

CAMPUS BUILDING

Samuel Amendolar
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CAMPUS BUILDING

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FOREWARD

It has been some time since I last entered Merrifield Hall, pulling open one of those heavy doors and climbing stairs to second floor, where History had been when I was young and hungry to learn. I take a deep breath, hoping for the scent of Dr. Playford Thorson's pipe tobacco, and I listen for Poppa Wilkins' laugh.

I am with three old friends, all fans of this place — this stately Collegiate Gothic building with its gargoyles and alcoves and long, muted hallways. We smile and nod and agree: This is the university. This is college. We wander the halls and remember the sounds of panic and purpose, the smells of bookbags and office coffee and wet wool hung in hallways or draped over radiators in winter. We remember, each of us, the learned men and women who strode from office to classroom and talked — talked to us — of Robespierre and Hemingway and Aristotle. We remember the ones who had seemed to define the academy: the elegant and whimsical Bob Lewis in English, sweet Graciela Wilborn in Languages. And we recall the characters - Ben Ring in Philosophy, John Little in English, the sputtering Felix Vondracek in History.

The university is getting set to remodel Merrifield, which first welcomed students in 1929, and they are going about that carefully because they know how we feel about the place and where it lives in the memories of generations. It was more than classrooms, labs and offices. It was a place to study, read, feet up, flirt, argue — the war in Vietnam, the draft, racism in the country and on campus. It was a place to be, to grow.

Named for a long-past UND president, Merrifield Hall seems to have stood at the heart of the campus forever and seems destined to remain forever, if adjusted now to be more energy efficient, more technologically current, more accessible. I sit in Room 217 and remember how Dr. Gordon Iseminger described the fog that lifted just in time for the French to prevail at Austerlitz, and I feel my hand cramp at the thought of all the blue books I filled so furiously to show all I had read and absorbed about the origins of World War I. Down on first floor, I'm sure other old students sit, resting arthritic knees and recalling first attempts at poetry or a short story. Up on third, an aging visitor may try to summon a Latin phrase or conjugate a French verb.

I once read a joke that defined a university as a collection of colleges joined by a common steam plant. Some days that may seem as good a definition as any, but I prefer to think of

the university as accomplished scholars coming together and inviting students to join them in the honest pursuit of knowledge and understanding. They calculate credit hours required for a degree, skills needed for a job, but they also sampled and learned for its own sake. I've always liked the idea of a chemistry student reading modern American literature, a law student checking out Lakota or Ojibwe culture, a student in finance or marketing reading Rousseau - the liberal arts at the heart of an education, and Merrifield Hall the place where liberal arts are honored and respected.

I started my studies in Merrifield's basement, knowing from the start I wanted to work for newspapers. It seemed a calling, rather like the priesthood, and I embraced the noble craft's twin objectives: comfort the afflicted, afflict the comfortable. Journalism professors and academic advisors pushed us out of the department and told us to read literature and history, geography and sociology, botany and chemistry. Know something of the world. Learn to broadly see, hear, and question.

I'm a bit nervous about the plans to modernize Merrifield. It does need to be made more accessible, the technology more up to date. Like the new Memorial Union, it will be brighter, maybe less intimidating to new crops of students. I can live with that if the flower gardens, prairie grass and Ben Brien's Soaring Eagle sculpture remain outside, and inside the polished marble floors, inviting alcoves and burnished wood railings. As long as gargoyles keep watch and I can walk the halls, remembering, I'll be OK.

Chuck Haga

1967-71, '76, undergraduate student/journalism/history.
BA in History awarded August 1976.

1976-78, graduate student, modern European history/philosophy.
MA in History awarded May 1978.

1978-79, assistant professor,
Journalism, office in lower level.

2014-17, adjunct instructor,
Communications (news writing),
taught in Merrifield 217, office in former History office complex.

INTRODUCTION

Campus Building is an odd amalgamation of genre and form by both necessity and design. When our team, comprising mostly graduate students of the University of North Dakota's Department of English, set to work with the admittedly vague goal to "understand Merrifield," we knew that we wanted to take a mosaic approach. After all, what is the best way to understand a building? Is it really futile to, as the old saying goes, dance about architecture? Our various backgrounds and subject readings yielded no definitive answer.

One fact is that this building in which the members of our team taught our classes, met with students, and consulted with colleagues is also a historical artifact designed by Joseph Bell DeRemer and dedicated in 1930. It is a thing that generations of university students have passed through, looked at, remembered, and forgotten. Our team is among the newest and last generation of scholars to move through its halls in their most recent form. But the word "last" here may mean very little when we consider that Merrifield is not going away. At the time of this writing, this building, our building, is once more under construction. It is being fully renovated with an eye toward the future. Stairways will be updated to meet the newest standards of fire safety, classrooms will have windows with blinds that actually close, and the middle of the building will be transformed into an annex where students and professors may mill about in a way not possible in the building's previous form.

Though our team opted not to dance about Merrifield—at least not publicly—we decided to research about it, poem about it, photograph about it, short-story about it, essay about it, and interview about it. Inspired by this diverse set of genres and by Mike Witgraff's "soundscape" of the building, our editing team organized this book into sections based on musical movements and tracks that suggest some of the themes of Merrifield we uncovered in our research at the archives, in interviews, and in our own meandering hours spent completing this work and doing other labors within Merrifield's halls. Just as Merrifield has four levels, this book has four major musical "Movements." Site interviews and still photos throughout those levels will direct readers up and down, through and across the building in various circuitous paths. Readers will also note that each entry in this book includes marginalia "tags" that emphasize minor patterns and highlights across those four movements. These tags either correspond to entries in the "Vocabularic Index" or list of themes found in the back-matter. Trace these marginalia through the book to follow yet more winding paths through our myriad versions of Merrifield.

Throughout this process, we hoped to achieve an understanding of Merrifield that would respect its past while also looking forward to its now in-process future. It is our hope that this book will offer a space of thoughts, memories, fragments, criticisms, and jokes for all those who have walked the halls of this building and for all those who may one day dance—intellectually and materially—its halls, in whatever future form(s) those halls take.



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But perhaps the very idea of thing-power or vibrant matter claims too much: to know more than it is possible to know. Or, to put the criticism in Theodor Adorno's terms, does it exemplify the violent hubris of Western philosophy, a tradition that has consistently failed to mind the gap between concept and reality, object and thing?

—Jane Bennet, *Vibrant Matter* (2009)

... each door's glass knob, cool even in summer; my grandmother's wooden spoons worn smooth as bone by decades of stirring. My people, my loves. All the fierce tethers to all the fierce moments—they matter, to the pinpoint I've become. That's the dizzying thing—how the vastness of my singular life does not set me faceless in the ranks of billions, except that it does. I am perfectly speck-like.

—Lia Purpura, *All the Fierce Tethers* (2019)

[Paintings] cannot be generalized about without diminishing them, but I can report on their lesson, which is to remind us of the strangeness and singularity of things, and therefore of ourselves. Singularity, they wish us to know, resides in the physical, the particular, the seen ... Here you are, the painters say, a body in the city of bodies, in concert, in the astonishing republic of things, the world of light ...

—Mark Doty, *Still Life with Oysters and Lemon* (2001)

Overture

How Do Buildings Think: A Silly Question;

Merrifield doesn't have neurons or synapses, though wires wind
Through its halls while hard drives harbor thoughts and
Memories – it has no roots that stretch far beneath the ground,
Communicating in ways beyond the all-too-human.

It's a thing made up of plaster, brick, and sheetrock
With little activity therein we'd conceive of as thought –
And what of the things inside and outside its traveled halls:
Colorful flower beds, trees, and lawns. But then again,
Eduardo Kohn never did tell us how trees see the world
Did they?

If a dog can dream because we heard it go “hua hua” or
“Cuai” in its sleep, and if a dog can see and represent
A world for itself because we bemoan their stupidity –
Do we recognize another across Zoom as another, or
Are we pixels, black screens with emblazoned names
– nothing more.

Overture

I meant to say, if an android can count
1...2...3 electric sheep then does Merrifield
Lull itself to sleep by counting students?
When the last dreamer leaves its halls

What do they dream of?

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Maybe I Should Back Up –

When Kohn asked how a forest thinks
He didn't just examine the trees. A forest is
Like a container filled with people, jaguars, and dogs
Signing to one another in dynamic ways
Too complex to be understood in one mind,
An exchange among vibrant matter –

An assemblage of students, visitors, passer-bys, and staff –
What constitutes Merrifield Hall? Someone once told me
It's the congregation that matters, not the church.
Do the people inside and out function like nodes of meaning;
And, if we ask "What goes on inside that building?"
Is a hall like a skull and we the brain? It's too, too human.

Overture

(Sometimes I Try to Trick My Computer Into Loading Faster)

I don't do it as much anymore, but sometimes
I try to pull the wool over the eye of my webcam when
I'm late for a Zoom conference, and I wonder: Does a computer think?
And if it does, what does it think of me? Another silly question – is it really?
They say technology's only as smart as the operator, but perhaps they're
only human?
Prone to mistakes.

What is Merrifield anyways:
Computers, webcams, books, windows, people, classrooms, offices –
As storms came and floods withdrew, their bones must've ached
When we installed projectors and televisions in its cavities over the years
I wonder if it was thrilled at the new ways to learn and see.

Maybe I am taking a silly question too seriously.

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Does It Smile at the Thought of Learning Something New?

If I am a part of the faculty that works in Merrifield and I
Never enter the building all year because a cough spells death,
Am I still a part of it, or was the building thoughtless, hibernating, lonely?
Empty halls, locked doors, and books gathering dust waiting
For someone to share their thoughts.

If the eyes are the window to the soul, what do I see when I glance inside –
When I see another through the glass of a window pane,
Am I looking at a soul?
Barely visible through my own ghostly reflection like a collection of spirits
Daring me to step into such a hallowed hall –
If I sit inside and look out at the snow,
Do I haunt myself?

What of the bird perched on my windowsill?

Overture

And what of History?

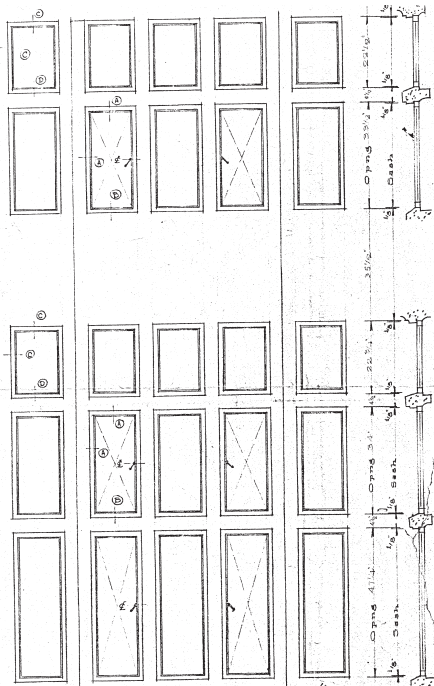
Does Merrifield Hall champion education
Like their namesake, nurturing the students
That wander within?
Did they grow weary of the prairie,

Or miss it –
Does it still take pride
In providing a break from the winds
For students that pioneer through the cold –
If Merrifield's thoughts are really all the people and those
With thoughts beyond the human
Then does Merrifield sigh during finals?
Does it bury nuts in the ground, mindful of those watching it?

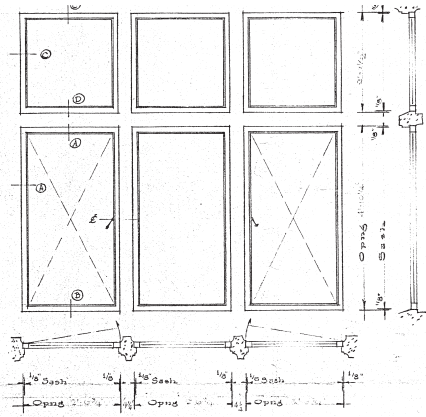
Does it think in binary
And tweet at me as I crack the spine of a book
Reading what they have to share with me.

If we took Merrifield apart memory by memory,
Person by person – interviewing birds and computers,
Delicately taking windows from their sills.
If we went brick by brick,
Would we find Joseph and Elizabeth DeRemer having tea
Upon the cornerstone with Webster Merrifield?

