

## Watermelon drop is UCSD's one true tradition

**June 1, 1973**

The watermelon drop or watermelon splat is really UCSD's one true tradition.

It began in the spring of 1965 when the initial freshman class sought an outlet following the freshman physics exam. An outdoor watermelon feast was decided upon and the splat was added. The last question on the physics exam was really a ballot for selection of a queen. The first watermelon queen was Liz Heller, a 19-year-old freshman from Pasadena.

The object of the toss (so the students said) was to see how far the various pieces of the watermelon would fly following impact. Once the melon hit, the students fanned out seeking bits and pieces. The distance from the point of impact to the farthest piece found the first year was recorded as 91 feet north of impact.

In subsequent years the object of each toss has been to see if the old record can be broken. Somewhere along the years during the eight tosses, the style of measuring was changed to include the diameter of the splat from the farthest piece to the farthest piece. The record is now listed as 204 feet 9 inches.

Several traditions have grown up around and following the first toss:

- The queen is supposed to be a Revelle freshman although this has not always been the case. Upper classmen have been named queen.

- The watermelon is supposed to be the biggest available in the supply brought in for the feast to follow. The first one weighed 20 pounds 6 ounces.

- The queen is to climb the outside stairwell of Urey Hall forsaking the nearby elevator and allowing the crowd below to follow her progress.

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