

B.A.C.H. FOLKLORE

(probably written in 1981, scanned, minus missing appendix, 2002 -wgh)

To determine what kind of folklore exists in the three cooperative houses, and how it is transmitted, we collected stories that have been passed down in the oral tradition, and through studying written material (e.g. old files, short stories, bathroom graffiti). The oral traditions were gathered by interviewing current house members, contacting old house members who are still in the Providence area, and by mailing a request for information to all known old B.A.C.H. members who no longer live in the Providence area. The written material was salvaged from the B.A.C.H. files and copied off the bathroom walls.

MILLHOUSE MYTHOLOGY:

I. The Clamshell Incidence

Approximately six Carberry residents, laden with buckets of water, made a sneak attack on a Millhouse dinner (Fall, 1975)- though the aggressors were quickly repulsed by soybean casserole (at grievous expense to nearby walls and furniture), a retaliation was planned for the next evening. As luck would have it, Millhouse was having steamers (clams) the next night, so armed with clam water and empty shells, and determined to make "the world safe for dinner", they took Carberry completely by surprise (P.O.W. Peter Gosse1in, B.A.C.H. coordinator). Millhouse returned to the scene with mops and sponges, and purportedly left it cleaner than before they attacked.

2. The Kite (approximately 19 lbs., surface area: 64 feet²)

The large and impressive box kite which hangs in the Millhouse living room, is rumored to have flown once, over Aldrich-Dexter field, supported by seven standard box kites and launched on winch and cable from the back of a pick-up truck (communication with the person who built the kite casts suspicion on this story, however; he claims that it never flew)

3. Elias and Gino

Elias still stops by Millhouse occasionally with various items for sale, such as juicers', waffle irons, and crates of green peppers (usually stolen from Carberry), and is frequently seen in other corners of the community (like the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Bank) -his presence seems to keep the legend alive. He is well known for his appearance (he never takes his cap off and is usually in a leopard skin loin cloth with bells and belts draped over an African shirt. At the back of his head he used to have a "power knot" of hair which is rumored to have been cut by the police when he was arrested. Jon Greenburg, an old house member, once touched the power knot, and Elias performed a half hour ceremony which closely resembled some sort of exorcism). He is also noted for his unique and un-ending depth of conversation. Elias' sidekick, Gino (a severely weathered Vietnam vet) is remembered only by older members of the house. Gino and his vegetarian dog, Uhuru (as in Star Trek) are no longer around.

4. Gotta Match

Second floor bathroom, east side graffiti, such as:

O.J. Simpson: "Gotta match, Groucho?"

Groucho Marx: "Sure,O.J., your fake and my ash."

Neil Young: "Gotta match, Ali?"

Muhammed Ali : "Sho' do, my fist and your hearse."

5. Great Fire of '72

A fire caused by a stray bottle rocket lodged in the rafters of the Millhouse attic, accumulating approximately \$2,000 in fire damages to the attic and third floor bathroom ceiling. Two particular episodes achieved legendary status:(1) After the installation of a \$15,000 fire alarm system the summer before, someone ended up calling the Fire Department and (2) the Fire Department went up the wrong staircase (Millhouse is a two-family house, which has symmetrical east-west sides and staircases) and ended up dragging hoses through the illegal "Kenneth J. "Turk" Richien Memorial Phone Lounge" (a carpeted area in the center of the third floor which connects the two sides of the house and is a long-standing fire code violation).

6. Green Dragon

The Millhouse car which turned a net profit of \$15. It was purchased in 1972 for ten dollars, and served for several years almost maintenance free (although in its last year and a- half it ran up a couple hundred dollars in repairs and impoundment fees). It was finally sold. for slag in the spring of 1977 for \$25, which was squandered on cheap liquor to drown the sorrows .

7. The Halloween Party

An annual ritual in which sacrifices are prepared and made in the form of kegs, food (hopefully popcorn and not Sunday's dinner) and stereo components, and the doors are flung open to the Brown community.

8. Loft Improvement

The movement to leave every room With a sleeping loft and a varnished floor (the former is one-half successful and the later totally successful, as of the spring of 1980).

9. Meaties and Sweeties

Habitual ingestor of animal protein and sucrose (respectively) - traditionally, the overbearing (if not overwhelming) majority in the determination of the Millhouse diet. Their staunch opponents are the "veggies," ingestors of soybean casserole and granola.

10. Leroy (Eldridge) Millhouse

Patron saint of Millhouse, signer of correspondence from former residents to the house, and legal resident, according to the phone book. He is also known for his correspondence with the CIA (see Appendix }.

11. The Fish Incident

In the Spring of 1976, a mysterious package arrived at Millhouse I carefully wrapped and marked "Do Not Open Until Easter." It was refrigerated and after several days, much suspicion and nose-twitching, the package was opened to reveal fish heads and a loving note from Josiah Carberry himself .

12. The Fish

A custom which is no longer with us, and is not to be confused with the fish incident. It became somewhat of a tradition to unfreeze a large fish for the purpose of a joke or revenge -it often mysteriously appeared in someone's closet, or under their pillow.

13. Pulling People Under the Table

This is a somewhat secret tradition carried on by the older members of the house (last occurrence was in the spring of '73), usually associated with an excellent dinner. One person feels himself being pulled under the table, supposedly by Xam the Dog (see 17. Xam the Dog), and they begin pulling others under - much chaos and craziness surrounds the event.

14. The Letter to Richard M. Nixon

Legendary item of correspondence dating from the founding of the co-ops, addressed to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C., and inviting all residents therein to the "opening and dedication ceremony of new Ivy League residence hall in the name of the President of the United States " No copies of the original letter or politely declining reply from Ron Ziegler have been found.

15 Millhouse Recipes

.A small sample of Millhouse cuisine which has attained notoriety includes Yogurt with Fruit, Sour Dean Rusk, Roast Pterodactyl, Yogurt with Fruit, Chocolate Death, Schubert Fizz, Cheese-Cutter Casserole, Yogurt with Fruit, Couscous Surprise, Chicken Tetra-Chloride, Boiled Gunga Dinner and Yogurt with Fruit.

16. The Mazola Incident

A 501b. block of shortening was accidentally purchased from Calise, and a sizable portion as melted down during a Halloween party and used along with a black light, a large piece of plastic, and an undisclosed number of people on the waterbed -David Ray, esteemed member of Millhouse for three years, and noted for his crazy exploits and notices, was the suspected instigator. Nothing came of it, however and it is referred to as the "orgy that never came off."

17. Xam the Dog (one-half husky, one-half golden retriever, and all dog)

The oldest continuous member of Millhouse (six years to date)- he still gets his tail caught in the fire doors, chases pieces of lint and bottle caps, and lives for late night encounters with the food in the kitchen.

18. Peggy Sue

Piglet who was a three week resident in the spring of 1979 - the only known animal that Xam the Dog couldn't deal with. She was taken away by a farmer early one Sunday morning after a house member finally decided (in a fit of irrationality) that he could not live with a pig (even a pig as little as Peggy Sue). The "Pig Room," her abode during her brief stay, remains in her memory.