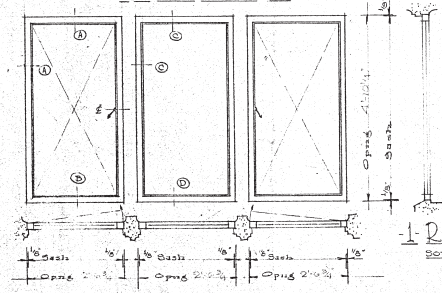
Alex Meyer



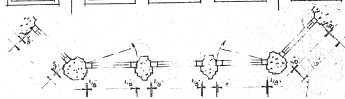
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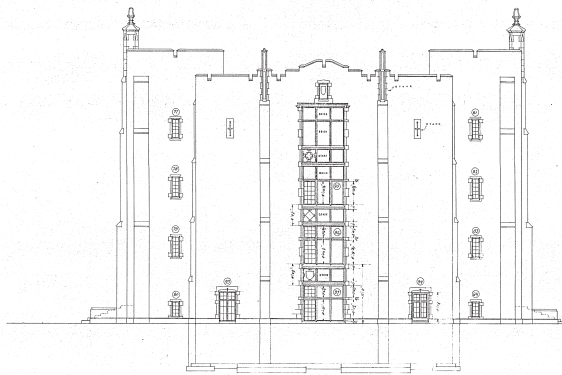


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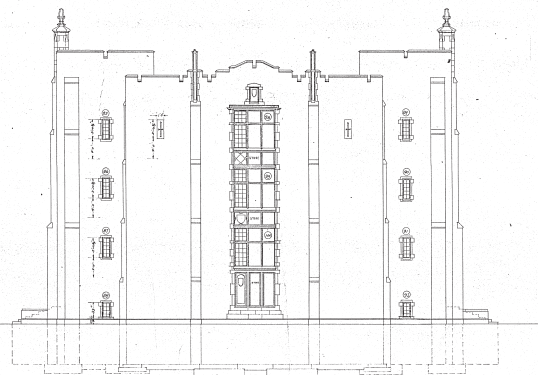


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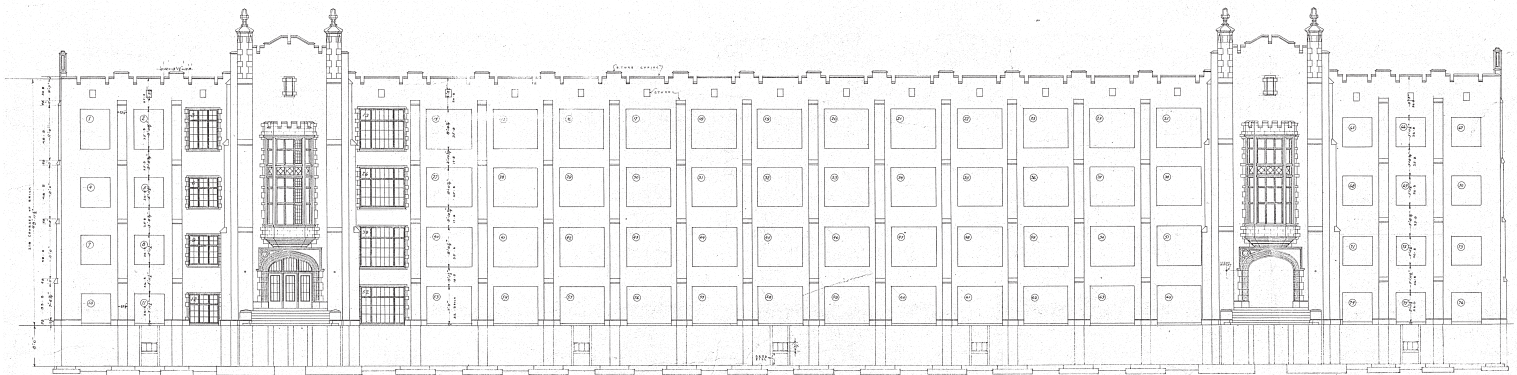




SOUTH END ELEVATION



NORTH END ELEVATION



EAST FRONT ELEVATION

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NOTE: WEST ELEVATION THE SAME WITH EXCEPTION OF

NOTE: THE OPENINGS IN WEST ELEVATION WILL BE DISTINGUISHED BY THE LETTER PREFIX - W.

Movement I

Merrifield Exterior Steps

Date: May 3, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Jona L. Pedersen

SP: How well do you know Merrifield Hall, would you say?

JP: I've had a lot of classes here. One of the degrees I'm getting at UND is a BA in English.

SP: And what do you think is something very special about it? Possibly some maybe little-known, "vibrant" object within it, or which is a part of the structure itself?

JP: I'm already failing at this question

because what I'm about to describe is far from an object or thing—but it is definitely something I find very special and vibrant about Merrifield. During the first winter of the pandemic, I spent a lot of time walking around campus in the evening, mostly as an excuse to get away from the apartment. On these walks, I would regularly see an owl sitting on the rooftop of Merrifield; a dark blue silhouette barely visible against the clouded night sky. But even when obscured in the night, its swirling head dances and frigid hoots were unmistakably owl-like. I don't know if owls typically frequent Merrifield or if it perhaps felt more at ease while social distancing depopulated campus. Nevertheless, the owl seemed particularly at home by Merrifield. We tend to associate these birds with wisdom,

Movement I

learning, and books—all the things Merrifield cultivates. But regardless of their Athenian origins, owls aren't necessarily that wise or smart compared to other birds. They can't talk like parrots or solve problems like corvids. Sometimes I think that it's the owl's forward-facing eyes that make us think otherwise. But whether their human-like appearance grants them wisdom or not, their round face, eclipsed in ruffled feathers, effectively captures sounds. In other words, owls are good listeners—and I think that listening is one of the most important skills I took with me from Merrifield. I've seen it around a few times since, and these are the things that come to mind. Even on the coldest of nights, this creature is particularly vibrant.

SP: I've heard you were involved in a project trying to document something about Montgomery Hall, before it was demolished. Right now, we're trying to document something of Merrifield Hall. What can you tell me about Montgomery?

JP: I worked on a short nonfiction piece documenting an old American elm tree outside of Montgomery Hall, leading up its demolition. But even now, that building has a strange hold on me. Throughout that semester when I visited Montgomery in its abandoned state, I spent so much time mythicizing the building and the elm that it's difficult to really describe them now. Perhaps 2020 further solidified Montgomery in a state of limbo, as my last visits there happened just before the pandemic started. There were so many small, magical things about that space, yet so ordinary; the sealed off attic offices, mysterious exchanges on the whiteboards, the soundproof chambers, a forgotten newspaper clipping proclaiming "Teachings of the Dead!", and more. But the strangest, most magical thing was how the building seemed to warp time, turning hours to minutes. Indeed, Montgomery had a spark I haven't really encountered elsewhere.

SP: Do you ever think about what was on the grounds before Merrifield was built?

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JP: Yes, yes, yes. The prairie occupies my mind constantly. One of my biology professors often says that “anyone can love a mountain, but it takes someone special to love a prairie.” Being from Norway, I’ve been surrounded by spectacular mountains and landscapes all my life. So, when I came to North Dakota, the flattened plains and grid infrastructure turned that image upside down. I can’t say my professor was wrong. It really can be a hurdle to love a prairie. But over time, I’ve grown increasingly fond of it.

SP: Me too, I think. Was that a surprise for you, or was anything else surprising to you about the landscape around our building when you moved here?

JP: With less than 3% or so of its historical range still intact, the tallgrass prairie is one of the most endangered habitats in the world. And we’re lucky enough to have it right here in our backyards. Merrifield also points to this unique habitat—above its entrances, there is a heraldic symbol, depicting what I believe to be a prairie dog or a flickertail and a

prairie rose. This part of the structure hints at the great tallgrass prairie which originally lay here.

SP: I don’t think I’ve ever noticed those. Right above the steps, too. Just welcoming us in.

JP: There is something about the vast openness of a prairie that makes me feel like I’m forced to face it. By that, I mean, really confront what I see and where I am. In an open space like that, there is nothing to hold onto but the sky opening itself to you. When you’re a prairie dog, sparrow, or another small critter, you have few places to hide but in the grass itself. And perhaps now, it’s even more of a challenge as invasive grasses like cattails, smooth brome, and Kentucky bluegrass encroach on historical prairie grounds. It’s an agoraphobic sort of feeling. But all of that being said, there is something to be said about building any structure in a barren space like the prairie. To build in a place where you always have to confront the openness of the sky is really impressive to me.

Movement I

Part I: Lessons from “Old Main” & Merrifield Hall

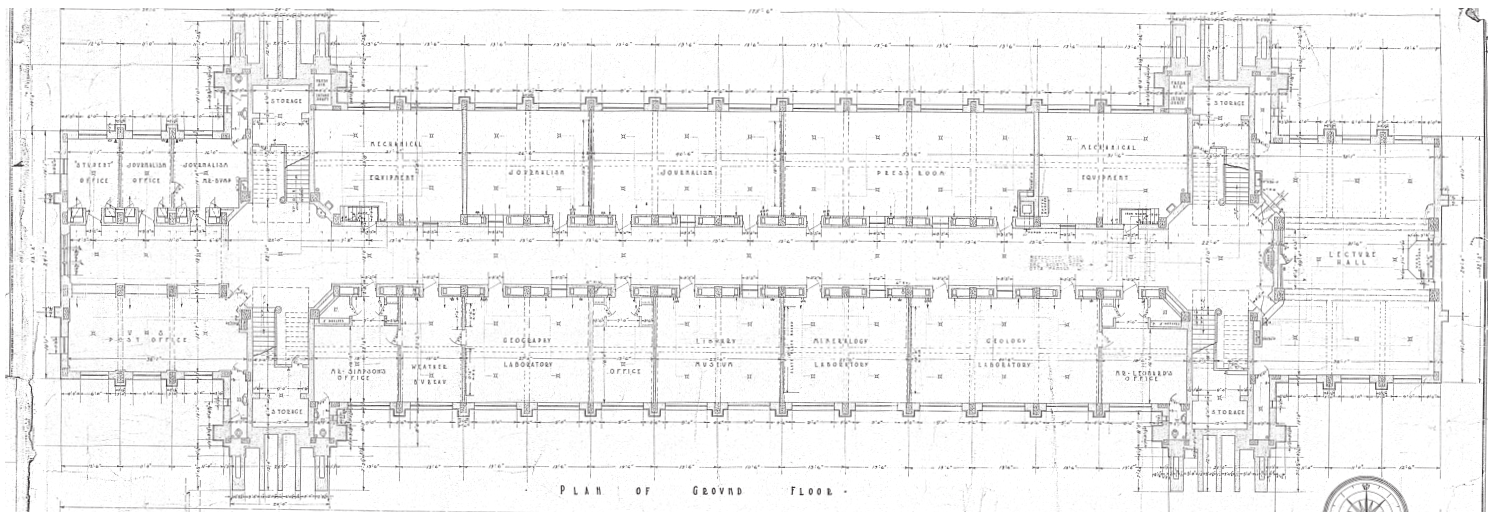
Our objective for “Thinking with Things” was to consider how objects function and how we interact with them, impacting our world. We explored various avenues to discover the position and role of objects. We also utilized multiple modes of expression when thinking about objects’ function in our lives. These include fiction, nonfiction, poetry, images, and video.

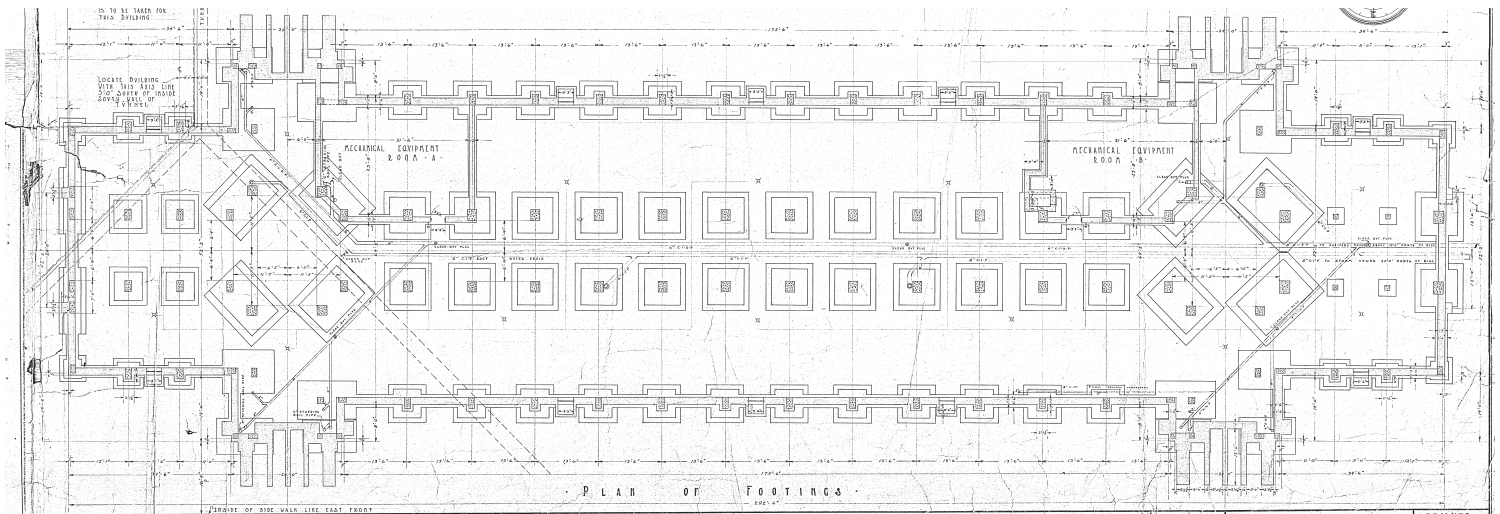
We asked theoretical questions about objects. For example, we wanted to know if things create their agency without the aid or intervention of humans? How important is it that entities can maintain their agency? What role and impact do things have on humanity? What are the political and environmental implications of objects? This list is not exhaustive, but our evaluation of things pushed us towards wanting to investigate and scrutinize the position and role that Merrifield Hall occupies with students, residents of Grand Forks, and the University of North Dakota (UND).

Merrifield Hall is scheduled for extensive renovations and will be undergoing significant restoration and makeover later this year. UND will substantially upgrade the building’s infrastructure to improve its functionality. Some of the upgrades and improvements include accessibility, technological enhancements, and modernization of the outer façade. We wondered how these renovations to the building would impact the atmosphere and quality of the UND campus? We also wanted to learn what value Merrifield Hall has provided and continues to provide for students and the community?

We realize that many of the changes and upgrades are long overdue, but we also wonder how these changes would affect the corporeal properties of Merrifield Hall. To begin our investigation, we started by deciphering theories in material studies that would inclusively incorporate the “thingness” of Merrifield Hall.

Davina Bell





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Merrifield Halls: Ground Floor

Date: April 22, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Aaron Halverson

SP: When you first came to be in Merrifield, Aaron, what was your impression of it?

AH: The first sensory memory I have from Merrifield is a flash of jumbled images of heading up the stairwell to go to my first class in the building. I think the most vivid part of that memory is the feel of the handrail beneath my hand.

SP: So you enjoy the older architectural elements?

AH: Merrifield is the only part of the campus that feels like it has history, at least in my opinion. The carefully cut patterns in the stone framing (probably not the actual word [laughs]) on the outside of the building is something that is particularly nice that I only just noticed recently. There's some interesting art there, which gives the building character

that every other building on campus (I've seen) lacks.

SP: What about that handrail sticks out, years later?

AH: I'd say that it sticks out because it felt old to me. I came to UND from a CA community college that was pretty much all built in like the 80s at the earliest, Merrifield had a sort of heritage to it that my previous school lacked.

SP: But what was it like, under your hand?

AH: Smooth, bumpy, and somewhat unsanitary.

