

Princetoniana Committee – History of Orange Key

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The Orange Key Society was founded in 1935 with the goal of serving visitors to the campus. A hand-written account from the Office of Communication records explains: “Impressed by the lack of undergraduate arrangements for the reception of visitors to the Princeton campus, a group of interested students set out, in 1935, to examine the services provided by other colleges in the East.”¹ This account differs from the account that Alexander Leitch provides in the *Princeton Companion*. He explains that President Harold Dodds, arrived late to Dartmouth at 2am and was greeted by a member of their Green Key Society. This Green Key member was apparently “waiting for him with a car, a thermos of hot coffee, and a friendly greeting.”² Afterwards, Dodds spurred the program on. Although the exact sequence of events is unclear, Orange Key began with a recognition that Princeton lagged behind its peers in offering hospitality to visitors of all kinds.

This founding occurred at a time when Princeton had a poor reputation among visitors, especially athletic teams. Only a few years after the Key’s founding, the situation was called “hit-or-miss” by the *Prince*, saying that visiting teams are “shoved about the Campus like so many sheep and are rather generally ignored during their brief stay on the Campus.”³

Battling this poor reputation was difficult, but Orange Key had many early supporters, especially President Dodds. An early message of backing came from the pages of the *Prince*, when they described the Key as “only less important than the Campus itself in leaving visitors with a good impression of Princeton.”⁴ This editorial even references President Dodd’s opening address in 1936, where he highlighted the importance of “good manners” and hospitality.⁵

As the early records of the organization were lost during an office move, the general organization and structure during these early years can be very difficult to pin down. According to a 1950 History of Orange Key, in its first years, the organization existed as a loose combination of the “welcoming facilities of the Undergraduate Council, the Student Faculty Association, Whig-Clio Halls, the Undergraduate Schools Committee, and the Managers' Club.”⁶ Mostly, the Key welcomed visiting teams, speakers, and students from other schools.

¹ Orange Key Guide Service; Office of Communications Records, AC168, Princeton University Archives, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University Library

² Alexander Leitch, “Orange Key Society” in *A Princeton Companion*, Princeton University Press, 1978, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt13x0zx2>, 346-347.

³ “A Matter of Hospitality,” *The Daily Princetonian*, Vol 64, Num 58, April 27, 1939, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19390427-01.2.17&srpos=9&e=-----193-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 2.

⁴ “The Orange Key,” *The Daily Princetonian*, Vol 59, Num 111, October 16, 1936, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19361016-01.2.18&srpos=1&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 2.

⁵ “The Orange Key,” *The Daily Princetonian*, 2.

⁶ John P. Geyman, “History of Orange Key,” *Historical Subject Files Collection*, AC109, Princeton University Archives, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University Library, https://findingaids.princeton.edu/catalog/AC109_c02912, 2.

The Undergraduate Schools Committee was one of the first functions of the Key. Although the USG existed in some form for fifteen years before, Orange Key brought new ideas to the organization. Beginning in 1937, they organized and managed individual prep school clubs, representing schools with more than 15 undergraduates currently at Princeton.⁷

One of the most important of Orange Key's contributions to the campus came in 1938. The Freshman Orientation Committee was established by W. W. Johnston Class of 1938, Chairman of Orange Key, "to draw up a workable program for the alleviation of the problems of adjustment and orientation to Princeton which are faced by the members of each incoming class."⁸ This program was extensive even from the beginning, including the posting of FOC members in booths across campus to assist with move-in and guide new students. Every member of the FOC also had eight to ten freshmen to visit during their first weeks on campus. Freshmen provided basic information like "his home, school, and interests" on cards to FOC members to allow for more tailored mentoring.⁹

This program was not without its critics. The *Prince* criticized it for being too informal, suggesting "the Committee place greater emphasis on praising Princeton and its traditions, and less on telling the Freshman how many classes he can cut and get away with it" in May of 1939 as preparations for the next year were underway.¹⁰

Hosting teams was remained an issue. A letter to the *Daily Princetonian* from the Navy lacrosse team stated that Princeton appeared "the most highhat establishment we have ever visited."¹¹ During 1938-9, the Key took on other functions like a program "to call on undergraduates at the Infirmary."¹²

Even five years into the Key's history, its structure continued to be undefined. For example, during these earliest years, the role of the Key was a combination of coordinating existing entities like the Undergraduate Schools Committee and Visiting Teams Committee and new functions like the FOC. This often-unclear structure was acknowledged: "The story of the Key in these early years was generally one of continual reorganization from year to year."¹³

Under the direction of Paul Douglas '41, the organization clarified its structure with its four main committees: Visiting Teams Committee, the Undergraduate Schools Committee, the Freshman Orientation Committee and the General Committee. During this time, Orange Key was a holding organization for these other student groups. The General Committee housed the longest-lasting function of the Key: The Guide Service. This committee also served purposes like "supplying needs of hospitalized undergraduates and providing overnight accommodations for team followers from other colleges."¹⁴ Under this new structure, the four chairmen of the committees served on an Executive Committee.

