

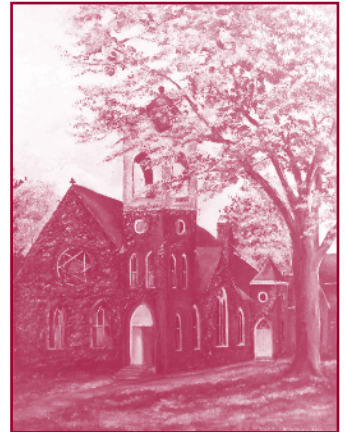
October 2007

A Moment for Grove City College

In my hometown of Pittsburgh is a very well-known public television station – WQED. It has been around for a long time and is probably best known for producing and presenting “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood.” It is also known for a series of shows that look in a nostalgic way at Pittsburgh’s past. The fellow who produces and narrates these shows is from the town south of Pittsburgh in which I was raised. His name is Rick Sebak. And while the shows are about Pittsburgh, they air on public TV across the country. One of Rick’s best ones is called “Things That Aren’t There Anymore.” Therefore, with thanks to Rick Sebak and WQED, I am going to borrow his format and apply it to Grove City College. I will call it “Things That Aren’t Here Anymore.” So, let’s get our memories cleared and recollections sharpened as we look at Grove City College and “Things That Aren’t Here Anymore!” Many thanks to retired vice president and dean Dr. Nancy (Lee ’54) Paxton, along with retired alumni director (among other titles) Bob Smith ’59 and his wife Ellie (Trevitt ’59) Smith, for sitting down with me recently to pool our memories.

So here we go:

- 1. Let’s begin with some buildings:** Ivy Chapel (see picture), Recitation Hall, Founders Hall, Library Hall, Colonial Hall (the original Colonial Hall) and Memorial Residence Hall (the original Memorial Hall) were all fixtures of our original campus. There are only a handful of grads left who can recall the first two, but the last two were torn down in 1981 and 1995, respectively. For our much more recent grads, Calderwood Hall, dedicated in 1958, was torn down and replaced in 2003 with the Hall of Arts and Letters. While a lot of those famous old buildings are not here anymore, the entire campus today is a thoughtful blend of lovingly maintained and restored buildings, plus a number of new ones since the mid ’90s, i.e., “new” Memorial Residence Hall, the Breen Student Union, the Hall of Arts and Letters and the great addition to the Pew Fine Arts Center – all done in compatible Collegiate Gothic style. Joseph Newton Pew’s adage to “make the campus beautiful for that, too, is an education” remains an animating principle to this day.
- 2. Freshmen:** More than 660 bright young people arrived in late August this year to begin their years at the College. A number of things concerning them are things that aren’t here anymore, such as:
 - Where they come from – From our founding in 1876 until the beginning of World War II, the College was basically a local school. Many grads went to Grove City High School and walked across the street to lower campus to begin college. A student from as far away as Philadelphia or New York City was rare. After World War II, the vets returned, the country had moved from isolation to the international stage and our students came from not only the local area but also a more regional setting. Beginning in the 1980s, we began to seek and recruit young people from all over the nation and overseas. So today, our freshman class represents 36 states (the whole student body represents 42 states plus a number of foreign countries).
 - Freshman Traditions – Here’s how we used to greet our Frosh; we all received a red cap called a “dink” and wore a large sign around our necks that had our name, campus address, big brother or sister and our freshman residence hall counselor (called an RA today). The dink and sign had to be worn until Homecoming and if we lost the football game, you wore it for another week. (You didn’t have to wear the sign and dink on Sundays!) Additionally, freshmen weren’t permitted to go home for six weeks. Well, those traditions aren’t here anymore but our orientation programs continue to do an excellent job of welcoming, preparing and integrating the new members of the College family.
- 3. Student life rules:** Many of our student life rules, of course, are also things that aren’t here anymore. For example:
 - In the early 1920s, the rules for ladies living in Colonial Hall required, among other things, that they not wear shoes between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. The ladies came to meals and moved about Colonial based on different bell signals. Further, they were permitted to go to town after signing out, but only for 20 minutes to “approved” tea houses. And finally (though there were many other rules), they could be in close proximity with a boy only at a sporting event, and as soon as it was over they couldn’t even walk across campus together! As many will recall, for years after the ’20s, women had strict hours and freshman women were even more restricted. The last vestige of regulated hours ended a couple of years ago, designed for men and women who were not yet 18 (usually first-semester freshmen) or for the second semester (if their parents requested). Although lots of those rules are not here anymore, our students still adhere to single-gender residence halls and other reasonable rules of living that continue to provide a very responsible, hospitable living environment. In many, many schools today, mixed gender housing, unisex restrooms, etc., produce campus residence living that is totally dysfunctional.
 - With the ending of hours for women, however, another famous area on campus has passed from the scene. I refer to the “Passion Pit.” With ladies having hours, the guys would rush their dates back to whatever dorm entrance was nearest the ladies’ rooms, just before the bewitching hour. And naturally, you might want to kiss your date goodnight. Well, at MAP South, on the patio, so many couples would be saying goodnight at the same time that that area became known as the “Passion Pit.” (The rail at old Colonial Hall was a similar nighttime stop.) There were even reports in my day (’63-’67) that Dean Jean MacLeod, while looking out the first floor office window in MAP and observing an overly long (in her opinion) goodnight embrace, would admonish the couple, in her dry though direct way, to “please save something for marriage.” Oh well, the Passion Pit still lives in memory but it’s another thing that’s not here anymore!
- 4. Chapel:** How we did Chapel as compared to how we do things today is also, if you will, a thing that isn’t here anymore. From our founding until the early 1950s, Chapel met from 9 to 9:20 a.m. Tuesday through Saturday, while Sunday Chapel was at 4:30 p.m. (Chapel on Sunday was changed to 7 p.m. in 1951). For Sunday Chapel, both men and women wore their best, as the old phrase says, “bib and tucker.” The Chapel format for many