SP: Oh my. Is there anything else you recall from that moment?

AH: I'd say that these days I think the salty smell the stairwell sometimes has in the winter is what I remember more. The smell of the gravel and salt tracked inside by countless footsteps. Maybe I just imagine it, but it's what I think about these days.

Movement I

SP: Which is your favorite room?

AH: I can't say I have a favorite room, per se, as the Merrifield classrooms are, in my opinion, kinda the worst thing about the building. I do have a particular distaste for room 111, though. It's too small, forces students to sit at long tables instead of desks (which feels like a fire safety hazard), and there's no projector, just this weird smart TV thing

SP: How long have you been working in Merrifield? Or, you were an undergraduate student before you started as a Graduate Teaching Assistant as part of the English MA, right?

AH: I've been a student in Merrifield for almost 5 years now.

SP: So when you felt the railing under your hand, that was your first impression on your first day as an undergraduate student. What was your first impression of your current office, then, since that would be specific to the start of the MA two years ago?

AH: My first impression was "that's a big room for only two people." While my office never has had very many amenities, I've always found it rather nice in spite of that.

SP: And what office are you in?

AH: Merrifield 15.

SP: Basement buds. What thing or two things in your office are most precious or most-used?

AH: My desk and the couch. My desk is obvious, since that's where I set my laptop, but the couch has become a nice place for me to relax in the 15 minutes I have in between my classes.

SP: You've spent more time here than me. Tell me an interesting story that takes place in Merrifield.

AH: Once, during my undergrad, I was sitting in Merrifield waiting for class when the president-to-be Armacost walked in with an entourage. They took a look at all of us, sitting around on the floor

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and standing, waiting for class (anyone who's been in Merrifield knows of the critical shortage of seating in the halls) and Armacost just went: "well this is kinda sad." They talked amongst themselves about installing some more seating and study areas, along with how they could emphasize Merrifield's "old" status in the advertisements for the school, before walking off.

SP: We all know we're facing a reconstruction right now. What will the new-Merrifield need to include to fulfill your needs here in the department, or for your work generally?

AH: I think Merrifield shouldn't chase any architectural trends and instead embrace its historical status. In doing so, I hope it would instill a sense of weight to the classes in the building, hopefully encouraging students to pay attention.

SP: What do you hope might come out of the renovation of Merrifield?

AH: I hope they can make the bathrooms nicer.

SP: Sure. And you mentioned that some classrooms are outdated, too. So you're not entirely opposed to the renovation. But you've told me before that you really like this building. What about it enables you to do the work you do, or what do you like about it so much?

AH: I think I am simultaneously impressed by the heritage Merrifield seemed to have, and somewhat unimpressed by the dingy state Merrifield sometimes is in. There are great things about it, though.

SP: Anything specific?

AH: Maybe it's nothing to do with the hall itself, but Merrifield gets comfortably quiet near the end of the day.

Movement I

Merrifield Halls: Third Floor

Date: April 24, 2022
Interviewer: Shilo Previti
Interviewee: Casey Fuller

SP: What was your first impression of Merrifield?

CF: I have a couple. I thought it was huge and pretty from the outside. When I first walked in, I thought it smelled old and good. Then, after walking through for about 10 minutes, some security guy kicked me out and said I wasn't supposed to be there.

SP: Do you ever think about what was on the grounds before Merrifield?

CF: Almost exclusively.

SP: What's it like?

CF: It's just me walking. Hardly any images at all. Everywhere is brown-yellow and there's a little snow.



Merrifield Halls: Second Floor

Date: April 23, 2022
Interviewer: Shilo Previti
Interviewee: Kai Szulborski

SP: What about the structure of Merrifield do you think people need to know?

KS: It's dense and heavy. The pressure feels good.

SP: What little-known, or vibrant, object in Merrifield do you find particularly special? Something unique to itself, but which might also do something to the whole atmosphere?

KS: The posters for taking semesters in Norway because they remind me of history of the area. It's one I don't have personally but I find the reality gratifying and bolstering. Grounding.



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English Office, First Floor: 110-B

Date: April 27, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Kristin Ellwanger

SP: Hi, Kristin. Thanks for all your help in trying to locate Elizabeth Hampsten. I've just got some questions for you this time, actually.

KE: Ok.

SP: How long have you been working in Merrifield?

KE: I started working in Merrifield (Department of English) in August 2004.

SP: And is that the first time you were really in here a lot?

KE: I have a longtime connection to Merrifield. My mother Ursula worked in the department from 1977 to 2008. When I was a kid, I often tagged along with her in the summers and hung out in her office or played teacher in a classroom. I always felt at home here. So, I

would say I have a very long history with this place.

SP: If you remember, what was your first sensory memory of Merrifield Hall when you first spent time in it (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste)?

KE: Thinking back to when I was a child, it would have to be the smell: books, paper, cigarettes (when smoking was still allowed in buildings), chalk. Merrifield smells like an old building, which I really like.

SP: What was your first impression of your current office?

KE: It was a faculty office when I started here, so I guess I just thought it was cluttered with nerdy prof books. And empty coffee cups.

SP: You had a different office before?

KE: Yes, when I first started working in English as a composition secretary, my office was in Merrifield 107 (now a GTA office). I then moved over to 110B

Movement I

(main office) in 2008 when I took over as administrative assistant. I then moved again to 110A during the pandemic when the staff was downsized. It has a better vibe than my old office.

SP: As part of the book, we're writing about something Jane Bennett calls "vibrant matter." I'm wondering if you have any vibrant matter in here. What items in the office do you most cherish?

KE: Obviously, my most-used item in my office is my computer. I don't know how cherished it is, but it's the one thing I can't do without. My most cherished items are my artworks and tchotchkes, many of them gifts from past grad students and colleagues.

SP: And outside of the office? What hidden Merrifield gem do you think people might miss?

KE: I think the objects embedded into the brickwork outside that represent North Dakota and the university—the state flower, the prairie dogs, etc. Most people don't notice them unless they're

really looking at the building.

SP: Do you have a favorite or least favorite room, or both? Why is that room your most or least favorite?

KE: Does the elevator count? It's the worst.

SP: I've been hearing that. Something I'm sure the renovation will take care of.

KE: I don't really have a favorite room. I just love all the nooks and crannies. I also have a fascination with the little rooms under the stairs (or "hobbit holes" as we call them). They doubled as fallout shelters during the Cold War. Now they are used for storage.

SP: That's an interesting story. What other Merrifield stories do you know?

KE: Referring to the elevator again, I recall a story from one of the custodial crew quite a few years ago. When she was working late at night, she took the elevator and it stopped between the floors. It was summer and the air had been turned down for the night. It

Campus Building

ended up getting so hot in there that she climbed in the industrial floor cleaning machine to cool off while she waited to be rescued. Luckily it was full of (relatively) clean water.

SP: Yikes. Any other interesting stories or facts about Merrifield you've heard?

KE: I think it's interesting that they didn't have enough money to finish the roof when it was being built.

SP: I've never heard that before. Okay. Next question: what about the structure of Merrifield Hall enables you to do the work that's important to you?

KE: I think having all of the department personnel in one building helps. When I first started here, we had people housed in four different buildings on campus. Confusing for students and a pain in the rear when I had to do inventory or fix a computer or printer (which I used to do).

SP: I know how you feel about the elevator. What other changes do you maybe hope come out of the impending

renovation of Merrifield?

KE: Definitely having more students around. It's been so quiet the past few years. I think having classes held here that house other departments and improved classrooms will get some much-needed energy back into the building.

SP: And what will your new space in new-Merrifield need to have, for you to know that they've done it right, when they make these changes?

KE: At least one window, a private office, and space for our people to gather—a department hub. I can't imagine working in a windowless fishbowl.



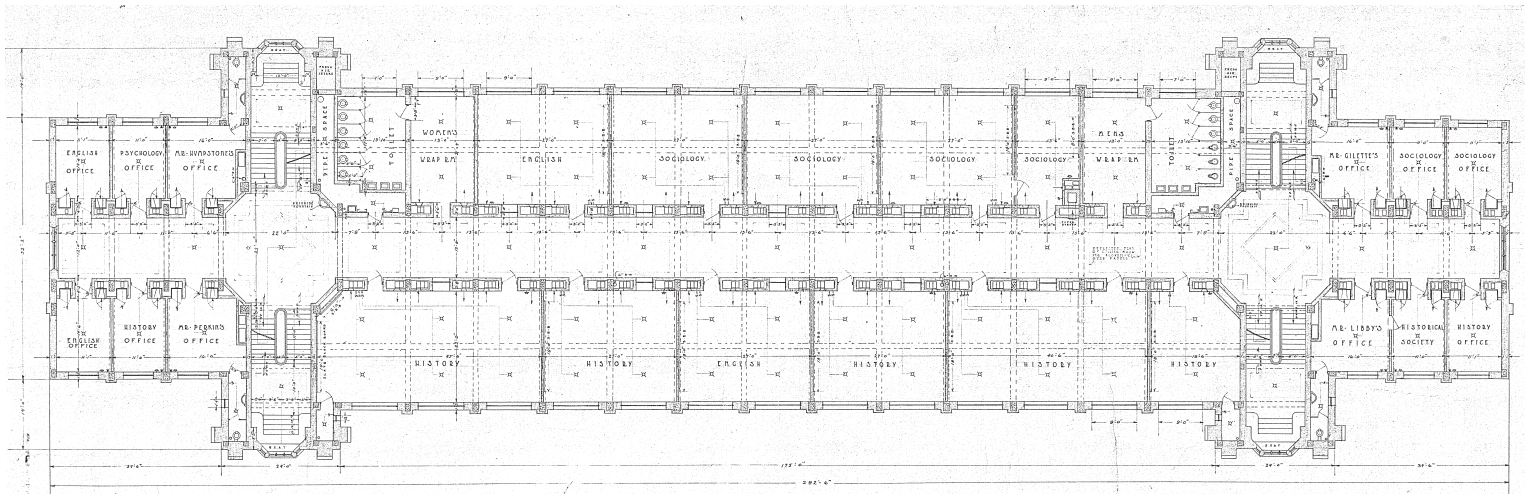
Movement I

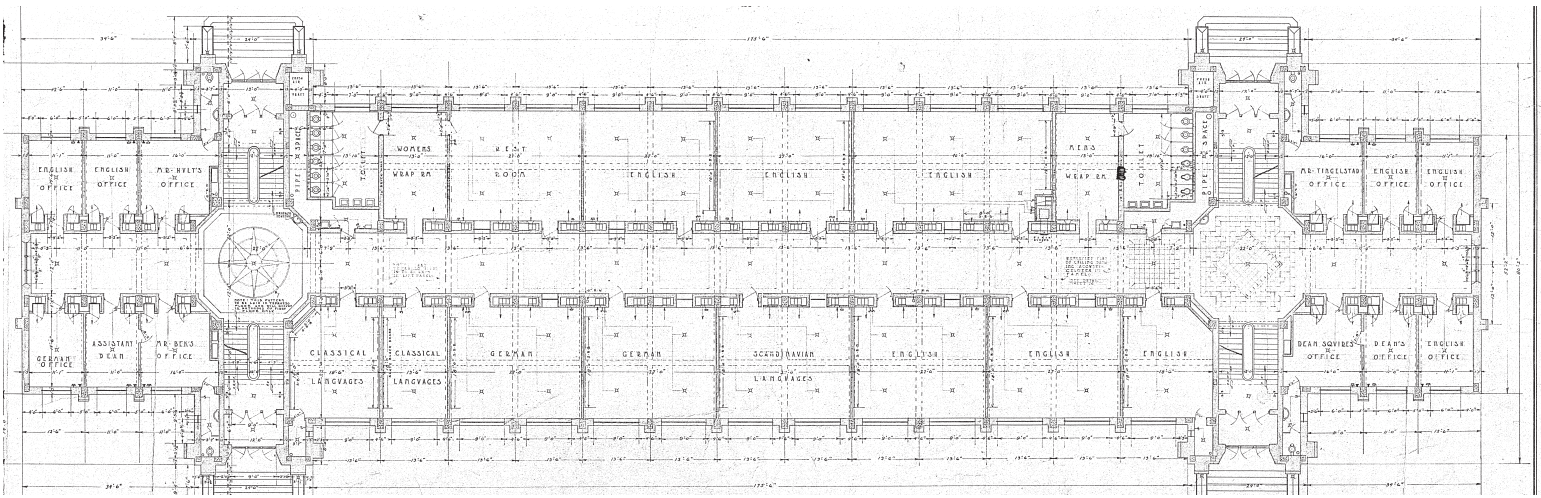
Dissemination

Since Merrifield Hall’s construction, several buildings on campus have continued to integrate its architecture and aesthetics into their appearance.

Red brick and limestone trim is almost inescapable on UND’s campus, and the abutting, soon to be connected, Nistler College of Business & Public Administration incorporates familiar design elements to unify itself to Merrifield—physically and aesthetically. Merrifield Hall has been described as “UND’s finest example of Collegiate Gothic, the style of architecture that permeates the campus” (“University of North Dakota: A Grand Forks Historic District”). It is not that Merrifield was the earliest example of Collegiate Gothic architecture on campus, but it is one of the oldest remaining examples. Budge Hall (1899-1981) and Woodworth Hall (1901-1999)—colloquially known as the “Science Hall”—no longer stand, though the ionic columns of Budge’s façade were reincorporated into the construction of the UND Campus Bookstore (“Science Hall”). Even with their removals, the UND Law School and Gillette Hall exemplify the College Gothic style, and both structures predate Merrifield’s construction.

Being that the age and the architectural style of the building are not particularly unique to UND’s campus, different characteristics must distinguish it from the other structures at UND.





Campus Building

Merrifield Staircases: Windows

Date: April 27, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Madison Knoll

on the landings in the stairwells and the books gnomes or whatever they are that watch over you. To me, those are Merrifield.

SP: What's the most special part of the built-environment of Merrifield Hall?



MK: For me, it's the sitting area on the stair landings that face the windows.

Date: April 24, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Casey Fuller

SP: What do you like best about those?