⁷ "Background Work," *The Daily Princetonian*, Vol 62, Num 153, December 11, 1937, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19371211-01.2.14&srpos=1&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 2.

⁸ Quoted in Geyman, 2.

⁹ Geyman, 3.

¹⁰ "Apologies, But," *The Daily Princetonian*, Vol 64, Num 73, May 15, 1939, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19390515-01.2.17&srpos=14&e=-----193-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 2.

¹¹ "Apologies, But," *The Daily Princetonian*, 2.

¹² Geyman, 3.

¹³ Geyman, 3.

¹⁴ Geyman, 4.

In 1940, the first competitive admission standard was introduced, although it is unclear how this process worked. For most of the Key's early history, both before and after 1940, admission to the Key was by invitation from existing members.

As with the rest of the University in 1941, Orange Key's role was significantly altered by the entrance of the US into World War II. Although Orange Key continued to operate, its role as host to visiting teams was almost non-existent, as athletic competition was suspended. The Key did shift to aid the war effort including carrying out "periodical War Bond and Stamp drives upon campus and organizing any further contributes to the Red Cross Blood Unit."¹⁵ Although there were few visitors to campus during these years, the Guide Service did become its own committee in 1942, demonstrating its increasing importance among the functions of the Key.

Even during the height of the war when civilian enrollment fell to 400 students, Orange Key continued with between six and twelve members on each of the five committees.¹⁶ Officers and members of the Key were not restricted to the civilian population. As the *Princeton Bulletin* outlined, three members of the executive committee were at Princeton under the wartime Naval College Training, or V-12, program.¹⁷ During 1943, the Key assisted in other wartime measures, including hosting visiting British Officers and assisting in Selective Service Registration along with members of the faculty.^{18 19}

In 1946, the Key returned to their duties quickly. In that year, a group from the newly created United Nations visited the campus, an Orange Key guide was provided to give them a careful tour of the campus.²⁰ Also in the Bicentennial year, the Key helped to organize an intercollegiate conference on the future of undergraduate organizations like student governments, honor committees, and private clubs.²¹

In the Spring of 1947, OK became concerned that the Senior Step Sing, which was a long-standing Princeton tradition even at that time, was suffering from chronically low attendance, would die. To give a "shot in the arm" to the tradition, the Key hosted a quartet competition where any male on campus including faculty and staff was allowed to participate.²²

Although the Key particularly the Guide Service was active during the bicentennial celebrations, not until the next year in 1947-48 did Orange Key return to its prewar heights. Under chairman Jud Decker '46, the Key assumed the added responsibility of staffing and maintaining the Murray-Dodge Campus Center, which served soldiers and sailors on campus as an USO during the war. To fill the new center, Orange Key hosted "art shows, photography contests, music recitals, and a Christmas Party" during the

¹⁵ "J. L. Freeman Jr. Named Orange Key Chairman," *Daily Princetonian Bulletin*, April 30, 1942, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19420430-01.2.9&srpos=12&e=-----194-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 1.

¹⁶ April Armstrong and Allie Lichterman, "Princeton University During World War II," *Princeton University Library University Archives*, <https://universityarchives.princeton.edu/2016/01/princeton-university-during-world-war-ii/>.

¹⁷ Thomas Shaw, "Work of Orange Key Outlined by Leader," *Princeton Bulletin*, Vol 1, Num 82, September 15, 1943, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19430915-01.2.8&e=-----194-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 1.

¹⁸ Alexander Leitch, "Hyper-Accelerees," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 44, No 6, 6.

¹⁹ "On the Campus: The War Service Committee," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 43, No 28, 7.

²⁰ "On the Campus," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 46, No 28, 4.

²¹ "Undergraduates Plan Bicentennial Conference on Campus Problems," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 47, No 25, 7.

