



Photos by Dennis Hickok

A little of "Animal House" came to Eugene Friday night with a toga party at the Lane County Fairgrounds. Approximately 500 persons wrapped in sheets were on hand. A special performance by Tony Smith of "Otis Day and Knights" fame highlighted the evening.



The toga turnout was low, but those who came went

By JOCK HATFIELD
Of the Emerald

As toga parties go, Friday night's at the Lane County Fairgrounds wasn't a record breaker. It didn't make money, and there were no arrests.

"Eugene is burnt out on Animal House," said coordinator Carl Bryant. "We expected 1,000 or 1,200 people. But those who came went bonkers."

In all, 500 toga-wearers showed up, wearing varied toga fashions. Some wore sheets and bedspreads, with branches and twigs as accessories. Others wore rugs. One couple wore sheets with big red hats, and claimed to be running for pope.

Later in the evening this couple unrolled their white masks and admitted themselves to be Ku Klux Klansmen.

"No one guessed," said the Klansman. "We finally showed our masks to some Blacks over there and they got a big kick out of it."

"We've got some great sexual degenerates here," said another dancer. "Everyone came here to look at other people in sheets."

Bonkers

One reporter moved among the toga dancers trying to make historical comparisons between the toga parties of today and the activism of the 1960's, or vice versa. However, most of the participants were too drunk to offer historical perspective.

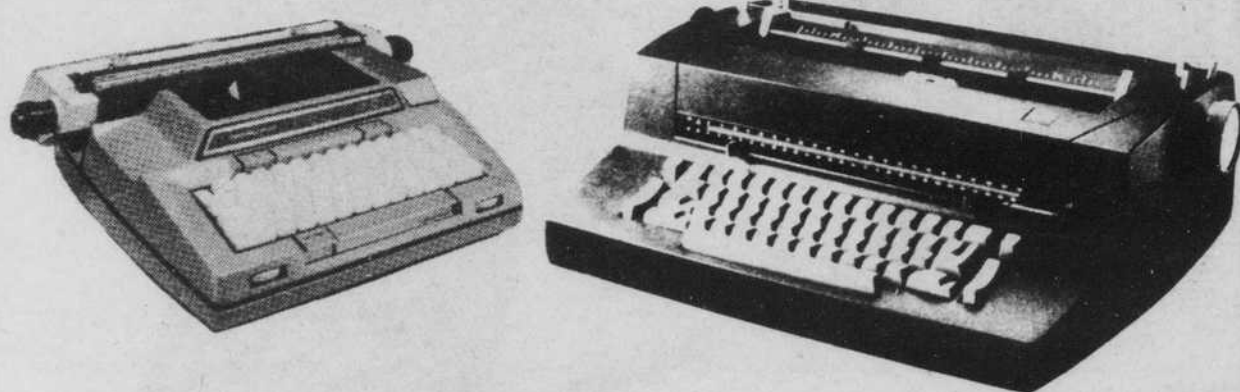
At one point Tony Smith, of "Otis Day and the Knights" fame, sang the toga song from Animal House, causing numerous epileptic attacks. Later, 300 togaed people joined to dance to the band's version of "shout."

The party was one of 30 Universal Studios-sponsored toga dances, calculated to start an artificial toga trend. In Eugene, enthusiasm wasn't what Universal expected. "We lost about \$500 on it," says Bryant. "Animal House is bigger in Portland now than it is here. I'd say that about one eighth of the people who came were from Portland."

There were no sexual incidents or arrests, according to Pete McGregor, who provided the beer from the Paddock, and helped watch the crowd.

One toga-wearer expressed embarrassment that there weren't more participants early in the evening "We don't have enough people here to do anything really weird," he said.

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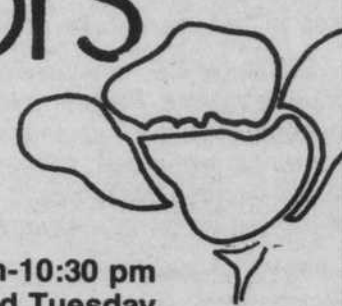
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