. We have had student marches and rallies, petitions to stop the war, and strikes. On

---

<sup>11</sup> The Observer: April 29, 1972

<sup>12</sup> The Observer: February 16, 1973

one occasion there was even a fire bombing!<sup>13</sup> Here we are at the office that was bombed, Fletcher School's Dean Edmond Guillion's office. He believes that whoever did it was trying to kill him because of his pro-military in Vietnam stance. This happened a few years before I came to Tufts, and they still haven't found whoever did it. Many think that that it was because of the war but no one can be certain. One thing's for sure, nobody can say that Tufts students aren't passionate about what they believe in! For the most part though, this passion is harmless. We tend to air our grievances in the school newspaper and not by firebombing professors' offices.

**Madeleine:** During Nixon's presidency, students flooded the Observer with unflattering cartoon depictions of him, especially after his reelection in 1972. Many of the students also wrote pieces that showed their dissatisfaction with the ties that the administration had to the military. A big part of this dissatisfaction was with the administration's ties to the Navy. We used to have a program where ROTC students could take classes at Tufts but were financially supported by the Navy. By 1972 the Navy had stopped allowing their officers to take Tufts classes because of the hostility of the student body.<sup>14</sup> This is just one example of a tension between the traditional administration and the more progressive students.

### **Fraternities/Sororities**

**Madeleine:** Moving onwards, this house here is currently called Carpenter house. It used to house a fraternity that was forced to shut its doors in 1968. Currently, our campus has nine fraternities, but no sororities. The last sorority that we had on campus, Chi Omega, shut down in 1972. However, it is expected to come back to campus this year. In general, fraternities have struggled in the past decade. During the sixties they fought against students and parts of the

---

<sup>13</sup> The Observer: September 14, 1973

<sup>14</sup> The Observer: February 25, 1972

administration who alleged that they had discriminatory practices against minorities. A few years ago, many of them struggled financially, and had to ask fraternity alumni for monetary donations.<sup>15</sup>

**Madeleine:** However, this year, us students seem to think that Greek life is coming back. The return of Chi Omega this year, as well as the opening of an all-black fraternity last year seem to be opening up some doors. One of our fraternities, DTD, also started a popular “little sister” program a few years ago, which offers female students the “opportunity to experience brotherhood”.<sup>16</sup> However there has also been a lot of negative press for fraternities. A few have been accused of sexism and sexual misconduct in the past few years. In 1972, a group of women that called themselves WITCHes (Women’s International Conspiracy from Hell) tore down a poster of a scantily clad woman at DU and replaced it with an anti-sexism sign.<sup>17</sup> This group also alleged that the “little sister” program was a scam, and that DTD had paid a member of the program to come to their house party and strip. This allegation lead to some back and forth in the student newspaper, the Observer, between little sister members defending the program at members of the WITCHes.<sup>18</sup>

**Madeleine:** Some of the brothers also took to the newspaper to defend their frats, they want people to “give frats a chance”.<sup>19</sup> They think that the negative views on fraternities has a way of indoctrinating the incoming class into thinking that they shouldn’t join.

### **More on Women’s Issues**

---

<sup>15</sup> Miller, 1986

<sup>16</sup> The Observer: October 27, 1972

<sup>17</sup> The Observer: November 3, 1972

<sup>18</sup> The Observer: November 10, 1972

<sup>19</sup> The Observer: March 22, 1974

**Madeleine:** Women's issues such as these are nothing new on Tufts' campus. We finally received a women's center in 1972 when TCU gave it a \$700 dollar budget, almost 200 dollars more than the tufts cheerleaders! The Tufts University Abortion Action Coalition shared room space with the women's center when it started out in the basement of miller, but it now has its own space in Curtis hall. With the introduction of Title IX into law in 1972, it is no surprise that our campus was quick to reflect the shifting national attitude toward equality. Activism also reflected the huge national interest in the outcome of Roe v. Wade back in 1973.

**Madeleine:** Abortion action became a big topic of debate in the wake of that supreme court decision and there are often events around campus that are associated with those efforts. The Abortion Action Coalition commonly presents films in Barnum that are open to all students in order to help educate about women's issues and why abortion rights are so important. If you have the chance to visit again while school is in session, you should check these out! Women on this campus are also proud of the "Women's Community School" that was established by the Women's Center last year. It was founded to train women for typically male-dominated career paths. Women are also encouraged to talk about their health and sexual consciousness with a hired coordinator and last year a rape collective was formed through the center.

**Madeleine:** General Tufts faculty have also begun to care more about women's issues, with more faculty speaking up about the inequalities they perceive from the administration. The Observer began publishing articles about pay disparity a few years ago, in 1972 it was estimated that female professors made between 3000-5000 dollars less than male faculty each year, but now the disparity might be even greater.<sup>20</sup> Over half of women staff who responded to an

---

<sup>20</sup> November 10, 1972



anonymous survey a few a few years ago did not think they were receiving equal pay for equal work. In 1973, two of our high profile female faculty decided to speak up.