Ivy Chapel

years consisted of two hymns, the President going over a lot of announcements (remember, that was before the computer age and the Internet), then the Dean of the Chapel intoning a prayer (considered by some students to be overly long). In the 1950s at Saturday Chapel, Dr. Charles Platt would read the "International Sunday School Lesson of the Week." Until the late 1950s, the ladies sat on one side of the Chapel and the gentlemen on the other. Today, Chapel meets twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 to 9:50 a.m. with praise singing from 9 to 9:30 a.m. Much of the time during the week, the College invites ministers and preachers of national note who represent many different Christian faith walks. Faculty members and students also speak. One example is those students who talk about their experiences as Red Box Missionaries the previous summer. Sundays at 6:30 p.m. are set aside for Vespers with our Dean of the Chapel Dr. Stan Keehlwetter in the pulpit and our wonderful Chapel Choir singing from the chancel. Chapel is still required (we offer 50 opportunities and require 16 attendances per semester) but the majority of our students attend more than the required 16. Chapel attendance, which used to be taken by assigned seating, then later by handing in a paper card, is now done by using a scanner to read the student ID card. So technology is alive and well even in the Chapel!

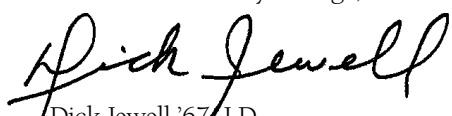
5. **Food:** How we served it and what it consisted of also reminds of some things that aren't here anymore. In a previous "Moment," I wrote extensively about food and its many memories and traditions, so I won't reiterate all of that now. I do want to address that most famous of Grover dishes (this selection has also appeared at other college campuses from time to time) and that is "mystery meat." It's a thing that's not here anymore. This is based on personal experience in our dining halls. But what was (or is) mystery meat? I want to be careful here so as not to ruffle any feathers of those from the past who oversaw food service. So, I will state the food (only one entrée served) was generally good, but every so often something was served that was, well, a mystery! The best analysis I ever heard on mystery meat came from some fellow students with whom I worked in Ketter cafeteria. Two were science majors and one was an engineer. While (hopefully) we all had some logic going for us, the non-liberal arts guys had much more methodology to apply in their thinking. They decided on a standard test that would require using all our senses. Therefore, after looking at it, smelling it, tasting it and even feeling it, if one could not find a name for it, then, yes, it was indeed mystery meat! Today in our dining halls (newly renovated during the last two years), there is not one entrée, but many from which to choose, located at various food stations. Choices abound and mystery meat is a dim (but fond) memory.