²² Robert K. Heimann, "On the Campus," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 48, No 31, 4.

year. In addition to restarting the Schools Committee, the Key began other ventures like hosting alumni banquets on campus.²³

Through the years, Orange Key has eschewed uniforms, as too stogy. However, during these years, Orange Key members often wore a simple orange arm band over their clothing as a signal to attendees of any number of events that the Key was responsible for managing at the time.

After this banner year, Orange Key was mentioned by name in the "President's Annual Report," published in PAW in November of 1948. President Dodds explained that "one undergraduate activity worthy of special mention, because of the incalculable service it renders the University is the Orange Key. Dodds was involved in the Key's inception ten years earlier and continued to extoll its virtues."²⁴

Russel Moore '46 led Orange Key during 1948. As an assistant to Decker, he participated in the strong return of the key. Importantly, Moore also helped aid the fundraising for the next year, writing a pamphlet for the Third Century Campaign on the effects of inflation in addition to serving as an undergraduate member of the Campaign's steering committee. This pamphlet was entitled, "How Rich is Princeton?" Although quite foreign to members of the Princeton community now, during this time money was very short and professors often took summer jobs in town to supplement income, so efforts like Decker's were key.²⁵

In 1949-50, under the direction of Joel Nixon '50, the Key helped form the Intercollegiate Relations Committee, colloquially known as the Key Ring, which gave a forum to discussions between all the Ivy League Key organizations. During this postwar period, in addition to the advancement of relations with other colleges, the Key began to staff informational booths and publish booklets and calendars for weekends on campus.

In 1950 John P. Geyman '52 wrote a *History of Orange Key* from which much of the account up until this point is drawn. Although this history is rather rich, moving almost year-by-year, the early records were lost in an office move in Nassau Hall, meaning that almost all of the information covering the first 15 years of the Key comes from newspapers and other secondary sources.

In the Spring of 1953, F. William Hawley III '54 introduced the Keycept system under which every freshman was assigned to a group of about ten peers and a junior keyceptor. They met regularly through the year with early sessions focused on answering questions and helping incoming students acclimate and later sessions focusing on student-faculty relations and "bull sessions" on "worthwhile topics."²⁶ The loose design with keyceptors almost entirely responsible for the programming led freshman to lose interest through the years: "One of the crimes here is to watch the original excitement of the frosh fall off to nothing."²⁷ Although the stated goal was to acclimate freshman, the program was inconsistent. Fifty-nine percent of freshman polled in 1957 suggested that the program could "be useful only if it were

²³ Geyman, 5.

²⁴ Harold Dodds, "The President's Report 1947-1948," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 48, No 11, 4.

²⁵ Louis Crep Jr, "To Annual Giving," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 49, No 7, 17.

²⁶ Donald Kramer, "Keycept Program Aims at Easy Integration for Frosh, Tries to Promote Faculty Contact, Stimulate Thought," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 81, No 36, March 27, 1957, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19570327-01.2.14&srpos=8&e=-----195-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 3.

²⁷ Kramer, 3.

improved.”²⁸ The *Prince* even ran a three-part series on how the program could be altered. One of the major problems was the extreme commitment required from around 75 different juniors to maintain these groups.

After World War II, the Key began to operate a permanent office to field questions from visitors and to begin tours. The office was open 9am to 5pm Monday through Saturday, and from 12 to 5 pm on Sunday. This information desk was key for visitors in an era before the internet or even the pre-booking of tours.²⁹

A famous alumnus of Orange Key, Donald Rumsfeld '54, was active on the Undergraduate Schools Committee, recruiting students and communicating with secondary schools during his time at Princeton. This fact was never reported until the *Prince* began writing biographies of Rumsfeld when he ascended to President Ford's Chief-of-Staff.³⁰

With the Key's other orientation duties, Orange Key began to offer "Smokers" or hour long informal meetings between incoming freshmen and faculty members in a wide range of departments. The program consisted of ten-minute speeches by representatives of the faculty for the given department and the informal conversations. By 1965, 28 departments were represented over two days of "Smoker" sessions with new students during their first weeks on campus.

With coeducation still more than a decade away, an extremely important role of the Key was hosting mixers with women's colleges. Most of these mixers were primarily targeted towards underclassmen with eating club events attracting the attention of upperclassmen. Orange Key also took on the responsibility of staffing an information booth near the Dinky station, to direct guests to the clubs or to other social events on campus.

