

From the Desk of Jim Dean...

The Campus in 1966: Reminiscences of the Old Days

[Editor's Note: While Jim Dean has been at home recovering from cancer chemotherapy, he has been writing some memoirs. The following paragraphs are taken from a longer article about the SOSC and SOU campus. The more complete essay can be accessed from the on-line web site: emeritus@sou.edu]

New faculty members are rightly impatient when obliged to listen to hoary war stories told by the elders of the academic tribe. Knowing this, I will nevertheless be guilty of telling some of these stories..., not only because they are amusing or absurd or discouraging, but also because they illustrate important aspects of a culture and time now edging into the bedrock of the ignored or forgotten. As events recede in time they undergo metamorphosis; you might say that the pressure of time and the heat of compaction create a new substance; experience becomes igneous, like a schist or gneiss. My intention is to preserve some of the particularity of remembered events before they become dense and irretrievable. Memory, of course, is not to be wholly trusted, for it shapes events to conform to a perceived reality. *Mark Twain's Autobiography* is remarkable for its vividness and its cheerful failure to distinguish between actual events and fancied ones. The mind embellishes and modifies the past, and there seems no help for it.

Thus it is that I caution the reader that he should not credit every fact as true, or count on every experience to be faithfully remembered and rendered. While I have been as faithful to experience as possible, I am aware that there may be distortions and omissions. What follows is reminiscence rather than "hard" history. It is designed to complement the fine account written by Harold Otness of his career at SOC (see "When I Came to the College in 1966" in Archives on the Emeritus Web Site).

The Campus

Churchill Hall. My grandmother, who spent much of her life in the arid intermountain west, once visited

us in Ashland. "My," she said, "In Oregon everything grows." She was right about Western Oregon, if you excluded the 1966 Southern Oregon College Campus. The expansive lawn fronting Churchill was sun scorched when we arrived, with only patches of green showing. The expanse had all the appeal of a military drill field or a prison yard. Trees were scarce, and the few you saw were dusty and droopy. Some desultory shrubs fronting the building made its beige front somewhat less stark than it would otherwise have been. I do not remember any flowers, save for spreading myrtle on the southeast corner. The entrance to Churchill was surprisingly handsome, with massive wooden doors and heavy glass windows. Once inside the entryway you saw rich wood panels, lustrous in their dark browns. They implied that here was an institution of substance and proud tradition. The current Vice President of Administration's office, centered on the first floor, seemed as if it should be the President's Office.

The hokey saying all we new faculty members were subjected to, that SOC was a "Little Harvard on the Hill where the Palms and the Pine Trees Meet" had at least one element of truth to it. Twenty feet beyond Churchill were a few scruffy palm trees (at least scruffy in contrast to their California cousins). South of the palms grew a grove of scotch pine, gracing a spot apparently once occupied by a fishing pond.

I will not describe all the buildings on campus, for that would be tedious. Rather I will focus on a few that struck me upon my arrival.

Myrtle and Pine Halls. Directly behind Churchill were two temporary buildings carted in from Camp White,

twenty miles away. They had the usual allure barracks have. The Art Department used Pine Hall, and though designated "temporary," it persisted until library expansion in 2002. Myrtle Hall, the smaller of the two buildings, housed about half the English Department. I was assigned an office there because I possessed an ABD, while eight other new hires with only MAs were relegated to offices carved out of a small four room house on Palm Street. There were no palms on Palm Street.

Huffman Hall. If you stair-stepped up the hill rising south above Omar's Restaurant and Bar (the only bar on State owned property in Oregon), you would first come to the Health Center, then Huffman Hall. It is the second of these that I wish to mention. Imagine a beige shoe box designed for size 17 shoes, then multiply its dimensions by about fifty and you will have a fair notion of Huffman's appeal. It was a bare bones dormitory when we arrived. The next year it was half dorm, half faculty offices; perhaps fifteen humanities faculty were housed on the second floor. We had one phone, in the hallway, to serve us all. In subsequent years Huffman housed Continuing Education before assuming its current incarnation as Cox Hall.

Huffman Hall was where we stayed our second night in Ashland. Our means were less than modest, so we welcomed a free night's lodging. Unfortunately, we were obliged to give up the room the next night to some "Christian Athletes." They were apparently a higher campus priority than we.

The Library. A new three-story library was soon to rise above Churchill, but when we arrived, there was simply a construction site. The College's library, such as it was, was housed in Central Hall's second and third stories. The building's façade of concrete poured in layer cake fashion, with a stucco

topping, was softened somewhat by ivy on its north facing side. Inside was a collection of far fewer than a hundred thousand books, periodicals, and documents. Bearing mute testimony to the paucity of the collection was a tiny array of catalogue card files, using the Dewey Decimal classification system. For no very good reason that I could determine Circulation and Check-out were on the second floor. I pitied those librarians and student helpers whose job it was to move books between floors, for there was no elevator.