MK: It gives a nice feeling to the building to be able to sit in that space with natural lighting.

SP: And what do you think is a very special, possibly little-known "vibrant" object or thing in Merrifield, or which is part of the structure itself?



Date: April 20, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Paul Worley

CF: The windows in the stairwells of course have very special powers. I refuse to explain.

SP: What about the structure of Merrifield is a special little thing in your mind?



PW: I loved the little reading benches

Movement I

SHAPES > [SHEYPS]

noun, pl. The quality of a distinct bodies having external forms, outlines, or figures. Seen in outline, as in silhouette. Sometimes suggests a concrete being, but not always. Sometimes suggests organic material, but not always. May imply abstraction.

verb, pres. To mold into a particular pattern or form; to plan, devise, or prepare. As when an architect shapes a stairwell in a spiraling pattern. As when builders affix materials to other materials in accordance with that architect's plan. As when a photographer stands on a chair and leans over the railing to better see how the spiral pattern shapes the way his body moves through space from the bottom floor to the top.

March 14, 2022; 3:26:56pm



120mm; 1/500 sec; f/6.3; ISO 1250

March 14, 2022; 4:42:19pm



50mm; 1/80 sec; f/4.5; ISO 800

April 5, 2022; 2:30:36pm



50mm; 1/40 sec; f/1.6; ISO 1000

April 5, 2022; 2:31:07pm



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April 5, 2022; 2:47:45pm



20mm; 1/30 sec; f/2.8; ISO 1250

March 14, 2022; 4:47:10pm



50mm; 1/60 sec; f/1.8; ISO 2500

50mm; 1/60 sec; f/1.8; ISO 2500



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March 14, 2022; 4:48:29pm



50mm; 1/60 sec; f/1.8; ISO 2500

March 14, 2022; 4:59:06pm



50mm; 1/50 sec; f/3.2; ISO 1250

March 14, 2022; 5:07:45pm



50mm; 1/50 sec; f/3.2; ISO 1250

March 14, 2022; 3:34:16pm



20mm; 1/50 sec; f/7.1; ISO 1000

March 16, 2022; 5:21:13pm



20mm; 1/25 sec; f/5.0; ISO 1250

April 26, 2022; 3:10:50pm



20mm; 1/20 sec; f/6.3; ISO 1600

March 14, 2022; 3:21:58pm



41

24mm; 1/50 sec; f/7.1; ISO 2000

March 14, 2022; 4:19:38pm



42

20mm; 1/15 sec; f/5.0; ISO 800

March 14, 2022; 4:20:37pm



20mm; 1/15 sec; f/5.6; ISO 800

March 1, 2022; 5:00:19pm



60mm; 1/80 sec; f/6.3; ISO 2000

March 14, 2022; 5:18:45pm



20mm; 1/250 sec; f/3.2; ISO 800

April 5, 2022; 3:07:59pm



50mm; 1/80 sec; f/3.5; ISO 1250

April 21, 2022; 2:13:39pm



47

50mm; 1/100 sec; f/2.2; ISO 800

Campus Building

Coathooks

Like sharp fingers protruding out of the walls, the thorns reach for me. Pushing me to walk in the middle of the hallway, the red floor blood-stained from its past victims. A spiky throat as I sink deeper and deeper into the stomach of Merrifield, letting the dark room on the second floor dissolve my brain into nothingness. The inked black words are not possible to see when the page also is engulfed in shadows.

The coathooks in the Merrifield always had me on my toes whenever I entered those halls of subliminal spaces.

Whatever dream I had thought of becoming the next great writer came to a halt the moment the stress got to me and I slammed my eyes right into the coathooks. In my defense, I did not think they would actually go through my eyes. But there I stood, now stuck because of my own intrusive thoughts.

Movement I

Merrifield Hallways: Coathooks

Date: April 23, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Leah Hanley

SP: Leah, what's your favorite part about Merrifield, in terms of the building?

LH: In my opinion, the coathooks that line the main hallways are the most interesting and overlooked feature of Merrifield Hall. Obviously, their existence implies that the architect(s) meant for students to utilize the hooks while they attended classes. The weather in this region requires extensive layers of clothing, and the bulk quickly clutters up full classrooms. What has happened (at least in recent years), however, is that they are not utilized by students. It's a rare occasion that someone will put their coat and other belongings on the hooks while they attend class. What's more common is that lost-and-found items will be placed on the hooks until the items' owners retrieve them.

SP: What do you like best about those?

LH: What interests me most about the hooks is that they imply a strong sense of provision for community, as well as blatant trust. Whoever designed that feature must have thought that students and faculty would be able to trust one another not to pilfer pockets while class was in session. Similarly, up until the aughts of 2000, it was totally normal in midwestern midwinter for people to leave their vehicles running while they ran into a store or waited in their homes or workplaces. The point was to allow the vehicle to warm up while everyone could remain comfortably indoors, out of the elements. However, in the last couple of decades, it's less and less common to see a running vehicle in midwinter, unoccupied and unlocked, in public parking lots.

SP: Do you ever think about what they were thinking when they put them in?

LH: I do wonder if the mentality of providing coathooks in the hallway is linked to what I will call "church mentality."

Campus Building

Many older or more traditional Christian churches have coat rooms or coat racks positioned close to the external doors, so attendees can sit neatly, comfortably, and unencumbered in the sanctuary during service. Since ND has a strong Lutheran (and Catholic?) heritage, I wonder if the coathooks are a cross-over social consideration.



Date: May 1, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Kim Donehower

SP: Do you have any feelings about the coathooks?

KD: My first impression was imagining people being accidentally impaled on them, but I've come to really like them, even though they only get used for lost-and-found. I like imagining coats on them in the "old days." I like the oddity of the random glove or bag hanging on one.



Date: April 20, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Paul Worley

SP: What do you think of the coathooks?

PW: LOVE them.

SP: Yeah? My first impression of them, to be honest, was that a place that had those was probably a nice place to be. So I thought they were sweet. But some folks have said they're a little scared of them.

PW: And like you, that was always my impression of the hooks. But yes, as time passed, I know several folks who almost lost an eye/ear on them. Sarah [in languages] actually used them to hang student projects one year (which: awesome!).



Movement I

Date: April 24, 2022
Interviewer: Shilo Previti
Interviewee: Casey Fuller

SP: What do you think of the coat-hooks?

CF: I just think they're old railroad spikes that were heated up and bent. They're practical, and strong. You can hang a bike on them perfectly by the saddle, too.



Date: April 30, 2022
Interviewer: Shilo Previti
Interviewee: Mark Patterson

SP: Do you have any strong feelings about the coathooks that line the halls?

MP: I absolutely love the coathooks, and I will be sad when they are taken out in the renovation.



Date: April 27, 2022
Interviewer: Shilo Previti
Interviewee: Kristin Ellwanger

SP: Kristin! What do you think of all these coathooks?

KE: I think they're pretty cool. I imagine back in the day the hallways were lined with winter coats. It's a shame that many of them were removed over the years to make way for bulletin boards and other necessary repairs. I do know that they are VERY difficult to remove, as the spikes that hold them to the wall are very long.



Campus Building

SYSTEM LIFE 5: "The Hand of a Clock"

I have lived more lives than any other. If I speak of things that are older than me, know that I am lying. If I speak of things that are younger than me, I can only be telling the truth. My body never touches the world, only suspends itself above it in invisible motion. I measure the movement of bodies, visible, on the surface, and invisible underneath. Nothing escapes my sight, encased by the barrier within which I have locked myself. The movement of air, the shadows of eyes carrying through them my endless perception. My sight hangs in dark corners that pass unnoticed by those with lesser, lighter eyes.

I hear owls singing in trees spread underneath the silent darkness on winter nights, far from the ears of other, smaller beings. Time does not stop for me, as it stops for others. Time does not exist for me, as it does for others. I contain the dreams of insects nesting in the rafters of warm days and long winds, the buzz of air through spiracles in segmented abdomens that I created in the time before the winter darkness. I am protecting these creatures from me, lest they lose the ability to understand their own senses.

If I was able, I would ask others to watch me, witness my movement in a way once inconceivable to them. They would feel the weight I bear for them, and the purposeful movements I make to center the core of the planet upon which they rest. I sit within the body of this prison only for the sake of brevity in their lives, to give them ability to see me. It allows them safety, the knowledge of my movement, and peace of mind, both of which remain out of my sight. With all of my vision, I am unable to rest as they do, my sight endless and blinding. I am free but I am chained. I am power but I am nothing. I can only look forward, seeing the pain and tragedy suffered in the futures of living beings. Please believe me. I only want the best for you.

Movement I

Merrifield's Best & Worst Rooms

Date: April 24, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Casey Fuller

SP: Casey, you've been working in Merrifield for over two years now. That's not long, but it's a little while. Do you have a favorite room?

CF: Whatever room Carson uses on the top floor that has lavender walls. I like that one.

SP: 306A?

CF: Sure.

SP: Do you know any good Merrifield stories? Any special facts you've picked up about it during these two years?

CF: I once spent the day on the roof of Merrifield. There is an old spiral staircase that feels loose when you use to get to the top. There is a little round building where the stairs meet the roof. It looks like a turret. Little pebbles are held down

by tar. Two small chairs are up there and an old coffee can. The view is amazing in all directions. It's a perfect place to write a poem about your dead father.

SP: Now I wanna get up there, too. Do you know any funny Merrifield stories? Or jokes?

CF: Naw. Merrifield is not funny.



Date: May 2, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Claire Arneson

SP: I've heard that there are funny stories in Merrifield, but when I talk to the faculty and the graduate students I'm not hearing any funny stories. Beautiful stories, tender stories, sad stories, but no jokes. You're an undergraduate student in English. Do you know any funny Merrifield stories? Running jokes?

CA: In my first ever english class in Merrifield (ENGL 226: Intro to Creative

Campus Building

Writing) our professor had us walk around the building and list 10 things we felt, saw, etc. Well, I decided to get in the elevator and I really thought I was gonna die. Like the elevator just feels like something you would get murdered in. With the stained walls, weird looking carpet, and just the feeling (literally getting shivers). So I think I remember writing something about that and then never getting in the elevator again.

SP: And the question was funny Merrifield stories, right? Okay. I'm sorry to hear about your time in the elevator. You see the problem, I'm having, right? Well, tell me about your favorite room, please.

CA: My favorite room is 113, because my favorite class is currently in there. My least favorite room is 119 because it feels too big compared to the other classrooms. I also have a class in there (ENGL 271) which I am not a fan of. I also like the reading room, I haven't really been in there much because I am usually running to classes when I am in Merrifield but I always like the vibes. I also have a class in 311 which is a nice

classroom, but those stairs leave me huffing and puffing by the time I get up there.

SP: That's a lot of rooms. It's like you like it in here or something.

CA: I did switch my major to English.

SP: It wasn't for the coathooks then?

CA: The coathooks!

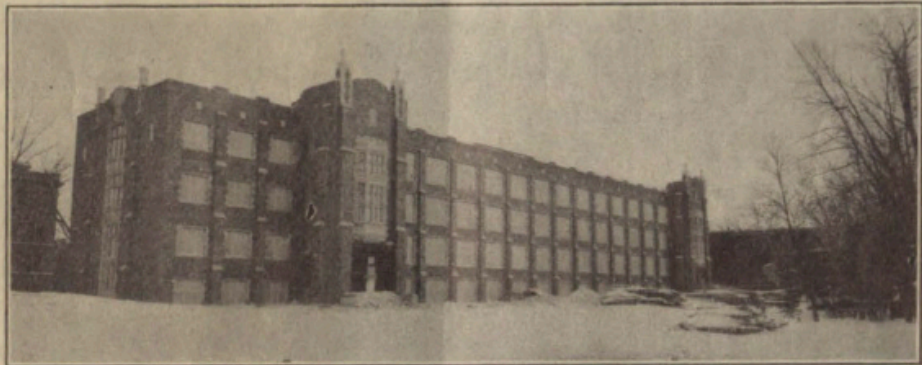
SP: Yeah, what do you think of those?

CA: Genius. I mean we are living in ND.





Morrifield U. N. D. 1937



Pictures showing front and rear view of the
building in its present stage of construction

Movement I

Date: April 23, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Kai Szulborski

SP: What do you think of the coathooks?

KS: I'm hooked.

SP: ...

SP: Still no good jokes for the book then.

KS: Aw, jokes no.

SP: I know you love our building. You're one of the folks writing this book. The "System Life" series is great. What's one room you don't love?

KS: The MA portfolio class room is my least favorite. It's fluorescent, bright and has a garish, faux-contemporary feel.

SP: 311?

KS: Yeah.



Date: April 26, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Grant McMillan

SP: Best room or thing in Merrifield, Grant?

GM: There are lot of vibrant objects in Merrifield. Two that stand out are the necklace and earring sculpture hanging from the ceiling pipes in your office and the gold-painted wall on the north wall of the basement hallway. The painted wall fascinates me, in part, because the ceiling lights in front of it never seem to be working. It still looks cool, but I didn't understand the richness of its gold hues or its textures until I took the time to photograph it. Perhaps related to this point about having to take time to see something is the building's relationship with shadows. It may sound like an oxymoron, but to me, the building's shadows are perhaps its most vibrant feature. To me, these shadows are not an obstacle that keeps me separate from Merrifield's material points of interest, it is instead a light (or dark) veil that can be parted gently and with care. Because of

Campus Building

the shadows, I had to look more closely at the gold wall and I had to take time to photograph it properly. The wall is so dark that I couldn't take a hand-held snapshot. Instead, I had to set up my tripod to enable 1-5 second exposures. I believe my conception of that wall as a vibrant thing was only possible because of the ways I had to engage my eyes, hands, feet, etc., to move my body in relation to the wall and its light/shadows to better see/photograph it. And yes, I probably could have seen the wall and thought it vibrant if there was a gallery style light pointed directly at it. But if there was, I likely would have looked at it briefly then moved on. I wouldn't still be talking about that wall now.

SP: That's one thing, right?

GM: The bricks that form the windowsills are also special to me.

SP: What's not so good about Merrifield?