On February 15, 1960, Orange Key was covered in the *New York Times*, after the organization promised dates to 100 Princeton students. According to the *Times*, the request "resulted in three things: a capacity sell-out, indignant protests from the mothers of 100 girls – and no girls."³¹ If students came with a date, they only paid \$4.75 per couple. But if they came without one, a date would be supplied for an extra \$0.25. After the *Prince* printed an article advertising the event, it was picked up by other publications and radio stations, leading to the controversy. All of this coverage of the dance resulted in its cancellation.³²

Orange Key even began printing a publication for major football weekends, called the *Weekender*, to inform both students and visitors of the events on campus during that weekend. They published schedules of which clubs would be open and what acts were playing at each club in addition to other social

²⁸ St. Clair Sullivan, "Freshmen Feel Keycept System Does Not Fulfill Their Needs," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 81, No 37, March 28, 1957, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19570328-01.2.13&srpos=7&e=-----195-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 3.

²⁹ "Princeton Alumni Weekly," *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Vol 53, no 29, 7.

³⁰ Joanne Csete and Michael Zielenziger, "Ford Names Rumsfeld To Major Staff Position," *The Daily Princetonian*, Vol 98, No 85, September 25, 1974, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19740925-01.2.2&srpos=1&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 1.

³¹ "'Girl Sale' at Princeton Vetoed by 100 Mothers," *New York Times*, Vol 109, No 37,277, February 15, 1960, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1960/02/15/105178655.html>, 18.

³² Martin Lapidus, "Orange Key \$.25 Mixer Called Off," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 84, No 9, February 15, 1960, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19600215-01.2.11&srpos=2&e=-----196-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 1.

notices. It was first documented in the *Prince* in 1956 but seemed to die out before the onset of coeducation in 1969.

In Fall 1963, Orange Key adapted its Keycept program, adding to the standard meetings between Keyceptor and frosh in the first week.³³ Groups of three Keyceptors and freshmen gathered with a member of the faculty to allow freshman to gain early access to a member of the faculty. The faculty advisor ideally would continue to meet with the students and the Keyceptors throughout the year. This program presaged the Peer Academic Advisor and Faculty Advisor that incoming students meet in their first week on campus. At the time, the *Prince* criticized the program saying that Keyceptors needed to be more carefully supervised. Now a version of this program takes place under the careful guidance of the Assistant Dean for Studies in each Residential College.

In keeping with their Freshman Orientation duties, Orange Key members were the first people to welcome women to the University, reportedly helping move the first female students into their rooms in Pyne Hall. However, within four years, women were guides themselves. Guide Carol J. Silverman '73 said that as a guide she was constantly asked "what it was like being a woman at Princeton. It (answering such questions) almost became an act."³⁴ In contrast, as Silverman described, women did not have an equal experience of every activity on campus. For example, women were not trained to wait tables at the Commons as was expected of all male students. Other elements of the organization changed as a result of coeducation. In 1971, the *Prince* reported that only one of 75 new members of Orange Key listed the mixer committee as his or her first choice.³⁵

Later in the same semester, the Executive Council suspended two Orange Key guides, James Mann '71 and Allen Gilbert '71, for "improper appearance while representing Princeton during campus tours."³⁶ These two students were sanctioned for wearing long hair. The suspension became a controversy when twelve other guides self-suspended saying that it was "simply a question of civil liberties."³⁷ At this time members were still appointed by the six-person Executive Council. The self-suspended members calling this process a "clique-like power structure." In a new constitution ratified in the Spring of 1970, the process of admitting members was amended to include interviews and reviews by members of the relevant committee.

As for most organizations at the University, the late sixties and early seventies meant change. Although only a few years earlier Orange Key had a vast portfolio of duties, by the time Alexander Leitch published the *Princeton Companion* in 1978, he reported that "in recent years, in order to meet an

³³ "New Keycept Program," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 87, No 63, May 7, 1963, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19630507-01.2.4&srpos=8&e=-----196-en-20--1--txt-txIN, 2>.

³⁴ Judy Piper, "'Original' Coeds Recall Progression From 'Freakish' To 'Normal' Lifestyle," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 97, No71, June 7, 1973, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19730607-01.2.16&srpos=313&e=-----197-en-20--301--txt-txIN, 6>.

³⁵ Warren Kasdan, "Vanishing Mixers Coeducation Threatens Survival Of 'Princeton Cattle Drive' As Change Of Attitudes Reduces Interest Of Men, Women," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 95, No 87, September 30, 1971, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19710930-01.2.3&srpos=6&e=-----197-en-20--1--txt-txIN, 1>.