Britt Hall. Below the library was Britt Hall. When first I saw it I thought it a war surplus Quonset hut. Closer inspection led it to be more like a very large airplane hangar buttressed on either side by thick-walled rectangles. On the top floor was a ballroom, on the ground floor the Student Union, a bookstore, and a faculty Lounge. The basement was a perfect maze of offices. You ran some risk of never surfacing once you entered that curious region. During my years at the College Britt was the most remodeled, most renovated, most refurbished building on campus. I came to think of it as an over-the-hill movie star struggling to stay young by virtue of face-lifts, tummy tucks, and liposuction.

Taylor Hall. The most appealing building on campus in 1966 was probably Taylor Hall. It contained an interesting mix of classrooms (none accommodating more than a hundred students) and faculty offices, most belonging to Social Scientists (a few art faculty had offices on the third floor). Entrances were inviting, if plain, and the honeycomb façade formed of painted, hollow cinder blocks seemed a refreshing change from the utilitarian concrete and stucco used elsewhere. Unfortunately, as we new faculty quickly discovered, the heating and air conditions system was discouragingly inefficient. The honeycomb façade served no functional purpose, except to mask views and provide convenient ledges for pigeons to poop on.

Parking lots were unpaved and unlighted, paths were sometimes

asphalt, sometimes cement, sometimes dirt. Lawns did not prosper. Landscaping seemed an afterthought. If anything tied the campus together, it was red-tiled roofs and beige paint. Perhaps there was a campus master plan, but the campus itself had the appearance of being thrown together in higgeldy-piggeldy fashion. At best you could say its buildings were eclectically arranged and designed. If you were less charitable you might say the architecture reflected the practice of doing things on the cheap. It was a

campus built on a shoestring budget.

If I have seemed critical, it has nothing to do with the affection I developed for the place. I have maintained over the years that good teaching can occur in a fair sized broom closet, provided there are willing students, a few good books, an engaging teacher, and a blackboard with chalk. Far be it from me to suggest that the Plain-Jane campus I found was not a good place to begin a career. The College had possibilities of becoming something nobler, and I wished to do my part in making it happen. ♦



SOU Library Specially Honored as Federal Depository Library of the Year

A national news release sent to President Zinser during the past week cites the SOU Library for a special award, recently presented, on October 17, 2004, and publicized in the news media. "Outstanding public service, creativity and innovation" are just some of the reasons why the Government Printing Office, in Washington, D.C., has selected Southern Oregon University as the recipient of this year's Federal Depository Library of the Year Award.

"The staff of The Lenn and Dixie Hannon Library has been described as having amazing energy and tireless passion for their work. And we at the GPO agree --"The library is public service driven, committed to creative and innovative programs and dedicated to providing access to Government information to the citizens of Oregon through its partnership with the GPO," said Bruce James, Public Printer of the United States.

Public Printer James presented the award to the Southern Oregon University Hannon Library to Deborah Hollens, documents librarian, with Lenn Hannon and Greg Walden also present, during the Fall Depository Library Council Meeting on Sunday, October 17, 2004, in Washington, D.C. A local ceremony honoring Librarian Hollens and others connected with the award was held on October 21, at the SOU library.

"It is an incredible distinction for Hannon Library to receive the coveted Federal Depository Library of the Year Award. The GPO award recognizes the years of excellent and enthusiastic service that our library has provided both to the students and faculty of the University and to the southern Oregon region. Our new Southern Oregon Digital Archives is an indication of the commitment the entire Hannon Library has made to permanent and improved access to our valuable local government documents," said SOU President Elisabeth Zinser.

This is the second year the GPO presents the award to a library participating in its Federal Depository Library Program. Last year the award went to the Tulsa City-County Library. Long known in the region and the State of Oregon for its special attention to government documents, the SOU collection has been supervised for many years by librarian Deborah Hollens. In its new location in the remodeled and enhanced Hannon Library, the collection also will be more conveniently available to students than in past years. Congratulations to the SOU Library for its great honor! ♦



Conferences/Senior Programs
Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, Oregon 97520

BILL AND SUE SAGER WILL TALK AT EMERITUS LUNCHEON

The SOU Emeritus organization will entertain Bill and Sue Sager at a luncheon on November 16, at the Rogue River Room, Stenveson Union.