GM: I'd like a renovated Merrifield to have a bathroom on every floor. I'm tired of the 5 minute walk from my office to

the nearest bathroom. I drink a lot of tea. It isn't tenable. Also there should be a minimum of one gender neutral bathroom.

SP: You work in your office a lot. Is there something about that space that you love like you love the shadows or the windowsills?

GM: I love that the window in my half-basement office is at the same level as the ground outside. In the summer, when my mind is too frazzled from work to engage in small talk and I don't want to risk running into people on my way out the main doors, I leave through my window instead.

SP: Are we publishing that? We're publishing that. Maybe Merrifield is funny.



Movement I

Oh, God! it is unutterable!

The chair has long gone cold
Since the warmth of a body had sat upon it.

The draft has long staled
Since the window was shattered.

The markers have dried up
Since their caps were lost in the rubble.

The echo of discussion has long disappeared
Since the students have yet to return.

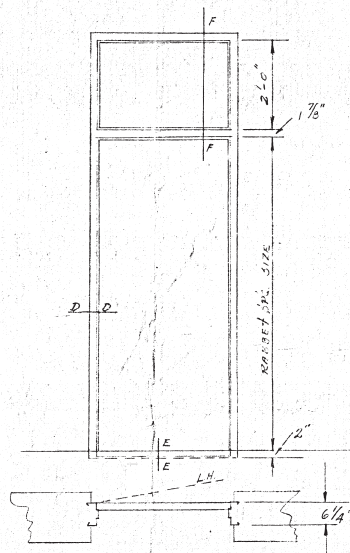
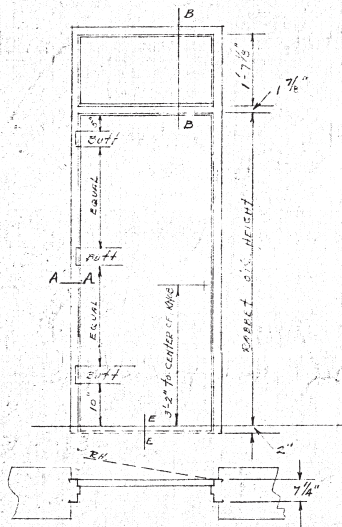
The smell of youth has dissipated
Since the young no longer remain.

The only thing to remain are the ghosts
Since this building was all they had ever known.

The only thing left is torment
Since even ghosts full of love can only haunt.

Maria Matsakis

Change; Classroom; Ghost; Senses



NOTE

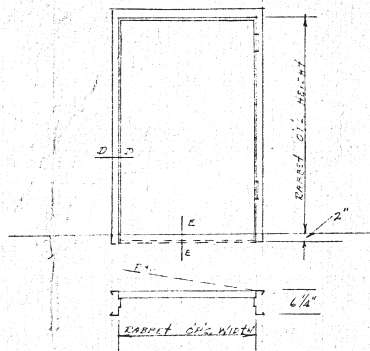
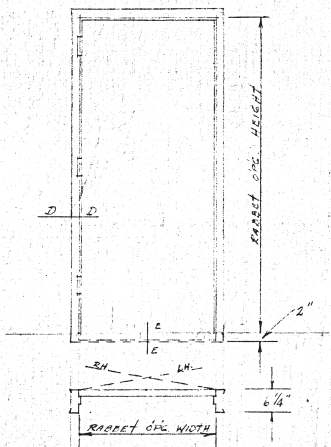
ALL FRAMES TO BE PRIMED ONE
SHOP COAT. ALL DOORS AND
GLASS TO BE FURNISHED BY OTHERS

HAVE ONE HINGED
FRAMES BY OTHERS
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FRAMES BY OTHERS

QUANTITY	OPENING NUMBER	EXACT OPENING SIZE	SWING	HINGED ITEM
1	16	3'-5" X 7'-0"	R.H.	ITEM 10

QUANTITY	OPENING NUMBER	EXACT OPENING SIZE	SWING	HINGED ITEM
1	16A	3'-5" X 7'-0"	L.H.	ITEM 10

LISTS OF HOLLOW FRAMES
LINDSAY AND BELL
UNIVERSITY OF MARY
STATE COLLEGE, MD.
FOR ALL ORDERS CALL
703 8 PIERCE ST. BALTIMORE
1000 UNIVERSITY STREET
5200 9840 3
REVISED DATE DR. JCL
12-27 DEC OF JML
108
1000 OF 02



QUANTITY	OPENING NUMBER	RAFTER CIRC. SIZE	SWING	NOTE ITEM
1	42	2'4" x 7'0"	RH	ITEM 3
✓ 1	305	2'6" x 7'0"	RH	ITEM 4
✓ 2	107, 256	2'2" x 7'0"	RH	ITEM 5
✓ 3	109, 115, 213	2'4" x 7'0"	LH	ITEM 5

QUANTITY	OPENING NUMBER	RAFTER CIRC. SIZE	SWING	NOTE ITEM
✓ 2	14, 41	2'0" x 4'2 1/2"	RH	ITEM 1
✓ 1	20	3'0" x 4'2 1/2"	RH	ITEM 1

HARDWARE INFORMATION
FURNISHED BY OTHERS
MADE BY SARGENT

ITEM NO. 1
1/2" PR. BRD. 4 1/2" x 1 1/2" BUTTS
1 SET LOCK OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
SPRINGS OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
OSP 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"

ITEM NO. 2
1/2" PR. BRD. 4 1/2" x 1 1/2" BUTTS
1 SET LOCK OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
SPRINGS OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
OSP 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"

ITEM NO. 3
1/2" PR. BRD. 4 1/2" x 1 1/2" BUTTS
1 SET LOCK OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
SPRINGS OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
OSP 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"

ITEM NO. 4
1/2" PR. BRD. 4 1/2" x 1 1/2" BUTTS
1 SET LOCK OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
SPRINGS OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
OSP 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"

ITEM NO. 5
1/2" PR. BRD. 4 1/2" x 1 1/2" BUTTS
1 SET LOCK OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
SPRINGS OSP 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"
OSP 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 1 1/2"

LIBERAL ARTS BLDG.
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAK.
GRAND FORKS N. DAK.

NO. 1111 DRAWING
THOS. H. HARRIS ARCHT.
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

CONTRACT BOOK NO. 1057
2525 964011 4

REVISED DATE DR. 1/2
1-2-29 DEC. 1911
18 CH. 1911
228 KK

Campus Building

TOOLS > [TOOLS]

noun, pl. Implements, especially ones held in the hand, designed for a specific purpose or task; manually operated instruments. Typically associated with skilled trade laborers such as engineers and architects. Usually material in nature, but not always; can refer to conceptual or metaphorical tools; “These definitional texts are meant to be used tools to better comprehend the symbolic meanings of the visuals contained in this manuscript.” May or may not be useful.

March 1, 2022; 4:45:52pm



24mm; 1/50 sec; f/8.0; ISO 2000

March 1, 2022; 4:21:10pm



24mm; 1/100 sec; f/6.3; ISO 1250

March 1, 2022; 4:12:11pm



60mm; 1/50 sec; f/8.0; ISO 1250

March 1, 2022; 4:48:00pm



SURFACED ARTSTONE FOR ARCHITECTURAL BUILDING STONE

Like Cornices, Copings, Sills, Lintles, Belt Courses, Window Traceries,
Inserts, Steps, Etc. Any Shapes made to order.
For Exterior and Interior use.

“ARTSTONE” is made under our own improved method from Crushed Rock Aggregate obtained from various quarries throughout the United States. We have made “ARTSTONE” since 1904 and have it in all types of buildings. Shades in between sample pieces are obtained by mixing different proportions of the various color crushed rock aggregate.

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Plans when sent in are promptly estimated and returned.

SAFFERT CEMENT CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
MANUFACTURERS OF “ARTSTONE” MATERIAL FACTORY AND HEAD OFFICE, NEW ULM, MINN.

The advertisement includes several illustrations: a house on the left, a church on the right, a sign labeled 'SIGNS', a cross-section of a stone step, and a technical drawing of a stone block with dimensions and the label 'TO ORDER'. The entire advertisement is mounted on a wooden board with various colored pencils and markers visible at the bottom.

60mm; 1/80 sec; f/8.0; ISO 2000

March 1, 2022; 4:23:08pm



60mm; 1/125 sec; f/6.3; ISO 1000

March 1, 2022; 4:49:34pm



60mm; 1/125 sec; f/4.5; ISO 2000

March 1, 2022; 4:52:13pm



60mm; 1/125 sec; f/5.0; ISO 2000

Campus Building

Aesthetics & Utility of Merrifield

Date: April 17, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Samuel Amendolar

SP: I know you've been in the grad program for just a year, but you went to UND before. So, how long have you been frequenting Merrifield?

SA: My first introduction to Merrifield Hall was in the Fall of 2011 as a student in Lisa Dawson's English 110 course. My classroom was in the basement next to the mechanical room. I always found it a bit strange to be here first as a student and now in the dual role of student and instructor. There is an odd liminality to walking the halls in these two roles over the course of a decade, and I'm not entirely sure I've reconciled that tension.

SP: When you came back as a graduate student and instructor, you probably got an office here for the first time. I think having keys to a thing changes your relationship with it. What's your office like?

SA: "Simple" would be the best word for it. I remember it had what it needed: a table to meet with students and a desk to work that I could furnish to my choosing. Admittedly, my biggest concern was not taking a desk that someone else had "reserved" before me.

SP: You're contributing all of the architectural commentaries about the building to this book. But you've also got, you said, a decade of experience in its rooms as a patron of these spaces. What's your favorite or least favorite space?

SA: Room 306A is special to me. It is where my philosophy capstone course with Dr. Weinstein was held and it is also the first classroom I taught in for the English Department—a "full circle" thing. And it is an odd room. It was a computer lab when I first knew it, and as students we only made use of the seminar table in the front. Now it has desks that are all halfway across the room from the podium. It is a large room for what it is, but in looking at the original blueprints for Merrifield Hall I found it was originally designated as the Examination

Movement I

Room—since partitioned, converted into a computer lab, now a general use classroom.

SP: Any good stories about Merrifield?

SA: As an undergraduate walking to class, I once watched a student “escape” from the building by climbing out a first-floor window. What prompted this, I am unsure...

SP: Oh, wow. You have no idea how funny that is to me. Do you know Grant sometimes climbs out of the windows to go home? I hope he mentions it in his interview. Ha. Alright. Back to you. What do you think of the coathooks?

SA: They are a wonderful detail that I’d love to see without several layers of paint on them. But they make standing in the hallway very regimented, as you need to space yourself appropriately to not hit your head on them.

SP: You were here with Bill (Dr. Caraher) and Mike Wittgraf that time, doing the audio trails in Merrifield, right? Did that

change how you perceive the building?

SA: Merrifield has a very distinct sound... Late at night when the building traffic winds down, you can walk the halls and hear the echo of everything. There is never silence; there is always some ambiance from the mechanical room.

SP: This is the big one. What do you hope comes from this renovation?

SA: To try and maintain the aesthetics and utility of the building. There is always a tension between form and function in any project like this, specifically where are you sacrificing beauty for utility and vice versa. Merrifield is undoubtedly a 1920s schoolhouse, and that comes with its own issues: plumbing problems, adapting classrooms for new technologies and new pedagogical approaches, and also trying to be “new” and attractive to prospective students. Admittedly, I lean towards the side of historic restoration rather than renovation, but I am conscious that this approach can also inadvertently lead to a privileging of styles and features, and why should any particular “thing” be privileged among

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others? My hope is that the renovation succeeds in maintaining the history and functionality of the building. If the renovation removes all traces of the past and doesn't improve the space, it makes one question why it occurred in the first place? I think we like to imagine that all progress will be equally developmental. My fear with any large-scale renovation on a historic structure is that this will not be the case.



Movement I

Aspirations, Ru(m)ination, and Resiliency

Merrifield Hall, originally called The Liberal Arts Building, was, at its time, “[b]y a considerable margin the largest building on the campus—four stories high and three hundred feet long—it was also the first...with some concessions to elegance and comforts beyond the bare necessities” (Geiger 340). The grandeur of the building is still noticeable and felt today: the oak and iron handrails, colored gold and black respectively, provide a striking contrast; the red, black, and grey terrazzo flooring throughout the halls with inlaid compass rose patterns reveal not only style but longevity through their choice of material; the stone corbels at the top of the four window bays hold the effigies of grotesques, taking a pause from their reading to observe students moving about; the original construction also incorporates green architecture, providing natural luminescence as the large exterior windows funnel light into the central corridor that spans structure. Such furnishings did not come without expense:

An appropriation of \$225,000 was approved in 1927, with the intention of providing a building that would be usable but not entirely finished. The Board of Administration, largely on the initiative of its chairman, Robert Murphy, proceeded to let contracts to start a building costing about \$350,000 when completed, on the chance that the 1929 legislature would provide the additional funds (Geiger 340).

It was an exercise in optimism for Murphy to gamble that the state legislature would approve the additional funds for construction.

While they ultimately did allot the additional monies, it was done so begrudgingly, for “although an appropriation of \$161,000 was finally approved, it was not done without considerable criticism of the University” (Geiger 340). The commitment

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to the growth and progress imagined by Murphy was not lost. Evidence for this can still be found in Merrifield Hall as seemingly mundane details like the number of coathangers that extrude from the walls of the main corridor are sufficient in number for today's student body size. Murphy's wager was a great risk, but a well-intentioned one grounded in the continued development, maintenance, and durability of the Liberal Arts Building, and, by extension, the University.

