

'Animal House' premieres in Portland

'A moosehead with a ski pole up its nostril'

By JOCK HATFIELD
Of the Emerald

There may be no point in re-viewing Animal House, which pre-viewed in Portland Saturday night. Good or bad, everyone in Eugene is bound to go see it anyway, if only to shout yippie every time a piece of Eugene or a friend or the campus appears on the screen.

Universal filmed Animal House here last fall. The local media, having nothing better to do, covered it religiously. The crew hired 4,623 extras, mostly from this area. Filming took place all over campus, in some Eugene locations and on top of Skinner's butte. The Universal crew was a pretentious lot. They look better on film than in person.

During the filming the press person, a scrambled egg named Saul Kahn, tried to give the impression through Eugene papers that Animal House was a clean-cut, wholesome movie. But in spite of Kahn, Director John Landis stuck in plenty of tits, "eat me's" and dildoes.

As a movie, Animal House is heavy-handed, tasteless and irreverent — well worth seeing. It has some great racial slurs and several top sex jokes.

It tells the story of a fraternity that owns, among other things, a moosehead with a ski pole up its nostril, a screw room and a mermaid with goldfish bowls for gazongas. This fraternity rebels against this and that and has an existentialist's good time of it.

The movie has its high points: for example when Otter, a frat member, goes to pick up a blind date and discovers she was killed in pottery class when her kiln blew up. Hee, hee, hee. Or when the horse dies in the Dean's office and has to be cut up with a chain saw.

Animal House is a walk down nostalgia lane.

The University does a great job of playing the pretentious, over-rated Faber college. It's easy to see why they selected us.

The characters of Animal House are wonderfully flat.

John Belushi does a fine job of hopping around and contorting his face.

Tim Matheson, of Walt Disney fame, is revolting as Otter.

Donald Sutherland, as a professor, is blah.

Doug Kenney, who also helped write the Animal House script, gives an inspired performance of the brain damaged stork. He was made for the role.

Steve First, as Flounder, was my favorite. I identify with Flounder. My only regret is that the scene where he tells about the dog he once flushed down the toilet, Fluffy, was cut.

Cottage Grove residents did a good job of running amok in the parade scene, but they had too much fun doing it. In one scene where they are supposed to be fleeing in terror from a deathmobile, several of them are cracking up.

The Portland theater hosting the preview showed American Graffiti first. This was a wise move. It makes Animal House look good in comparison. Animal House is supposed to be a satire on nostalgic 60s movies. If it were shown with The Omen, audiences might get the wrong idea.

The Portland audience, composed mostly of extras, laughed in all the right spots and gave the movie rousing recommendations. Animal House will open in Eugene on August 26. Extras hoping to find themselves in the movie are advised to bring a magnifying glass and tweezers.

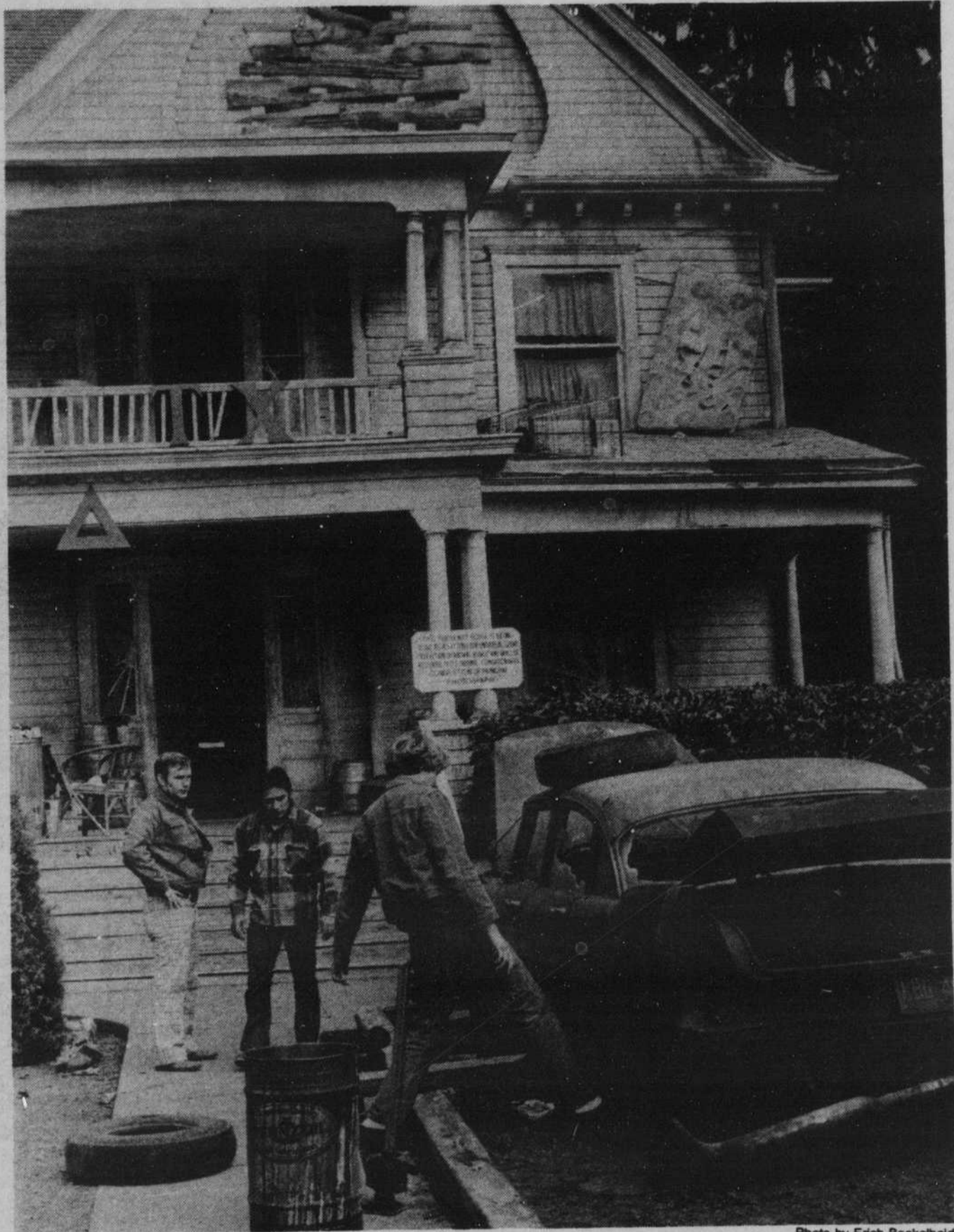


Photo by Erich Boekelheide

The Animal House crew puts the finishing touches on the demolition of the "Delta" fraternity, one of the sites of the National Lampoon movie. Filmed in Eugene and Cottage Grove late last fall, Animal House will open here August 26.



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