³⁶ Nancy Kent, "Orange Key Suspends Pair, Blames Improper Appearance," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 93, No 130, November 20, 1969, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19691120-01.2.6&srpos=1&e=-----196-en-20--1--txt-txIN, 1>.

³⁷ Nancy Kent, "Orange Key Members Protest Suspension Of Mann, Gilbert," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 93, No 14, November 24, 1969, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19691124-01.2.19&srpos=3&e=-----196-en-20--1--txt-txIN, 5>.

expanding demand by visiting groups, the Orange Key has made the campus guide service its principal function."³⁸

Although a 2003 document asserts that the Orange Key Society was renamed in 1974 the Orange Key Guide Service, to reflect these changes in its scope, Leitch in 1978 still records his information under and entry titled, "Orange Key Society."³⁹ ⁴⁰ The first constitution that reflects the name change, as well as a new tour-focused structure was adopted December 4, 1980, a few years after Leitch.⁴¹ It is possible that Orange Key operated as only or as primarily a guide service during these years, but without a formal constitution, as the organizing document of the society have not always guided its actions directly.

From 1965 to 1981, Orange Key had the same office in Stanhope Hall.⁴² They moved into this office after Reunion Hall, their former home, was condemned for demolition. However, 1981 would mean a shift to the shed at the back of the Maclean House, where all tours would leave for the next 19 years. These tours included a full campus tour following a route from Rockefeller College down to the Art Museum and a miniature tour covering only Nassau Hall.

After the drinking age was raised in New Jersey from 18 to 21, a new office space for Orange Key and visitors center was suggested for the former pub space and student center in East Pyne and Chancellor Green. As the Maclean House space was thought not to be adequate, the proposal was even supported by USG in 1984.⁴³

Very much like the process that was instituted over a decade before, selection in the 1980s was by interview with "the half-dozen elected officers of the Guide Service."⁴⁴ However, compared to a decade before, selecting guides became a more important process. As Historian Bob Swartz '87 explained, "Until a couple of years ago, essentially anyone could be a guide. But interest has grown to such an extent that we've had to become selective."⁴⁵

No physical move in the Orange Key offices had as much effect on the organization, as the move from Maclean House to the newly renovated Frist Campus Center. As early as the mid-1940s, Orange Key had staffed the student centers on campus. However, moving to Frist came with new responsibilities and new institutional pressures. Beginning in the Fall of 2000, just as Frist came online, tours began and ended at the Welcome Desk at Frist 100 Level. The ties to Frist allowed parents and prospective student to see

³⁸ Leitch, 347.

³⁹ "Orange Key Guide Service Constitution," December, 2003 in *Orange Key Guide Service Records*, AC055, Princeton University Archives, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University Library, 1.

⁴⁰ Leitch, 346.

⁴¹ "Constitution of the Orange Key Guide Service," December 4, 1980 in *Orange Key Guide Service Records*, AC055, Princeton University Archives, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

⁴² "Orange Key Office Moves To Maclean Shed," *Princeton Weekly Bulletin*, Vol 70, No 31, June 29, 1981, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=WeeklyBulletin19810629-01.2.1&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 6.

⁴³ Michael Fox, "USG Finalizes Plan For Student Center U-Council To Hear Proposals Monday," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 108, No 43, April 3, 1984, [eprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19840403-01.2.4&srpos=80&e=-----198-en-20--61--txt-txIN](https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian19840403-01.2.4&srpos=80&e=-----198-en-20--61--txt-txIN), 3.

⁴⁴ Sally Moren, "Orange Key Unlocks Campus For Visitors," *Princeton Weekly Bulletin*, Vol 75, No 23, April 14, 1986, <https://theprince.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=WeeklyBulletin19860414-01.2.7&srpos=6&e=-----198-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 2.

⁴⁵ Moren, 2.

and understand a wider range of activities on campus than the old outpost in Maclean House, where students are rarely seen. With more roles, including staffing the Welcome Desk and increasing interaction with administrators at Frist, came less autonomy for the traditionally independent Key.

In the Spring of 2001, the Orange Key advisor bought North Face fleeces and polo shirts bearing the Frist Campus Center insignia for guides to wear during tours. Until the Fall meeting of the Key in 2002, these were mandated during tours. However, because of concerns that this made student guides appear to be agents of the University and not an independent body of students, the Key voted to make them optional. Other than the arm bands of previous eras, Orange Key has not had a formal uniform and today does not wear any kind of uniform or identification outside of the occasional Orange Key sweatshirt.