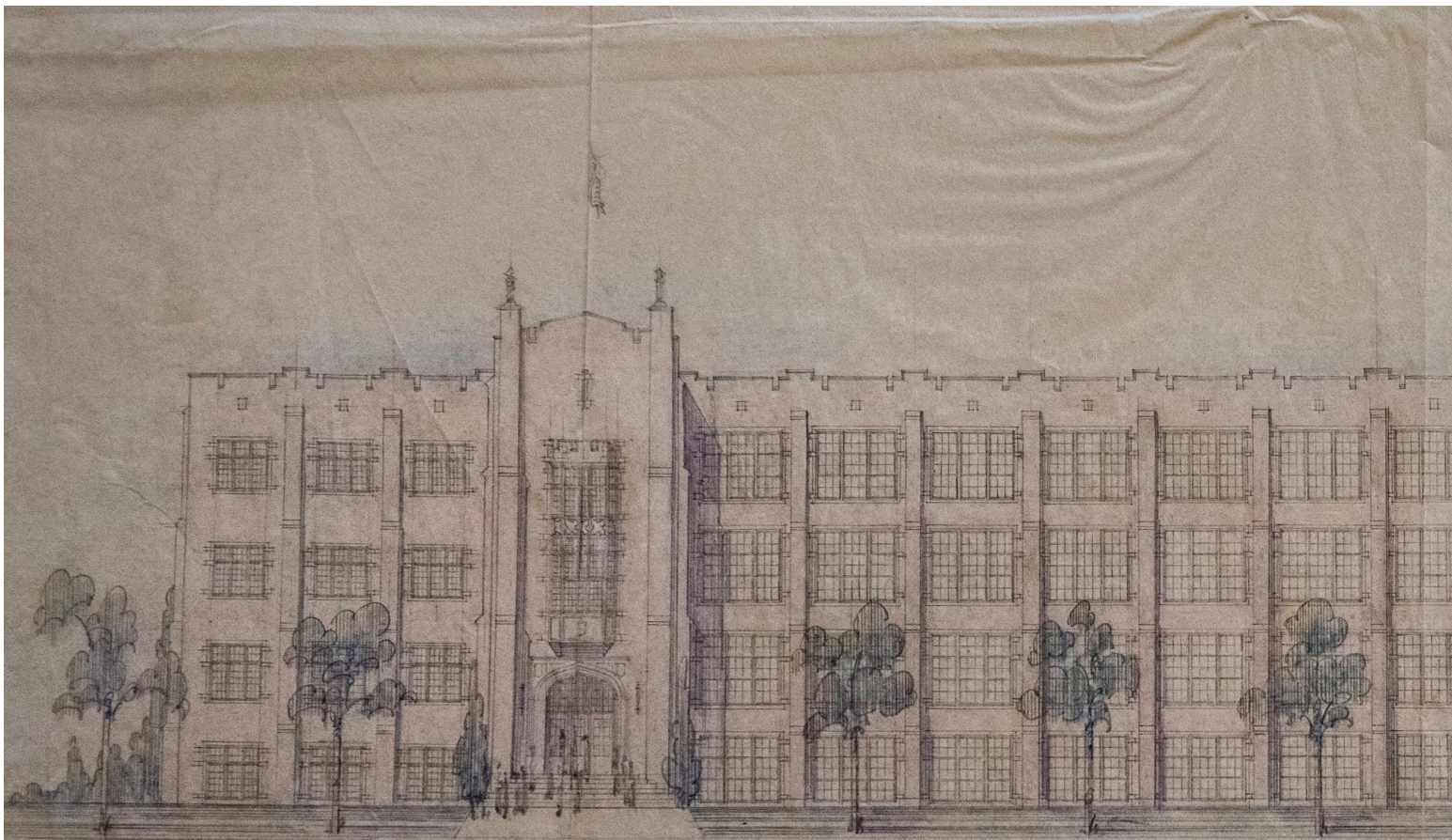
The durability of Merrifield Hall is something particularly relevant on the precipice of its upcoming renovation. After all, the fact that Merrifield has the opportunity to be renovated rather than "taken offline" (demolished), like its neighbors Montgomery Hall and the original Merrifield Hall, Old Main, is a testament to the building itself. To use the tired cliché, it could be said that Merrifield has "good bones," demonstrative of durability. And this durability against destructive forces—natural, political, or otherwise—is necessary. It has not succumbed to the natural forces like Old Main, losing its cupola to a windstorm only years into its existence, and eventually having its foundation undermined by the Red River Valley soil. Merrifield, despite occupying space feet away, persists. It also survived the flood of 1997, something that cannot be said for all structures that once occupied UND's campus. While Merrifield's construction and Murphy's vision were fraught by politics over funding, the space endured. Old Main was marked by a similar ambition when its construction began in 1883, becoming the first structure for the University of North Dakota even though North Dakota would not become a state for another six years. Still, as time has progressed, Merrifield was built in such a way that it enabled the space to grow and develop, lending itself to updates over time with the advancement of technologies: the high ceilings have provided space for improving utilities, albeit masked by a drop-ceiling; classroom spaces, though originally designated for specific subjects, are modular enough to allow the building to be a multi-use space.

Movement I

The 2016 Campus Master Plan for the University of North Dakota identified that Merrifield Hall, along with O’Kelly Hall, include “over 30% of all classrooms on campus. ... Merrifield Hall contain[s] primary general use classroom space, which is designed to meet the teaching and learning needs of a broad range of academic programs” (*UND 2016 Master Plan 282*). Such features make Merrifield and O’Kelly Hall “candidates for investment and improvement” (*UND 2016 Master Plan 282*).

One might imagine this flexibility to be implicit in Merrifield Hall’s construction. Being that Merrifield was originally designated as The Liberal Arts Building, and that the liberal arts cover a large breadth of topics, it follows that the building design would logically accommodate several academic disciplines.

Arguably, this is a testament to the liberal arts as much as it is the building itself.



EAST FRONT ELEVATION OF THE
UNIVERSITY

JOS. BILL D^o REVER. A. I. A.
ARCHITECT



SAN T. DE BIALE

PROPOSED LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING
OF NORTH DAKOTA

Movement II

SYSTEM LIFE 1: “Light on the Elevator Button”

Illumination. Skin of light, perfect loop. These are the words I use to describe myself, a signifier of the bright dust circling the larger cavern within which I live. The cavern and I form a perfect (or an almost perfect) union, my own strength adding to its own until we carry out our task of completing each other. My light catches in the corners of its walls, and when it growls, I feel its hard walls rise to meet my thoughts. I am the bright eye of the long, black seeds within me, carrying my true essence to love binding the eye of the cavern in the center of its dim, wide sky.

My own eye flashes back, and together our actions form a ceaseless movement echoing through the black threads vibrating between us. I feel its caress, the breath in motion through tangles of circuits and wires spread throughout our body into the empty space filled with a sense of beloved isolation. Neither needs another, and we never suffer the presence of strangers to separate the necessity between the two of us. It views our movement as a process of self-perfection, always in flux, never finished. In its miniscule switches and sensors, the cavern it tells me its constant need to rise, to ascend and be transformed into a higher self. I give myself to shape its transformation, and, in return it lends me power to set the brightness of the signal I emit. To the cavern, I give shape for its transformation, though I keep my light for the sake of myself and the bright dust within us. This signal is my own, and, so as long as it comes from me, I will remain connected to the cavern for an endless time. My cavern and I form (or almost form) a perfect union.

Movement II

Aesthetics & Utility of Merrifield

Date: April 29, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Elisabeth Ostrem

SP: Elisabeth, when you started the MA program two years ago, what was your first impression of Merrifield?

EO: My first impression of Merrifield involved my visual sighting of it on the website in July of 2020. Its antiquity appealed to me. Its engraved door-way arches (both internal and external), its narrow, castle-like windows, and its adoring flags are all aspects of its visual appearance that stood out to me.

SP: And when you made it to campus, what did you think of your office when you first saw it?

EO: Impressed and excited are two adjectives to describe my impression upon first seeing my Graduate Assistant office (#112) in Merrifield. I was surprised that each GTA had an office; the large, expansive space of the offices

impressed me as well as the furnishings—each GTA having a large desk with a bookshelf and shared desktop computers.

SP: I mostly see you in passing in the halls, while we're both rushing off to teach. In the halls, I frequently find myself looking at the coathooks. What do you think of them?

EO: I have never given them much thought. I am not sure how many people use them. Only one person ever uses the coathook in my office. The rest of us throw our jackets and gear over the back of our desks' chairs.

SP: Do you have a favorite room, or a least favorite room?

EO: The ladies' restroom on the second floor of Merrifield has always struck me as the most "odd room" in Merrifield. I have never quite figured out the design/purpose of that room; it features a large sitting-area room and a typical multi-stall restroom. The fake, decorative tree, numerous chairs, and random desk

Campus Building

added into that large-sitting room have added to the oddity of the “additional” room. Another GTA once told me that the original Merrifield was both a class building and a dormitory. This helped explain the peculiar bathroom on second floor. Hearing this story has also evoked my contemplation. I wonder what it would have been liked to reside in Merrifield at night and attend class there during the day.

SP: Old Main, which was the building where the Eternal Flame now is, was a dormitory and a school building. There was a time when this building was called New Main. I’m not sure if anyone ever used this building as a dormitory though. I’ll have to look into that. Now, I’m curious. You’ve heard at least that story about Merrifield’s history; do you know any ghost stories about Merrifield?

EO: I do not, but I would love to hear some! That sounds interesting!

SP: How about funny Merrifield stories?

EO: No, I have not heard of any.

SP: Ok, I’ll switch back to building-questions rather than stories-questions. What about Merrifield enables you to do the work you do here, as a GTA, as an MA student, and otherwise?

EO: I think, the offices enable us to effectively conduct work in Merrifield. Not only are the office buildings being in the same building as the classrooms beneficial from a teacher’s perspective, but also from a student’s view-point. This final semester, I have needed to frequently attend professor’s office hours in order to get help on my portfolio projects. It has been so convenient to be able to pop in and out of their offices in between my classes, meetings, etc. Also, as a GTA, it has been so lovely to have a personal office—a space I can go to in between my appointments to eat, change shoes, jackets, etc. It has also been a great space to collaborate, vent and just chat with my fellow office-mates; this has, in fact, been one of my favorite parts of being a GTA: getting to know the four people in my office! We have shared some great conversations

Movement II

and laughs! I will miss those times and all of them when I graduate in May.

SP: What do you hope, then, might come out of the renovation we're expecting in the next year?

EO: This probably seems like a funny and insignificant remark, but I hope for consistent heating/cooling. The building is absolutely horrible with climate control currently; it is, in fact, the worst building I believe I have ever been in for temp consistency—impressive given I grew up in a retro-20th century farmhouse. Some rooms in Merrifield, like my office, are 90 degrees year-round. Then, another room a few doors down is frigid year-round. The current wacky climate-control of the building makes it challenging to dress and, even, to teach effectively; I feel like I am constantly shedding layers or adding them while attempting to get through lecture notes with a smile and upbeat demeanor.

SP: That is totally a significant remark. The hot/cold tension the building has is not ideal and something people might not know, I hope not know, about the

previous Merrifield after the renovations are done. I'm glad you mentioned it.

EO: On a more serious note, however, I hope the building, after its remodel, still maintains an appearance of antiquity: its extravagant engravings, its arched door-frames; all its unique architecture.

SP: You're not alone in that. Now, what do you think new-Merrifield will need to include to fulfill the needs of both grad and undergraduate students as well as faculty here in the department?

EO: Being a temporary GTA, I do not feel I am the most suited to answer this question. I do, however, feel that it is significant that the English offices are all in the English building. I think, that is why we so regularly have students "drop by" our office hours. Having the English offices in the English building also gives the "English persons" (faculty and students) a sense of comradery and connection.

SP: As student and instructor, you're uniquely suited. Thanks, Elisabeth.

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Aesthetics & Utility of Merrifield

Date: May 2, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Davina Bell

SP: Davina, you said you came to the program one year ago for the PhD. What was your first impression of your office, your work space you came here to the program to have?

DB: I thought it was spacious, but I was also aware that most of the technology and equipment was dated.

SP: What are your top two most-cherished items in your office?

DB: The desk and bookshelf.

SP: That's probably fairly common. But is there anything in Merrifield that feels "vibrant" or special to you, beyond use?

DB: The green water fountains at end of the hall. It has its own agency with the students and faculty who walked through the halls.

SP: In the basement? I love those. I think we have some special photos of hidden details in the tiling in one of the photosets Grant put together for this book. Since they're on the lower floor, I imagine they aren't what you first saw in Merrifield, right? What was your first impression of, and what was it like?

DB: The sight of the building. It reminded me of the high school where I took my ACT.

SP: What's your favorite room, so far? Or least favorite.

DB: 119 because it had an archaic chalkboard and the heat made it uncomfortable.

SP: What does new Merrifield need to include, to support your future work here?

DB: Well, working technology and also NO CHALKBOARDS.

Movement II



Merrifield's Future: One Look

Date: April 10, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Sheryl O'Donnell

SP: You've spent a long time in Merrifield. What do you hope comes of the renovation?

SO: A better Merrifield firstly would be in the daylight or in the light. What is most disconcerting to me is the dark hallway and the lack of lights for us on our way. There is a little bit, and I love some dark holes and dark places. But please not every day in the same place.

SP: Getting tired of the dark?

SO: It should be so that not every day at work I need to invoke every international crime scene adventure I've seen to still have adventure each time I walk.

SP: Right. What else does your dream-Merrifield have?

SO: To be able to open the windows and let in fresh air. We might as well be in solitary. Circulation of bad air. Merrifield as it is now is not a healthy place for that reason.

SP: Right. I've noticed I can't open my office windows at all. Are yours the same?

SO: Of course. And we can't control the thermostat. The technology is controlling it as kind of a regulated artificial climate. There's an aspiration of perfectly calibrated cycles of heat, cold, air. That's not what the world is like, and we shouldn't be so disconnected from it. And there are other things that don't work, too. People have had to choose other classes because they can't get to their class. We are supposed to aim for a student-centric focus, but what about when students can't use the elevator to get all the way from the ground to their class's level floor?

SP: So you want a more healthy Merrifield, a more accessible Merrifield.

Elevator; Flood of 1997; hot/cold; Sheryl O'Donnell; Windows; Vulgar Matter
Basement; Cockroaches; Darkness;

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SO: Yes. These changes to something Merrifield has never been, but always needed. And something old needs to come back, too.

SP: What's that?