In March 2003 the Sagers returned to the United States from a three-year term serving the Good Shepherd Hospital and the Christian Medical Institute of the Kasai (IMCK) in Tshikaji in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They spent several months doing mission interpretation, then a stint as missionaries-in-residence at Presbyterian Church Center in Louisville, Kentucky, and in January 2004 they moved temporarily to Malawi to serve the hospital system of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian.

Prior to their service in Congo and Malawi, the Sagers had a long and rewarding medical career, both in mission service to Pakistan and private practice in Oregon.

(See reprint of Mail Tribune story concerning the Sagers' work in next column.) ♦

Gift of Game Balls enables Ashland Couple to Discuss AIDS Risks

By Bill Kettler (Reprinted from the Medford Mail Tribune.)

A homemade soccer ball gave Dr. Bill Sager an idea for fighting AIDS in Africa. The retired Ashland physician saw the devastating impact of HIV during a three-year medical mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Sponsored by the Presbyterian Church, he treated patients and trained young doctors while his wife, Sue, taught English as a second language.

"About 5 percent of the population is infected," he said last week, just days after the couple returned home. "Fifty percent of the population is under the age of 15."

Several Congolese pastors were organizing church meetings to teach young people how to avoid AIDS, but most kids stayed away, he said. "There might be 13 or 14 boys and girls inside, but outside the church there would be hundreds."

One day, he noticed a group of kids in an impromptu soccer game kicking a "ball" made of used plastic bags and rags wrapped with twine. The game sparked a memory

of an old friend who gave away soccer balls in Thailand in a wildly successful promotional campaign to sell Coca Cola.

The doctor said he would come back to the village in a week with two new soccer balls—one for the boys, one for the girls—if all the kids would come to a three-hour AIDS meeting.

"When we came back the next week we had 150 kids standing in the church," he said. "It was so crowded you could hardly get in."

By the time the 70-year-old couple left Congo, they had given away more than 500 soccer balls and introduced thousands of young people to the dangers of a disease that has ravaged sub-Saharan Africa.

"That was the most exciting thing we did," he said, "and the most satisfying." ♦

For the full MMT article go to <http://www.mailtribune.com/archive/2004/0511/local/stories/05local.htm>

SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY
EMERITUS NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2005

Architect Robert Keeney's Buildings at SOC and SOSC

by Arthur Kreisman

Late in August I received a letter from Thomas Rogers of Chatsworth, California, whose uncle had been Robert Keeney, an architect who did much work for Southern Oregon College between 1955 and 1972. Mr. Rogers, who had been referred to me as the University historian, wanted to know what buildings his uncle had designed for the college so that he could put the information in his family records.

Mr. Keeney was born in 1904 and died in 1989. He was educated at the University of Oregon, living then in Portland. A few years after graduating, he became a professional architect and in 1934 won a Better Homes and Gardens award for his work on restyling a farmhouse. He designed many buildings in the Rogue Valley. Among the local buildings are the Varsity Theatre in Ashland, the Fluhrer Building in Medford; also Medford's U.S. Federal Building, the Rogue Theatre in Grants Pass, and many others.

Of course, the first thing I did after receiving Mr. Rogers' letter was call Don Lewis, who had been in charge of building (as the business manager of the College), from 1947 to 1982. His reply came to me in the mail two days later. He recalled that Robert Keeney had been involved in five different projects over the years, and he listed them.

The first, in 1955, was a remodeling of the old Britt Gymnasium into its present configuration for classrooms and offices, adding two wings, east and west, an assembly area for a second floor, and a variety of offices and other spaces. In 1958, he built the first SOC Science building. Between 1960 and 1967 Keeney created the nine buildings of the Cascade Dormitory complex. In 1965 he designed Taylor Hall, the social sciences building. In 1971 he was involved in setting up the Stevenson Union.

All this information I sent on to Mr. Rogers, along with a map of the campus with the Keeney buildings marked. Also, of course, it was helpful to have this additional documentation of how the campus has developed over the decades. ♦



EMERITUS SCHOLARSHIP FUND REPORT

As of midsummer 29 people have contributed to the Emeritus Faculty Scholarship fund. \$2,310 had been received and \$50 pledged for a total committed of \$2,360. Our goal is to develop a total of \$10,000 before using the income to give scholarships. The needs are great. This is a way to express our gratitude toward those who have assisted us in the past. Direct your contributions and/or questions to:

Elaine Plaisance
Development Associate Institutional
Advancement
Southern Oregon University
1250 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland, OR
97520 Telephone: 541-552-8366
Email: Plaisance@sou.edu

Fall Emeritus Faculty Luncheon

BILL AND SUE SAGER: THEIR WORK IN AFRICA

Dr. Bill Sager and his wife Sue will be the featured speakers for the fall emeritus luncheon. Those who have heard their presentation on their work in Africa speak highly of it, and the Sagers are widely known in the Rogue Valley. You will certainly want to make reservations early for the complimentary luncheon, brief business meeting and talk.