In 2003, issues of independence came to a head, as Orange Key drafted a new constitution. The new constitution includes almost a full page of provisions related to guide selection, including a tenant of the current process, evaluation tours in which prospective guides give a tour to a group of visitors before becoming a member of Orange Key. Along with the change in name in 1980 was the reorganization of officers. The previous model relied on chairs of various committees, representing the diverse functions of the society. However, with the shift to focusing only on tours, new officer positions were created including Historian, Treasurer, University Liaison, Social Chair, and Publicity Chair. This general structure continues today.

On July 1, 2006, Orange Key transitioned from University Services to the office of Admissions. This proposal had been “tossed around” for at least a few years before the change in the summer of 2006.⁴⁶ Although many older members of Orange Key were concerned that the switch might compromise the independence of tours, then Dean of Admissions Janet Rapelye explained, “We will have more moments to communicate, and we would want that communication anyway.”⁴⁷ The admissions office did not ask for control over the content of tours nor the selection of guides, both of which continued to be controlled by officers of the Key. At the time of this transition, Orange Key’s acceptance rate remained about fifty percent.

Beginning in the Fall of 2011, guides were paid with funds from the Office of Admissions for the first time. Previously, guides had been paid for their service only over the summer or as Chair of the organization. Dean Rapelye explained that guides were taking on more responsibility than in the past, as more and more visitors traveled to campus.⁴⁸ In the early days of Orange Key, most visitors to campus came from a few schools. There was some concern that paying guides would attract more students who were generally less dedicated. However, in the first year almost the same number of students went

⁴⁶ Michael Juel-Larsen, “Admissions to Take Over Orange Key,” *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 130, No 65, May 15, 2006, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian20060515-01.1.3&e=-----200-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 3.

⁴⁷ Juel-Larsen, 3.

⁴⁸ Rosaria Munda, “Orange Key to Pay Guides,” *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 135, No 73, September 23, 2011, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian20110923-01.2.4&srpos=1&e=-----201-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 1-5.

through the recruitment process and roughly the same number were admitted when compared to the previous year's cycle, as a *Prince* piece from the next spring described.⁴⁹

About two years later in Spring 2008, this friction between Admissions and Orange Key flared up. Guides complained about content suggestions from administrators, including frustration that many guides denigrated campus architecture along the tour route, including the School of Architecture. Although none of these comments seemed to rise to the level of an order by Admissions, some guides bristled at the comments.

Orange Key has during various times of their history offered historically focused tours on Sundays. The *Prince* Editorial Board in 2015 suggested that Orange Key offer a single weekly tour slot focused solely on "architecture, history and traditions" of the University.⁵⁰ They also suggested historical tours for admitted students during Princeton Preview. This practice has made a comeback in the last year with the establishment of a History Committee to study and implement a series of history tours during the 2023-4 school year.

In the summer of 2020, a major renovation of the facility at 36 University Place was completed and the Admissions Information Center moved into the facility. Rather than beginning and ending tours at First or at Clio Hall, tours were set to transition to the new Admission Information Center beginning in Fall 2020.

However, in the spring of 2020, just before Spring Break was set to begin, all students were sent home for the remainder of the year putting an end to tours. Not only did the onset of the pandemic mean the end of the tours for the year, but also the emergency scuttled Orange Key's operations for the next two semesters. The next spring, Orange Key was not able to carry out its normal schedule of tours. It was not until the Fall of 2021 that tours in any form or recruitment of new guides resumed. To continue to serve prospective students, members of the Key organized TigerWalks, live tours given over Zoom. Douglas Robins '23, Logistics Chair, organized these new tours, which were the first of their kind. TigerWalks became a permeant program, even after in-person tours resumed in Fall of 2021, to allow students who may not be able to travel to Princeton, to see the campus.

Orange Key remains vibrant providing tours and information to visitors of all kinds to Princeton's campus. The Key is currently working to re-offer history tours for visitors not focused on the admissions process. The Guide Service is also endeavoring to provide a more engaging training process for new guides and more professional development opportunities for current guides, so that they can continue to give unique and informative tours.

⁴⁹ Cerena Chen, "Orange Key Interest Steady," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 136, No 39, April 6, 2012, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian20120406-01.2.10&e=-----201-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 1.

⁵⁰ Editorial Board, "Offering Historical Tours," *Daily Princetonian*, Vol 139, No 35, March 30, 2015, <https://papersofprinceton.princeton.edu/princetonperiodicals/?a=d&d=Princetonian20150330-01.2.15.1&srpos=4&e=-----201-en-20--1--txt-txIN>, 4.

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