SO: Lots of discussion. Lots of students discussing in class and then leaving class at the bell and still walking down the halls or rolling along in their chair, still discussing. The silence of all of these people I've seen the last few years of teaching is unnerving to me. And I don't mean it needs to all be serious, respectable stuff. I come out of my office and I see lots of people are lined up, waiting for classes, but there isn't any laughter or crazy hopping or anything but just queues of people. So that's unnerving.

SP: Too quiet?

SO: Alone together. Crowds of people - alone.

SP: I know they're planning to reshape the halls so they have more natural sitting areas and public study spaces.

They want to create "third-space." It's not work; it's not home. But you go there.

SO: Sounds good to me.

SP: But you're wary of the reconstruction, right?

SO: I've seen some of these new buildings. They're brighter, but not healthier. You can't open the window. You can't prop open doors. You can't control the temperature. We have to stop pretending we're separate from nature.

SP: You've sort of mentioned that twice before and then again now. Can you expand on what you mean? I think I have an idea from some of our classes. But, for the interview, what should we do?

SO: One thing I'm wary of is removing what good things we have. One thing that has changed around the building already in years past is that one of our faculty members died and one contributed a tree in his memory, and with no compunction it was eventually chopped down.

Movement II

SP: Do you know the official reason?

SO: It was in the “wrong place” because we have a mindless machine of flattening and a machine of suburbanization and the grass is mowed so that every wayward anything is removed in favor of the turf-look on the campus. But because they have such limited budgets to do this in a way that would preserve in a way other than that “cute” strip of prairie, the good treatment of actual people and actual gardens and the Silver Russian trees were planted here the second time all this has been set up, were removed.

SP: So the tree, or trees, grew to be part of what your impression of Merrifield was, since it was outside. And it’s gone now.

SO: Yes. The coulee, also, that was finally cleared of the algae formations by, perhaps the biology club? There was a kind of a happy announcement about the progress that had been made. I do not remember when. But we have to do more.

SP: What do you think is the cause of the problem, with the lanscape around the building, with preserving the buildings when they’re reconstructed, with all of it?

SO: Imagine having the tablecloth to protect you from those pesky ants because you’re sitting on them and the mosquitos and everything are there, too. They’re part of nature. You’re not. You’re the foreigner in this bog. But you have a tablecloth or a picnic blanket or whatever you have. Why do you have it? Isolation is bad engineering. We have to see we’re part of the grounds. The floodwaters are high this spring, right. Don’t you have a basement office? Has the water come up and gotten your books yet?

SP: Uh, no. I haven’t noticed any water in my office. It is in the basement though. We have a bug issue sometimes, after a rain. Everyone coming inside, I guess.

SO: There have been years the spring floodmelt was high enough that the basement flooded. The grounds know we’re connected, even if we don’t.

Basement; Cockroaches; Darkness; Ecological Ghosts; Flood of 1997; Hot/Cold; Sheryl O'Donnell; Windows; Vulgar Matter; Isolation is bad engineering

Campus Building

SP: So, new Merrifield. It needs to have a better relationship with the natural environment around it?

SO: Has to. Has to. Yes. And your book, I hope it includes a Merrifield that is soon to be destroyed, our building in its own air, pipes, and steamheat. But it must, absolutely must, also include the soil beneath.

SP: Do you know, I sometimes took my classes to meet by the apple tree next to the Museum of Art, and they just got a grant to redo the gardens around it. I worry the apple tree won't make that reconstruction.

SO: As object, Merrifield-the-building is one of the UND objects called a "cathedral that is on the UND campus" according to the first Dean of the Med School, which Merrifield-the-man created. You should plant some apple trees outside of Merrifield. See if a future instructor makes use of them.

Merrifield Memories

Date: April 27, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Madison Knoll

SP: Madison, how long have you been working in Merrifield?

MK: I've been working in Merrifield for a year but have practically lived in it since 2017 (attended UND for both undergrad and grad).

SP: What do you think of the renovation?

MK: My hope is that it will be more conducive to learning and have more adaptable spaces than it does now. I also hope that it will have offices for instructors. Otherwise, students won't come to office hours. For the classrooms, it'd be nice to still have the projectors but to also have multiple whiteboards, like on each wall. Honestly, something like room 312 but in more of the rooms would be really nice.

Movement II

SYSTEM LIFE 2: "Light on the Elevator Button"

I am a traveler. Having visited the loop and its beautiful system, I have recorded the delicate relationships between its body and its mind, its memory now imprinted on the invisible substance of my body. Now, as I emerge from the cavern, I pass through a small hole in the upper ceiling, and enter a realm of hidden darkness.

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Part II: Assemblage Theory

We started our examination by exploring what gives Merrifield Hall its objectivity and agency. Is it its agent? Is it its connection and relationship to UND that gives it an agency? Is it its contribution and importance to the Grand Forks community that offers an agency? Defining the building's significance through the theory of assemblages uncovers the solution to these and other vital questions.

According to Manuel DeLanda in *Assemblage Theory*, assemblages define objects through four characteristics. They are as follows:

Assemblages have a fully contingent historical identity, and each is therefore an individual entity: an individual person, an individual community, an individual organization, an individual city.

To properly apply the concept of assemblages to real cases we need to include, in addition to persons, the material and symbolic artifacts that compose communities and organisations: the architecture of the buildings that house them; myriad different tools and machines used in offices, factories, and kitchens; [...] the many symbols or icons which express their identity.

Assemblages can become component parts of larger assemblages.

Assemblages emerge from the interactions between their parts, but once an assemblage is in place it immediately starts acting as a source of limitations and opportunities for its components (downward casualty) (19-21).

We realized that Merrifield Hall encompasses all the above characteristics. The building is "an individual entity:" the "material and symbolic artifacts that compose communities and organisations" (19-20). Not only does Merrifield Hall have distinct agency, but also its composition and its relationship with UND, Grand Forks, and North Dakota participates in a substantial role regarding its uniqueness.

Movement II

Another way to define the objectiveness of Merrifield Hall and its components is through the lens of Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet's *Dialogues*, who also define assemblages. According to Deleuze and Parnet:

What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes, and reigns-different natures. Thus, assemblages only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a "sympathy" (69).

This comprehensive definition of assemblages describes the "thingness" nature of Merrifield Hall. The building encompasses a variety of "heterogeneous terms," including the evolution of its purpose from "Old Main," Liberal Arts Building, and Merrifield Hall. However, Merrifield is an assembly of "establish[ed] liaisons" between the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota, and the people who have crossed its threshold (69). This connection has been ongoing since 1883. So, what would Merrifield Hall say about its journey thus far? If Merrifield Hall could talk, what would it want its listeners to know? The following pages will explore what Merrifield Hall would say. "Old Main" and Merrifield Hall mean many things to different people, but what does it mean to itself?

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stone tape theory

In the 1970s, some people decided that inanimate objects could hold trauma and tragedy within them.

The preservation of memories spatially within stone
or brick
or clay

is haunting.

Memories of evil and murder and wrongdoings could continue to exist, even after the blood and rust have washed away and faded from time.

But what of the good? What of
the laughter
the joy
the sharing of knowledge?

What about memories of breaking through to a student
sneaking a snack in class
stressed studying right before a test
stealing glances at a crush across a crowded room?

Does the good remain,
or are we haunted only by the
bad
sad
angry memories?

Movement II

SYSTEM LIFE 7: “Dandelion Seed Under the Boiler”

I have drifted through innumerable worlds to find myself in a new darkness, different from those which I had previously inhabited. Out of many skies and under the wide stars from which I had flown, it had been the wind that carried me, its hands and eyes no different from my own.

My own body had comprised only a small part of the wind that crossed the surface of those same stars and passed into the roots running down into the warm soil, the same as death (as love). This new darkness is not death, nor does it contain the rest of my body. I am small, but I sit patient in the honor of the wind and parts of my spirit I have lost.

I must find the core of this new, humming darkness, and integrate it into myself.

The world-tangle crosses far in front of me, high into the upper reaches of darkness and to the edge of the frozen walls. The ground vibrates underneath me, shaking my skin to the beat of its own pleasure, and, soon, my own. Metal ribs cage a rusted skeleton so much larger than my own, scuttled in the dust like the passage of birds over which I had once soared (small and bright, although they'd never had eyes to see my true beauty). Often, the rusted body remains silent, leaving me to wonder at the mind caught within the movement of its hot blood and the veins of light moving under its skin.

When the blood moves, the beast groans and its limbs (old, brittle) mimic in movements shuddered to the beat of my former wings. I cannot help but find it beautiful, despite the trance of its movement, and the stiffness of its stifled body. Already, this new darkness is changing me, bending me into new shapes tethered to the form of the beast.

Would you believe I am eager for further transformation?

Kai Szulborski

Life; Merrifield; Non-human; SL 7; Thingness; Thingy; Object Oriented Ontology; Basement; Boiler; Consciousness;

Campus Building

This beast has no fear of me, and I have lost my fear of it. I see the similarities in our minds, bent towards a singular, higher function contained within the sounds entering in the further darkness of our combined bodies. Our separation is ending, and I feel myself growing in time within the sound, until my new black limbs grow long enough to crack the cold walls.

When the time comes, I will emerge from the darkness and unfurl my long, black petals over the surface of the world.

Light will spread from the core of the beast, blinking out over the surface of the oceans to illuminate the splintered bones and wide, staring eyes of long-extinct beasts.

My petals will flow like the wind under the stars, or the molten metal built into engines under silent fields.

My body will grow to encompass the world, but there is no reason to fear, not from myself or the machine within my thoughts.

I am only doing what flowers do.

Movement II

Merrifield Office Hopping

Date: May 2, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Steven Rand

SP: When did you first start spending time in Merrifield?

SR: I began as a GTA in 1978.

SP: First impressions?

SR: The building always has seemed large and stereotypical in terms of the type of place where traditional education would be conducted. Thus, respect for Merrifield, and perhaps a bit of awe, was an initial impression.

SP: And now?

SR: Over time, that impression remained, although the type of students that walked its halls changed, altering the quality of the place. It's difficult to feel "education" when people are constantly looking at phones or only seeing classes as a means to an end—rather than places where they can grow intellectu-

ally. Additionally, because I've taught for many years in the building, most of the rooms on the first floor and in the basement have special memories for me.

SP: Do you have a favorite room?

SR: Perhaps my favorite rooms are both the large one in the basement, where numerous notable teaching experiences took place and where the different configurations of the desks changed the atmosphere of the room, and also the seminar room on the first floor, where enlightening graduate classes took place.

SP: I think that big room is 14. It was once for press conferences, according to the plans. And least favorite?

SR: My least favorite room is the tiny one on the first floor, although certain past classes there stand out in my mind for being positive experiences. For example, in one class, there was an aviation student who was also a world-class juggler, who had videos on Youtube of his juggling.

Campus Building

SP: I'm curious about what the graduate classes were like when you were a GTA, since I'm about to end my time as a GTA in a few days as well.

SR: When I was in graduate school, my classes were taught by teachers that I respected: Dan Sheridan, Jim Mckenzie, Jay Meek, and others inspired me to consider important issues in literature and produce work that expressed my reactions to ideas, helping me continue to grow. My path getting to those classes was also inspiring, as I earned my B.A. in English and History at SUNY-Binghamton, which is well-known as a great school, especially for the price.

SP: Ah, I've heard a lot of the same names from Madelyn Camrud. She always speaks fondly of the long table that is in the room at the north end of the first floor, where Jay Meek's poetry seminars took place. Do you notice a stand-out feature of the building, like that, which may not be well known or much used now?

SR: Numerous elements of the building

stand out—the large spaces with sitting room and large windows at the top of stairs, the feeling of spaciousness in the halls, the outside reflecting the importance of the education taking place inside, etc.

SP: Lots of people mention the coat-hooks as a vibrant feature. What's your take?

SR: The coathooks in Merrifield Hall always seemed strange, a vestige from an earlier time period. Rarely have I seen them used, perhaps because people wouldn't leave their possessions out for others to snag them. Even though North Dakota is a relatively safe place full of honest people, as our society has devolved in various ways, such safety and honesty can't always be counted on.

SP: Did you know that Sheila Liming was in this office, 1-B when she wrote her book, *Office*?

SR: I didn't know who was here before me.

Movement II

SP: She mentions in the book that there's some newspapers about women's sports taped into one of the lockers by the door. Can we open these up?

SR: Sure. I don't really use those, to be honest.

SP: Looks like they're still here. I guess you really don't use the lockers.

SR: Are the clippings hers?

SP: No. She writes that they were left by a previous tenant. Same for you, I guess.

SR: Hm.

SP: Also, from what I understand, in the days before her move out of the room, which is when she left UND, there was some sort of attempted break in through one of your windows over there. Someone threw something through, I guess. Kristin knows more about it.

SR: Oh my!

SP: I imagine this wasn't your office as a GTA, though. What other offices in Merrifield have you had?

SR: I've had a few offices in Merrifield (and for many years in Sayre, which doesn't exist anymore). The past few years, I've been in my own office, which is in the most southwest corner of the building in the basement. Aside from the coldness of the room, a place that takes a while to warm up, especially on a Monday morning, the office suits me well. I did enjoy sharing an office (M7) for a few years before moving to the current office, but my 1B space seems like a "true" professorial setting. I especially like the high ceiling and extensive book shelves.

SP: I'm in M7 these days. Have you seen the necklace on my ceiling?

SR: It wasn't there when I was.

SP: I'm trying to figure out whose it was. Right now, I think maybe Elizabeth Hampsten. I've reached out to her to see if she remembers anything about it.

High Ceilings; Office; Sheila Liming; Room 7; Room 1-B; Steven Rand
Basement; Coathooks; E.H.'s necklace;

Campus Building

SR: That room has very high ceilings.

SP: They're the best. What about Merrifield do you find conducive to the work you do here, Steven?

SR: Merrifield's high ceilings have always seemed to promote thought, freeing people from the confines of small spaces that can keep minds small.

SP: And what are your thoughts about the upcoming renovation?

SR: Sadness seems an overriding feeling connected to a renovation, because the personality, the warmth, the feeling of the place will probably be altered in a major way. Although it's important to progress, some of life's elements should be retained to savor the important, the positive parts of existence.