Noon, November 16, 2004
Rogue River Room, Stevenson Union
Southern Oregon University

To Make Reservations:
Email (preferred): stallman@sou.edu
Telephone: 541-552-6699

Reservation Deadline: November 12, 2004

Greetings from President Elisabeth Zinser

Warm fall greetings to Southern's Emeriti Faculty! This is Homecoming Week—a fitting time to remind all of you that you are highly valued members of the University community. That so many emeriti remain in the Valley and others visit often speaks volumes about your love of the institution and the region. It is a source of great satisfaction that so many of you still teach and serve at the University in myriad ways.

It pleases us to see you at University events—from art exhibits and music to science seminars and mentorship of students preparing to be teachers or law enforcement officers. To those who no longer can be this active, please know that we take pride in your careers and comfort in your encouragement to those who follow you at Southern. Please accept my genuine gratitude also for your gifts to SOU for students, programs, and facility improvements, and for remembering Southern in perpetuity through bequests.

In my 27 years spanning service as a dean, vice president, and three-time president, I've never seen such public disinvestment in higher education. It has happened at a time when most citizens take for granted that a college education is necessary for a productive career and informed life, not to mention securing a vibrant economy and democratic society. We live in a complicated, competitive, technological, and all too divisive world. A strong liberal and professional education is essential for individuals and society. Yet, it seems that our institutions are taken for granted—presumed to stand strong no matter what—until they crumble and costs to restore them are exponentially greater than would have been wise investments over time—even in tough times.

Policy makers assume mandates for more prisons and rising costs for health care, even at the expense of education. While these needs are real, the cycle is never ending until we confront the truth that education—the kind of education that supports citizenship and productivity—is the main ingredient for reducing crime and sustaining a healthy community.

New Directions for Oregon Higher Education and University System

Oregon is fortunate to have a Governor who is determined to create a sustainable, high quality and diverse post secondary system that is affordable for Oregonians and that inspires citizens to save and invest for educational opportunity—in their own families and their communities and state. The Oregon State Board of Higher Education is organized around work that bodes well for our future if the people of Oregon rally behind their initiatives and the Governor's program. The State Board and Oregon University System and universities are making huge gains in forging partnerships with community colleges and public schools. We may see the day soon when education moves forward as a whole while respecting a mosaic of different missions.

SOU on the Move

Southern Oregon University is challenged, yet strong. Precipitous and unpredictable cuts in state appropriations over the past few years have given rise to opportunistic

(continued other side)

reductions followed by realignments that stabilize operations as best we can. They led to tuition increases beyond sensible public policy and certainly faster than the rise in financial aid to support our students. We are seeing a modest drop in fall enrollments—about 6% or a few hundred students. While improved enrollment planning and new strategies are in the works, the external pressures are tremendous.

Among other factors is the growth of educational opportunities in our area, and the need to reach farther *a field* for students who come to see SOU as a terrific place and who bring diversity of thought and background to SOU. We are working with RCC to create a joint downtown facility that will give both institutions room to grow and SOU a chance to consolidate its expanding offerings across six locations into one location—hence serving our students and faculty much better.

You will be very pleased to know that SOU is progressing well in diversifying its resources and strengthening its position. Thanks to such creative and hard working faculty and staff, our grant funding has risen 26% to \$5.2M in FY2004. Private support in FY04 grew 42% over the prior year (excluding a spike in bequest maturities which brings it to a 75% growth).

Partnerships Offer Hope for the Future

Provost Earl Potter and his colleagues are forging significant new partnerships with organizations of our region, such that the University can carry forward its service in contexts that are more effective and enduring, although more complex.

- SOU is a significant partner with the Rogue Valley Council of Governments in the creation of a new Center for Community Partnerships which will enable us to give more to our region than was possible by SOU alone under SORSI which was discontinued last December.
- SOU is linking in new ways with industry and governments for wise stewardship of our environment through education and research, especially through the formation of new alliances and field stations.
- SOU's fine and performing arts programs have been recognized as a 'spire of excellence' by State Board members visiting our campus.

In conclusion, I hope these points give you a sense of progress and anticipation, while we continue to call upon you to stay involved and to make investments in your University and its students.

Please mark your calendars and join us for a celebration of Ron and Marilyn Bolstad on December 3rd at 4 p.m. in the Meese Room of the Hannon Library. As you know, they will be joining your ranks shortly. We shall miss Ron in his leadership post but are thrilled that they plan to remain in Ashland.

All my best for a healthful and meaningful Holiday Season!

Sincerely,
Elisabeth Zinser