

PREFACE II

Until I began this project, I knew very little about Beatrice McMillan Field. I knew she had been a director of Tulane Alumni Affairs and that her portrait hangs in the Alumni House. But I had no idea of the depth of her commitment to the university. Bea Field graduated from Newcomb College in 1928 and taught Latin for 10 years in her hometown of Lake Charles. After receiving a graduate degree from Tulane in 1942, Bea assumed the position of director of Alumni Affairs, where she stayed until 1977.

During her retirement and after a great deal of time, commitment and energy, Bea completed *Potpourri: An Assortment of Tulane's People and Places* in August 1983. By painstakingly compiling information dating back to 1834 from the university's various schools and colleges, departments, archives and other sources, Bea created an invaluable resource for those who want to learn more about the university and to reference its history and the people who have contributed so much to it.

There are no university rooms or buildings named after Bea, but her mark can be found in the hearts of so many colleagues and alumni who were fortunate enough to know her. I never had the opportunity to meet Bea before her death in 1986, but *Potpourri* speaks loudly of her dedication to this university and the preservation of its history. Even today, Bea is still working toward that goal. She left money in her will for *Potpourri* to be updated. And through the direction of another of Tulane's treasures, Charlotte Travieso, current director of Alumni Affairs, I was brought onboard to work on the project. Even in death, Bea is still touching the lives of those in the Tulane community. I hope you will take the time to read the article about her that follows. Bea truly was a remarkable woman.

In the process of updating *Potpourri*, I have contacted numerous people within the university to obtain information. I was overwhelmed by how helpful and excited everyone was about the project. But extra special thanks must go to Charlotte Travieso, director, Alumni Affairs; Julie Nice, assistant vice president, Institutional Advancement; Winnie Burmaster, recording secretary, Tulane Board; Ann Case, assistant archivist, University Archives; Nicole Labadot, senior assistant, Alumni Affairs and the late Leon Trice, whose notes from his work of updating *Potpourri* in the early 1990s were invaluable.

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Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Wiley Rittenhouse, for being my personal and technical support. He was crucial in the process of converting Bea's work from hard copy to an electronic version, which makes it simpler for future updates and readily accessible to so many more people through the Alumni Affairs web site. He helped me over every technical hurdle that arose in wielding such a huge document. I'm very thankful for his loving support.

May this book be a valuable resource for administrators, faculty, staff, students and alumni, and serve as a hallmark of Bea Field who poured her heart, mind and soul into Tulane University.

- Amanda R. Rittenhouse, August 2002