**Madeleine:** Those two women were Nancy Milburn, dean of Jackson College and Kathryn McCarthy, the provost.<sup>21</sup> In fact, Kathryn McCarthy is our school's first woman provost! It's really a huge step for equality at Tufts. At a forum three years ago they talked about how only 14% of full time professors were women. A little later that same year, Tufts was sued by two professors for sex discrimination. Professor White and Professor Joost alleged that Tufts has discriminatory hiring and tenure practices. It was the first lawsuit of its kind brought against the university, and eventually a few years ago they won their case. During that same time, another professor was awarded 6000 dollars from the university after she sued them for allegations of salary disparity. In general, our student body has supported the efforts of these women to have their work taken seriously as equal to that of the male faculty.

**Madeleine:** A new issue that us women have been tackling is sports equality, we know our Title IX rights! Up until last year we had to fund our own sports teams, can you believe it! And the boys get so much monetary help from the school. Really its thanks to Dawn, the field hockey coach. She encouraged the girls to speak up and lead the struggle against the administration. Tufts has finally agreed to start giving women's teams funding from the school.

### **Student Activism & Gay Community Forms**

**Sonia:** To build on the sense of budding activism on our campus, an important tension that Tufts has been facing recently is the tension of the traditional past vs. the progressive future. This can be applied to the social activism and social change occurring on campus and the coming

---

<sup>21</sup> March 23, 1973

of Jean Mayer and his plans to transform the school which I will go into later in our tour. This tension can also be applied to movements made within the university in regard to race, gender, and sexuality found on campus. Overall Tufts has become a more accepting place for students with a wider variety of identities.

Student activism has proven to be successful in moving Tufts towards more progressive values. In 1973, students in the African American society and others protested against the school hiring a construction company with racist hiring practices to build a new dorm. They were actually able to reach a deal with the university which shows that administration actually does put value to student concerns.

Additionally new to Tufts is the gay community which formed in 1972. This is the first official gay organization on campus and although it includes both men and women, the term “lesbian” is considered too radical to be in the group’s name. The gay community takes many steps to fight for their rights and promote acceptance across campus. They occasionally receive threats and harassment from peers but continue to grow every year. These new communities forming act as an incubator in that they produce and cultivate various identities that will impact these students in their adult lives. As Tufts continues to move from exclusive traditions to the progressive formation of groups for underrepresented identities, the school is reflecting the contradiction of tradition vs. change.

### **The Great Barnum Fire**

**Sonia:** Switching gears, another recent hot topic event on campus is the great Barnum fire that occurred just last year in 1975. Tufts is currently still dealing with the after effects of the fire that left the building burned to the ground. The electrical fire due to faulty wiring occurring

in April of last year resulted in countless research labs lost in the ashes as Barnum was used as the science center. Many professors and students lost years worth of research and expensive lab equipment. Also burned to the ground was the famous original Tufts mascot Jumbo which was famously donated by P.T. Barnum in 1889. Thankfully, the fire left no one hurt, but it did reflect well on the financial issues that Tufts was then and currently still is facing. This fire was the thirteenth fire in eleven years. The university clearly is having issues with being able to prioritize building maintenance mostly because it just doesn't have enough resources. Tufts currently acts as a university that doesn't prioritize fundraising but still tries to keep up with the top tier research universities in America. Yet, here the Barnum fire found the school with a huge chunk of their important science research material reduced to nothing but ashes. Interestingly enough, activism and the great Barnum fire can be seen tied together in the story of biology professor Emeritus Saul Slapikoff. Slapikoff was there as the fire blazed on and watched as his career works were burning to the ground. He was an activist against the Vietnam War and had been doing research on Agent Orange. The professor actually had multiple brands of pure dioxin, the main ingredient of Agent Orange, in his fume hood in the basement of Barnum. This was an extremely dangerous poison that could easily have caused a lot of chemical damage; thankfully, Slapikoff and the fire chief were able to both go together into the burning science building and rescue the dioxin, stopping a potential further catastrophe.

The building is set to reopen later this year. Having such a centralized building with our school's mascot in it burn to the ground was most certainly a huge low point in Tufts' history to date. At the time last year, it felt a little bit like a temple--a place that was held as pure and central to the university-- had been destroyed. This tension between the past being destroyed in

flames and new changes coming to the university reflect a key contradiction found recently between tradition and progressive change. However, many saw this fire as a symbolic rebirth out of the destruction with a new president this year, and hope for more stability in the university's financial troubles.

