

John J. Rhodes

Kansas State '38

Oxford Cup Roll N° 019

The Honorable John J. Rhodes, *Kansas State '38*, is no stranger to alumni and undergraduates alike in Beta Theta Pi. His life has been a reflection of all that we portray in our magazine and in public discussion under the banner "Worthy of the Highest". Indeed, he personifies that concept.

A native of Council Grove, Kansas, he was president and Convention delegate from his chapter, later serving as vice president and then president of the General Fraternity.

A graduate of Harvard Law School, John retired from active military service after World War II as a Lt. colonel and from the reserves as a full colonel.

The first Republican Congressman ever elected by Arizona in 1952, he served for 30 years. In all, he served 15 consecutive terms, the longest House of Representatives tenure in Arizona's history.

When Gerald Ford became Vice President in 1973, John succeeded him as House Minority Leader, a post he held for ten years. He chaired the Republican Platform Committee in 1972 and was the party's Permanent Convention Chairman in 1976 and again in 1980.

Prior to his election to the top Republican Leadership post, he served for nine years as chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee. He is a former member of the Committees on Appropriations, Rules, Education and Labor, and Interior and Insular Affairs. He was permanent chairman of the Republican National Conventions in 1976 and 1980 and served as chairman of of the 1972 convention's Platform Committee.

John is the author of *The Futile System*, a book about how the legislative process suffered during nearly 40 years of one-party control. His most recent book is *I was there*, which traces his 30 years in Congress.

Presiding over one of Beta's liveliest periods in modern history, 1984-87, John was a working president, visiting virtually every Beta chapter, taking part in installations and anniversaries. He later chaired Beta's Sequicentennial Fund Campaign and headed the committee which drafted the *Beta 2000* goals.

On May 24, 1942, he married Mary Elizabeth (Betty) Harvey. They have four children and nine grandchildren. Still active in his so-called retirement, he and Betty divide their time between homes in Mesa, Arizona and Washington, D.C., where John continues an active law practice with Hunton & Williams.

The couple made a lasting gift to the new Foundation and Administrative Office with their endowment of the Beta Fireside Room which features their portraits.

Erv Johnson, Idaho '53, Editor