

## The *Other* Discussion Group: The Pub Club

**R**OCKBRIDGE is the home of two extremely serious intellectual societies whose members are expected to spend months learning and writing well-organized, well-argued papers about important topics, both contemporary and historical. The two clubs are the Fortnightly founded in 1899, with membership limited to men, and the Ignorance, 1904, for women. Both thrive today and remain true to their original purposes, and more than a few papers from each have found their way into print elsewhere (including this site's sibling online publication, *Rockbridge Epilogues*).

Those citadels of scholarship left a gap, however, between the truly serious men and women of Rockbridge and the rest of us, and in 1945 that vacuum came to be filled by a third discussion club, which had less scholarly aspirations: The Pub Club. Interestingly, more than a few members of the Fortnightly were also members of the Pub. One can serve two masters, it seems.

This informal history of the Pub Club has no attribution. It does, however, have the ring of authenticity.

*Pub Club's logo in the 1970s*



11 May 1966

### THE PUB CLUB

A Record of 21 Years of Service  
To The Intellectual World

**F**OUNDED August 16, 1945, at the home of Col. R. E. Dixon, those present being Maj. C. C. Tutwiler, Dr. Rowland Nelson, Mr. Fred Fitzgerald, Dr. M. C. Bell, and Maj. Arthur Lipscomb Jr. Others now nobly supporting the tradition: Col. Gilliam, Dr. Ford, Mr. Clayton, Dr. Light, Col. Morrison, Dr. Brush, Col. Barksdale

### Decisions

**T**HE CLUB will be composed of nine members, including the above named, and three additional members to be elected.

**Purpose:** Members propose to meet periodically to converse, debate, and argue on topics of interest to the group; to exchange information and misinformation, views, and prejudices with utmost abandon on any subject of depth and significance which the group may select; but to refrain to the very extent of their abilities from – at any meeting – descending to the level of local trivia and bridge table gossip. To these noble purposes, they solemnly dedicate their hearts, their intellects, and their vocal chords.

**Conduct of Meetings:** All meetings are to be informal. No prepared papers are to be read, no formal speeches will be made. There will be no chairman. Questions of any sort will be in order at any time, by any member. At each meeting, the subject of discussion of the next meeting will be selected. Discussion is not necessarily confined to the subject selected, however. Also, at each meeting, the host for the next meeting will be selected.

**Guests:** Members may bring guests to meetings. The host should be notified as far in advance as possible of the anticipated number of guests.

THE BOMB, VMI YEARBOOK, 1955

**Guest of Honor:** The club may select for any meeting a guest of honor to lead the discussion, the intention being that a guest of honor have special knowledge of the subject discussed. The guest of honor will NOT be expected to make a talk or read a paper; he will merely participate in the discussion and answer questions at his pleasure.

**Host:** The Host will be expected to take all steps necessary to see that all club members and any guests



*Raymond E. Dixon, chairman of the VMI English department, 1919-55, and founding host of the Pub Club*

are informed as to place and time of meeting. The host also will keep the Record Book after his meeting, place in it some pertinent data about his meeting, and turn the book over to the new host at the next meeting.

**Refreshments:** The host may serve refreshments provided the alcoholic content be not such as might endanger the accurate transmission of information among the club members or wash away the intellectual foundations of the discussion.

**SOME TOPICS**

The Returning Veteran	Who Was the Greatest American?	Has there been a decline in moral values?	Athletics & Education
International Relations in the Pacific	Relations with Russia	The Problem of Pain	Beauty
The Atomic Bomb	Congressional	Conditions in England	Communist College Professors
Trial of German War Criminals	Investigative Committees	Does the Church justify itself?	Evidence of Progress
What is a gentleman?	Universal Military Training	Extra-sensory perception	Prospects for the Future
War, sex, and the Negro problem	Modern Art	The Kinsey Report	The Welfare State
What is Virtue?	Segregation in Colleges	Culture vs. democracy	Economic Consequences of the World Situation