

Newcomers' Skit      January 29, 1947

Title -- Life At Temporary Terrace

Script -- Mrs. Arthur W. Burks

Narrator -- Mrs. H. T. Ballantine, Jr.

Participants --

Mrs. G. H. Bauer  
Mrs. Harry Freund  
Mrs. Brooks Lockhart  
Mrs. Edward Lirette  
Mrs. Edward Daseler  
Mrs. Gerald Cooper  
Mrs. Warren Chase  
Mrs. ~~Joseph~~ Hartsock  
Mrs. Robert Niccells  
Mrs. F. B. Kimball  
Mrs. Robert Cameron  
Mrs. John Carey  
Mrs. R. C. Schneider

## LIFE AT TEMPORARY TERRACE

Narrator enters and takes her place in a chair in front of the curtain to one side. She carries a sign, 'Narrator,' and her script in a brief-case. She adjusts herself in her chair, draws out her script, and begins to read to the audience.

Narrator: Everybody knows that we are gathered here this afternoon to commemorate the founding of the Faculty Women's Club twenty-five years ago. (Pause -- looks up at audience) Now not all of us have been with the club these twenty-five years! But we cherish the hope that when we have been here for twenty-five years, we will be among those fortunate few who live in structures known as -- as -- as Houses, I believe they're called.

A Prop runs across the stage with a sign, 'House,' pursued by another Prop with a sign, 'Newcomer,' both stopping at the same moment to show their signs to the audience.

Narrator: This afternoon the Newcomers' Section has prepared for your Abusement a skit entitled, 'Life at Temporary Terrace!'

The Time (alarm clock rings off-stage):  
Fall, 1946.

The Place (Michigan colors, blue and gold, are carried across the stage by two Props):  
Ye Oldie U of Mich!

The Event (Signs are carried across the stage by ten Props in succession:

No Dogs  
No Cats  
No Parrots  
No Alligators  
No Elephants  
No Children (Prop dressed to appear pregnant)  
No Vacancies  
No Deliveries  
No !!!  
I SAID NO !! )

The Result: Life at Temporary Terrace!

SCENE I.

Narrator: Our first scene is called, 'The Disillusioned Bride.'

Bride, who is dressed in an afternoon dress, with a ~~veil~~ to designate bride, steps out through curtain. She holds sign, 'Disillusion.' Is shy, downcast.

Narrator: Many a young woman has married a professor with the dream in her heart of a spacious white colonial just off campus. It is not easy for her to adjust to her neighbors in the closet next door, who sneak over each night and put their children to be in her kitchen window-box.

Narrator (as bride changes her sign to read, 'Consolation'): But she consoles herself with the observation that some couples are in a worse plight than she and the professor. Tents and trailers have been reserved for graduate students! And some of the undergraduate couples make their homes in canoes on the Huron River!

Narrator (as Prop removes bride's veil and bride changes her sign to read, 'Hope'): And then there is always the hope that at some future date perhaps the neighbors in the closet will move away, and she and the professor can hang up their clothes and in her kitchen window-box have their ~~own~~ own -- geraniums planted!

SCENE II.

Narrator: Our second scene is entitled, 'Doubling Up.' We treat the problem of those newcomers who live on a communal basis with three or four or five or seven or twelve other couples in one small converted house. In most cases, each couple has its own private living-bedroom, separated by paper partitions from other couples. The bathroom and kitchen are shared by all.

Curtain rises on two scenes. A large sign at the left side of the stage reads, 'Bawth.' There are four men in line for the bathroom. One is reading a huge book. One is scribbling notes on a tablet. A third is dressed in tennis shorts and holds a tennis racket in one hand. The fourth is wearing a heavy overcoat.

On the right side of the stage is a sign which reads, 'Kitchen.' There is a Prop bent over to resemble a coal stove (covered with black cloth and having a sign, 'Coal Stove,' pinned on her). There are four women rushing madly about the kitchen, wearing aprons and carrying brooms and kettles. One woman wears tennis shorts. Another wears a fur coat, with her apron tied over it.

Narrator: A few words of explanation are in order for those who have never visited a communal-living home. Of course these men to our left are waiting for their turns in the bathroom.

Here a few words from 'Clementine' are heard from behind the 'Bawth' sign.

Narrator: Now that gentleman with the tennis-racket -- Mr. A., we'll call him --

Mr. A. shows sign, 'A.'

Narrator: --- Mr. A lives in the room just above the converted oil furnace! He is comfortable in summer sports wear!

Narrator: And that gentleman just behind him -- we'll call him Mr. B. --

Mr. B. shows sign, 'B.'

Narrator: -- Mr. B. lives in a room to which it has not yet proved possible to run a hot-air pipe from the furnace below Mr. A.! Mr. B. finds he is most comfortable in his winter overcoat.

Narrator: And those first two gentlemen are now arguing --

Here the first two begin to bicker, while a few more notes are heard from the bathroom.

Narrator: -- are ~~not~~ arguing about whose turn it is to put the next roll of Powder-Room Tissue in the communal bathroom.

Narrator: New here on the right we have the kitchen, with its very trying coal-stove. (Stove, bent over with back to audience, takes two steps toward the front of the stage) This coal-stove, it seems, was happy out in Pete's Junk Yard, before society chose to bring it back into town and install it in Temporary Terrace. Here endless abuse is heaped upon it.

One of the housewives kicks the stove.

Narrator: Of course you have no difficulty in finding Mr. A..

The woman in tennis shorts shows a sign, 'A.'

Narrator: Nor Mrs. B..

The woman in the fur coat turns to show sign, 'B.'

Narrator: And you might guess that those two women are arguing --

Here two women argue and point to the coal-stove.

Narrator: -- are arguing about whose turn it is to wash the coal-stove!

CURTAIN

SCENE III.

Narrator: For our third and last scene this afternoon we turn to the difficulties of another newcomer. Once our housewife has settled down to daily living at Temporary Terrace, innumerable problems arise. For lack of space her husband is keeping his books in the kitchen sink, and though that's very convenient for him, the problem of washing dishes is constantly facing the housewife.

Narrator: Another grave problem is the laundry situation. We call our last scene, 'Laundry Troubles.'

Curtain rises on a young housewife, bare-footed and wearing a raincoat. She stands before a table, on which there are a small basin, a small tea-kettle, a wash-board, and a bar of soap. Surrounding her on the floor are heaps of clothes to be washed, and she is working hard at the wash-board and basin. She occasionally reaches down to one stack of clothes and picks up an article to wash it.

Narrator: This unfortunate housewife has been postponing her washing week after week, because of certain difficulties. Now she finds she simply must get this washing done, for her friends are beginning to make remarks about her wearing that same old Raincoat day after day!

Narrator: One difficulty is that if the professor has shaved this week there will be no running hot water.

A Prop runs across the stage, showing sign, 'Hot Water,' and escapes the housewife.

Narrator: Then of course there is the difficulty of washing in such a small tub.

The housewife reaches down and picks up a sheet, one end of which she begins to wash out in the small basin.

Narrator: And then there is the problem of procuring Soap! New housewives in Ann Arbor have found it a very slippery business to get their hands on this and other under-the-counter items this fall.

Here the housewife reaches for the soap on her table and the bar slips from her hands onto the floor. A Prop comes scooting out and steals it and runs off the stage with it.

Narrator: In desperation, this housewife decides to put off her laundry until next week!

The housewife throws up her hands in despair. Then she begins to pick up the heaps of clothes. And as she picks up a particular suit of long red underwear, it gets up and runs off the stage ahead of her!

FINAL CURTAIN