

Has The Original Boxer Been Found?

by Steve Dodge

About six years ago at an alumni event in Los Angeles, an African-American man approached Jan Stricklin and Pacific president Faith Gabelnick.

Gabelnick has since passed away, but Stricklin, the associate vice president for University Relations, recalls the man said, “Oh, by the way, I have Boxer, would you like to have him back?” The man, an alumnus from the 1970s, didn’t say how he had gotten Boxer, but said he had the campus icon in storage. He added, “The next time you guys come down I’ll bring it.” Said Stricklin, “We were stunned — we were really surprised to hear him say that.”

The story seemed to click. One of many rumors had placed Boxer — missing since a “toss” in 1969 — in California, sometimes submerged under the Golden Gate Bridge. There has been no disagreement that the “Campus Spirit” was spirited away by members of the Black Student Union.

On a later visit to Los Angeles, Stricklin and Gabelnick talked with the alumnus but no handover took place.

Then, in November 2006, two alumni, including the first man mentioned, contacted Alumni Director Brian Hess, and told him they were on campus. Hess walked with the pair, who pointed out where they said Boxer was thrown into the car in 1969. “They had the best time,” said Hess. “They knocked on student doors in the dorms and had great stories. They said it was time to give Boxer back to Pacific.”

“At least three times we’ve talked about it,” Stricklin said of the alumnus that approached her six years ago. “If he truly has it, it would be sweet to get it back.”

Said Dean Croshere ’07, who wrote and produced a movie about Boxer, when told the above story, “I’d be overjoyed – it would be wonderful.” So the quiet contacts continue — and maybe this will be the year the dragon-dog comes home. —*SD*

—*Steve Dodge is editor of Pacific magazine.*

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