6. **A few other things not here anymore:**

- Pay Phones. As many of our grads will recall, we had no phones in the residence hall rooms but pay phones on every other floor (get in line, put in a dime and call our folks collect). There were hundreds of pay phones all over campus. Well, the advent of cell phones has made pay phones as useful as buggy whips. Last year, we were down to 18 pay phones on campus and half had not been used for at least six months. So we are now down to a few phones in Crawford Hall and a couple of other public areas. When in a few years we are down to just two or three, we may need to provide personal instruction to our students on how to operate the contraptions!
- Old buildings remain but are called by new names. This is confusing to me even today. For example, the Recreation Building (as I recall its name) that houses our Arena, Intramural Room, pools, etc., is now called the Physical Learning Center (PLC). The computer lab building is the Technological Learning Center (TLC). In this more modern vocabulary, we have more acronyms than FDR had federal agencies. However, we still have the Buhl Library, because frankly, I have neither the inclination, heart nor strength to call in our dear librarian since 1968, Diane Grundy '65, and tell her it's now called the Information Commons (IC). Guess we'll wait on that one.
- Pinning Ceremonies: In the old days, before a couple became engaged, they were often pinned. It was sort of being engaged to be engaged. The fellow and his fraternity brothers would all go over to the girl's residence hall. She would be serenaded outside and the fellow's fraternity pin would be given to be worn by the girl. The scariest part was the solo verse sung by the girl's beau. No talent was required and often no talent was evidenced! This custom began to change with the shrinkage of the Greek system. It is a rite that isn't here anymore. But take heart, it has been replaced in the last 25 years by the rite of "creeking." In this ceremony, if a fellow becomes engaged, his buddies carry him from his residence hall room down to Wolf Creek and deposit him ceremoniously (actually, unceremoniously) into the creek. It is a custom that's effective, memorable and cuts out having to sing solo to your sweetheart.
- Saturday Classes: Here's one thing that's not here anymore that even our more recent grads will recall. In the old days, most students had classes on Saturday. Freshmen were notoriously assigned an 8 a.m. class. The Board of Trustees voted in November 1999 to end Saturday classes beginning in the fall semester of 2000. This was big news. "The Collegian" headline writer unfortunately got carried away in his excitement and the headline read (above the fold) "Board does away with Saturdays." The students were relieved to learn that Saturdays would continue, but no classes would be scheduled. So how has it worked out? Very well. By 1999, the College no longer had 8 a.m. Saturday classes and only about 25 percent of our students had a Saturday class period. Not surprising, the change was celebrated by the students and also by the faculty. For the faculty, they were missing out on a lot of Saturday morning activities with their families and the change was welcome news. I can also report that it did not turn the College into a suitcase school where most go home for the weekend. We have not really noticed a difference.

It is, of course, not surprising that in 132 years there are things that aren't here anymore. But the most important things are still here and will never disappear from our campus. They are our animating principles of faith and freedom, our love of the Lord, our respect for each other and each other's ideas, and our sense that Grove City College still has a notion of family about it (quaint but vital, I believe, in today's world). Some might call Grove City College an island – but I respectfully think they misidentify the land mass. I believe it is an oasis in higher education. That is because of the heritage of things that aren't here anymore as well as those things that remain. It has worked remarkably well. We'll continue that way forward and that is a promise.

Yours for Grove City College,



Dick Jewell '67, J.D.
President