### **Hiring Jean Mayer**

**Sonia:** So the buzz of the campus on this current day is that just yesterday, Jean Mayer officially assumed the role of Tufts University president. This move is sure to have huge impacts on the school as Mayer is a very different kind of man and leader than the previous Tufts presidents. Historically the trustees would not hire presidents who wanted to ask for money or who were interested in substantial fundraising. The former president, Burton Hallowell had dealt with huge deficits as Tufts president since 1967 and led the university as it continued to fall further behind in the world of elite institutions. A consulting firm came in to look at how Tufts could improve financially and found that the school had very limited fundraising potential and a tremendous amount of needs. Hallowell resigned last year in 1975. The trustees now needed to find someone new for the job, and they sifted through over 200 names submitted. For the first time, Tufts allowed student representatives to have a say on the committee to pick the new president.<sup>22</sup> The trustees then looked to hire the Provost of Johns Hopkins Harry Woolf, who would decline the offer eight days later. Finally, the board would look to their second choice, a man who had been denied from the job twice before, Jean Mayer. Mayer had very little in common with his predecessors. Before assuming his presidency he was a professor of nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health. He is known for being an adventurous, charismatic, and

---

<sup>22</sup> Miller, 1986

charming man.<sup>23</sup> The Tufts community expects him to bring a new energy to the school; whether this will prove positive or negative in the long run is yet to be discovered. The tension of holding onto tradition vs. taking risks of potential innovation are evident in the decision to hire Mayer. The current talk around campus is that Mayer has big plans to transform the University into a top elite school; these dreams are pretty unheard of previously at Tufts, no one really thinks of the school as one that can be a top university. Personally, I'm not sure if Mayer will be able to accomplish all that he plans. He may be reaching too high. However, I do foresee his presidency potentially producing a Tufts education that acts as a sieve in filtering out prospective students who aren't wealthy or from elite upbringings. Jean Mayer's presidency is sure to be influential on the Tufts community, and we, as members of this community, are anxiously awaiting in anticipation for what is to come.

That concludes our campus tour. We hope it was enjoyable and informative and of course that you've decided to apply to Tufts in the fall!

---

<sup>23</sup> Gittleman 20, 2004

## References

1970. *The Observer*
1972. *The Observer*, February 25.
1972. *The Observer*, April 29.
1972. "WITCHes Brew: DU Sexism Charged." *The Observer*, November 3.
1973. *The Observer*, February 16.
1973. *The Observer*, September 14.
1973. Tufts University. Digital Collections and Archives. Medford, MA. Retrieved October 16, 2017 (<https://sites.tufts.edu/tuftsyearbooks/files/2016/11/eventLewisHall.jpg>)
- 1973 – 100 Years of Tufts Yearbooks. Retrieved October 17, 2017 (<https://sites.tufts.edu/tuftsyearbooks/1973-2/>)
1975. Tufts University Digital Collections and Archives. Medford, MA. Retrieved October 16, 2017 (<http://hdl.handle.net/10427/7719>)
1975. *The Observer*
- Baer, Jonathan. April 14 1975. Tufts University. Digital Collections and Archives. Medford, MA. Retrieved October 16, 2017 (<http://now.tufts.edu/articles/great-barnum-fire-oral-history>)
- Dixon, Linda J. 1979. *High on the Hill*. Tufts Alumni Council.
- Fletcher Dean Edmund Gullion's office bombed to protest University's military ties to Vietnam War, March 1971*. Retrieved October 10, 2017 (<http://hdl.handle.net/10427/11826>).
- Fitts, James. 1974. "Frats: give them a chance." *The Observer*, March 22, 14.
- Gittleman, Sol. 2004. *An Entrepreneurial University*. Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England
- Grant, Spencer. 1973. Tufts University. Digital Collections and Archives. Medford, MA. Retrieved October 16, 2017 (<http://hdl.handle.net/10427/008262>)

- Hutchinson, Karen. 1972. "Free the WITCHes : 'Little Sister' speaks." *The Observer*, November 10.
- Miller, Russell. 1986. *Light on the Hill, Volume Two* . Cambridge, Ma: MassMarket Books.
- Our History | Tufts Student Services*. Retrieved October 17, 2017  
(<http://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/living-campus/group-six/womens-center/about-us/our-history>)
- Peller, Alicia. 1973. "Deans discuss women's status." *The Observer*, March 23.
- Phi Epsilon Pi Fraternity*. 1941. Retrieved October 10, 2017  
(<http://hdl.handle.net/10427/47762>).
- Real Admiral J.C. Wylie addresses Tufts Naval ROTC aboard USS Constitution, 1969*. Retrieved October 10, 2017 (<http://hdl.handle.net/10427/928>).
- Somerville Police at Student Protest*. 1969. Tufts University. Digital Collections and Archives. Medford, MA.
- Storrs, F. (2017). *The Great Barnum Fire: An Oral History*. [online] Tufts Now. Available at: <http://now.tufts.edu/articles/great-barnum-fire-oral-history> [Accessed 17 Oct. 2017].
- Students marching in protest of Vietnam War*. 1969. Tufts University. Digital Collections and Archives. Medford, MA
- Tufts Field Hockey Team, 1975*. Retrieved October 10, 2017 (<http://hdl.handle.net/10427/4821>).
- View of Miner Hall and Curtis Hall from Anderson Hall, 1965*. Retrieved October 10, 2017  
(<http://hdl.handle.net/10427/001762>).