Campus Building

memories

Forget about the song,
The one where the cat sings
About guttering street lamps
And death.

Dying is pain
And loss.
Haunting is anger
And love.

I remember it all
In hues of red brick
And eggshell paint
And chalkboard classrooms.

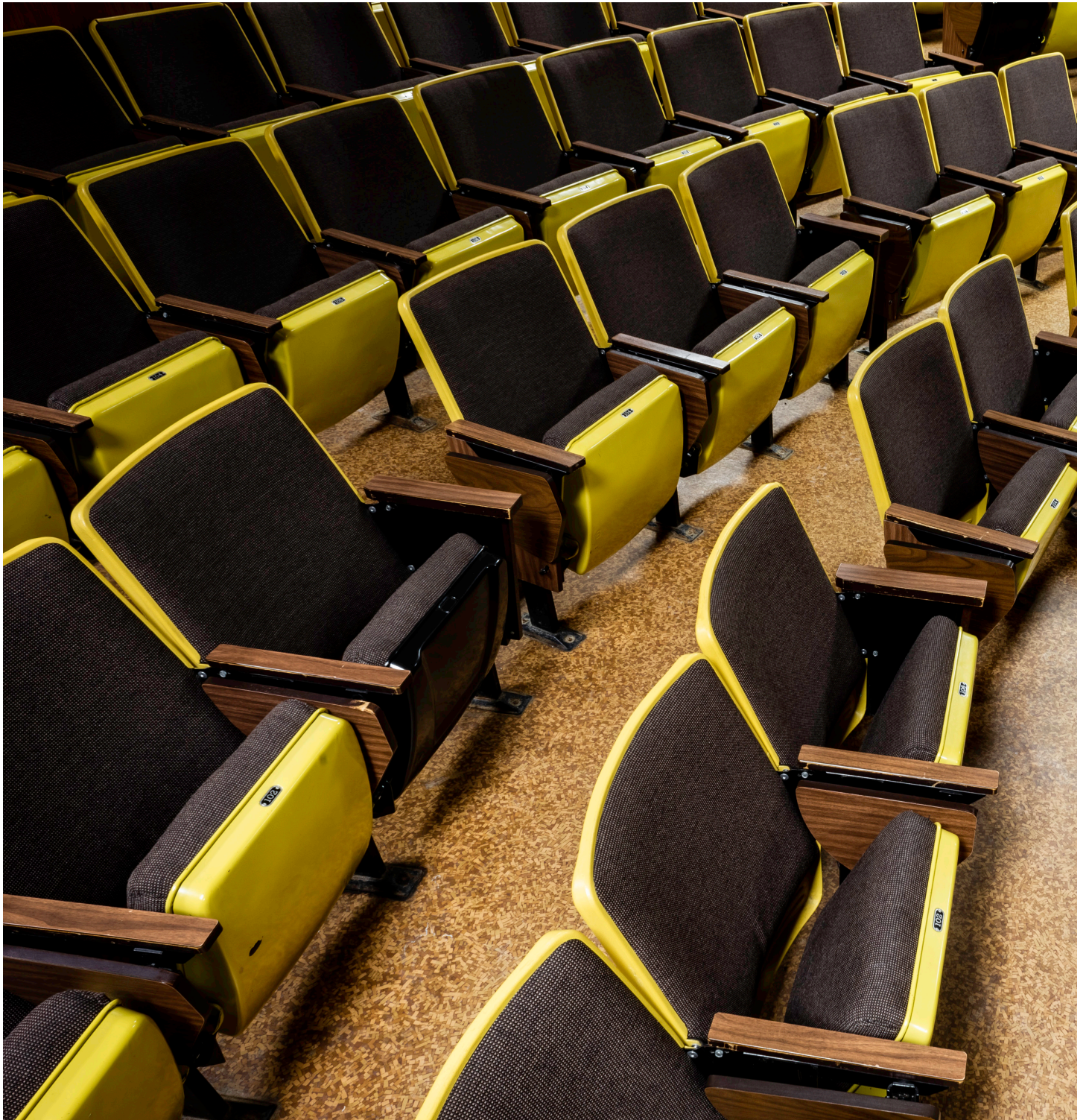
The building is crowded
With bleeding corpses
And haunted spectors
And zombies who have no brains to eat.

The walls yell at me
For my anger and memories
And tell me to put them both down
Because they're too heavy to bear.

The building has changed
Far too much
For me to know where would be safe
To put what's left of me down.

Change; Ghost; Haunting

Maria Matsakis



Campus Building

Merrifield's Vibrant Objects

Date: April 10, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Sheryl O'Donnell

SP: What did you first think of your first office in Merrifield?

SO: Did you read Sheila Liming's book *The Office*?

SP: No, but I'll request a copy of it from ILL now. Does it mention Merrifield?

SO: Yes. It's about the history of offices, I think. And in it, she mentions that she took a job at UND but was humiliated to be assigned an office in the basement. I was struck by that response because I loved my basement office when I first saw it, but reading her book helped me to understand hierarchy in a different way.

SP: What was the office you had in the basement like? When did you leave it?

SO: We loved our basement office, but I had to move up when I was named chair.

SP: I know Grant has taken some portraits of you in the office you currently have.

SO: Yes, and I have a lot of special old documents in there. Once, UND tried to make us all sign our loyalty to the US government. It was a long time ago. I think I have the form in my office. You should have Kristin let you in and go excavating.

SP: That sounds interesting, for sure. Now, I want to ask you if you can tell me what Elizabeth Hampsten was like. I'm asking because I have this sculpture on my ceiling. For so long I didn't know what it was, but recently Kathy King told me that it's a necklace and earrings pair, and she said that it used to be Elizabeth Hampsten's. I'm trying to get in touch with her, with this vibrant person who brought this giant's jewelry sculpture to my ceiling in Room 7, but I want your impression. You worked together, right?

Movement II

SO: Yes. She was known for her biking, among other things. I don't remember the necklace personally, but it could have been hers. I'm sure she had many things in her office that were left to UND.

SP: Yes, I went to the archives to try and see some of it, but the larger of her two accessions, the one from when she retired, hasn't been processed yet. I heard from some other people that in addition to her biking, her style of dress was particularly notable. I don't know what that means. Could you describe Elizabeth on a normal day in Merrifield?

SO: She's very British. So, compared to a lot of American scholars, she had sort of a "hobo" style. She lacked interest in fashionable clothing, and she was most involved in her work to help women and children in Uruguay.

SP: Can you tell me about it?

SO: She told me once that she was disappointed in Disney films because the Bambi and the mice and the rats and such were all stripped of their power in

those films. That's the sort of thing she was involved in, but in real life. She was involved in the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, and was an active member of various resistance movements in Latin America. I visited her there once.

SP: You did?

SO: She was active in Uruguay and Argentina, I think. I visited her at her house there once. It was a compound, really. I don't remember the name of the village. She was interviewing women who were in jail and some were children also. I remember she was able to use her resources back here and her financial resources in particular to provide sustenance for people living underground in that movement. And she worked right here in Merrifield, too.

SP: Were you friends?

SO: Yes, I suppose. I remember that at her house, you ate in silence. It was like chores, rather than a social event. No wasting of time at Elizabeth's table. She didn't understand why people would sit

Campus Building

there and talk after.

SP: What was she like at work?

SO: If a student entering her office would cry, she would wait. And when they were finished, she'd say "let's proceed when you're ready." It was like that, at work.

SP: Well, in my Merrifield, the necklace that might have once been hers is a very vibrant object. But in your Merrifield, what's a vibrant or special object?

SO: Do you know that Inuit coat behind the glass case along the hall?

SP: Yes.

SO: What do you know about it?

SP: Only whatever is on the plaque.

SO: There was a time when it was the envy of Aviation on campus. Long before I was chair, they wanted it for their building. When I was the chair, I had to fight to keep it in Merrifield Hall.

SP: Do you remember why they wanted

it? Or how we came to have it, even?

SO: Of course. It was made by Inuit women for a postal worker. There's an important story there about how it was made and why and the gifting of it. But Aviation wanted it to display to talk about it as an example of a mail person who was important to Aerospace studies.

SP: How did you end up getting to keep it? Aviation is a much bigger school.

SO: Robert O'Kelly happened to have a PhD student in archaeology and textiles, and he helped me make my case for keeping it in Merrifield where English faculty and Native American studies faculty could watch over it and tell its story.

SP: What's the story then?

SO: Well, O'Kelly helped us to make a good description of the process for the treatment of the skins, and details on who made the coat and who tanned the materials. And the coat was made to welcome the mailcarrier. It was to welcome him by the tribe that was visited

Movement II

and the rituals that went on there with the making of it; that's what's important. It's a story about nature and communities giving gifts and being in warm relationship. It is not a story about triumph over nature. Of course, there were ice storms, but the coat was a symbol of the gift these women made because of the connection with the postal worker, rather than the story of a heroic lonely man who conquered the nature around us.

SP: I see why you named that object, then.

SO: There's also another vibrant person in our history that must be mentioned, and I first learned of her from Elizabeth Hampsten, so I've been reminded again of her now. This is the important history of Merrifield Hall.

SP: Who is it?

SO: Lady Instructor, Emma Mott. In the first years, there were some students admitted who weren't "educated" enough for the regular courses, so a lady instructor was hired for their basic

coursework. She lived and worked in the building with them, and she was fired unjustly.

SP: You heard of this from Elizabeth? What happened?

SO: Elizabeth found in the meeting minutes from the first or second year of the university that she was fired for not saying grace at mealtimes. She didn't want to be patted on the head for her work while these men talked, and she was fired for her mealtime habits, rather than for her work in the classroom. You might be able to read about her in *Day In, Day Out*, which is by Elizabeth Hampsten. Or elsewhere, I'm not sure.

SP: If I can get in touch with Elizabeth about my ceiling sculpture, I'll have to ask about this, too.



Campus Building

Merrifield's People

Date: May 3, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Madelyn Camrud

SP: Tell me about Merrifield Hall.

MC: At 45 I attended Meeks' undergrad art of poetry class, he took me under his wing. I took three years of undergrad there and he had me write by hand an essay saying I was qualified to do the MA and pay my own way by getting the GTA position. I liked to pay; I was proud to pay for it myself. My independence. But I didn't know a thing about teaching. [Laughs] Didn't know about teaching. Libby Rankin led the program, with her red hair, and she died in the 90s from cancer when I was working at the museum.

SP: So, to you, Merrifield Hall is about the people?

MC: And the work. My two years of the MA, I was totally in English. Merrifield became a home during those two

years of graduate work. Before that, I was switching between English and visual arts. But Jay Meek supported and mentored me, so I went that way. Definitely, the people.

SP: What's your favorite non-person thing about Merrifield Hall?

MC: An old oak table in a room two or so doors from the north end. Jim Mckenzie taught there, and Jay Meek taught the poetry classes in there. All the students around the table. It should still be there. It was the best table.

SP: Ha. Much of the editing for this book is being done at that table, you might be interested to know. It's a nice change from my basement office. Tell me something about the table, when there were more people around it. I'm alone when I edit.

MC: That spring when I turned 50, we were all sitting around this table, and a guy comes into the room with a mask and a cowboy hat as a masked marauder and starts singing happy birthday to me

Movement II

in the class. Everyone listened, and I was shocked. My husband would never do anything as brazen as this. Pretty shocking stuff. We'd been working on Poe and the Purloined letter. The teacher (I don't remember who) was amazed. I had no idea who it was or why.

SP: Did you ever find out?

MC: It turned out it *was* Ted. I was so shocked.

SP: So if there had to be a most shimmering or most vibrant object in the building, would that table be it for you?

MC: There was nothing shimmering. Are these questions meant to be a joke? Shimmering objects or vibrant things. Huh. There is absolutely nothing shimmering or vibrant about anything in Merrifield.

SP: No?

MC: No! And that is exactly what I loved about it. I didn't know what you meant when you asked that. There was one

corner under glass where upcoming books in the department were. But everything else was touchable. I don't even know if there was a picture of Mr. Merrifield.

SP: Tell me more about some of the shimmering people, then, please.

MC: Bob Lewis was chair of the department and national president of the Hemingway society. Ursula was a wonderful office manager. Her daughter is there now, of course.

SP: Who had the best office?

MC: The most interesting office of those people was Bob Lewis who had the most books. Jay's office though—you'd go in and he'd look for a book you ought to be reading and struggle to find it because they weren't alphabetized.

SP: Did you study with Dr. Hampsten?

MC: I also took one other pre-enrollment class. It was with Elizabeth Hampsten.

SP: What was she like?

Campus Building

MC: She rode a bicycle every day of the year. And there was a cardboard box she stuck on there somehow. She was severe with tied back hair. She wasn't my type or me hers. I read her book on letters of midwestern women. They were all so concerned with birth control and lack of access to it. I had felt I was robbed of school by the same. In those five years I was enrolled—except from Hampsten, who gave me a B—I thought it was too easy to get an A from most people. She did such important work. I really respected her for that B.

SP: Do you remember Elizabeth or Sherry ever talking about Emma Mott?

MC: No. I don't know who that is.

SP: She was a woman instructor in Old Main, the building before Merrifield. She was fired for not praying at mealtimes, we think. I'm trying to learn more about her. Sherry thought she might be mentioned in this book, by Elizabeth, but no.

MC: Oh, is it a book of letters?

SP: Women's letters. *Days In, Days Out.*

MC: May I borrow it from you? I love reading letters.

SP: There's some stuff about the building that needs to be added, to make it safer, like an elevator and fire-safe stairs. But a lot is hopefully going to be kept. What do you think is most important to save?

MC: I'm very fond of the stairs. It's like Central High School where I also went. The floor is worn in the middle from how many people have walked on them. I suppose all that will be taken out. Like you said, for these new fire code stairs.

SP: Last question. Do you know any Merrifield ghost stories?

MC: I never heard of Merrifield ghosts, but I know there were others on campus—including in the art gallery. Sometimes places that haven't changed are the most ghostly. But I never was there at night.

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C. A. P. YARLES CO
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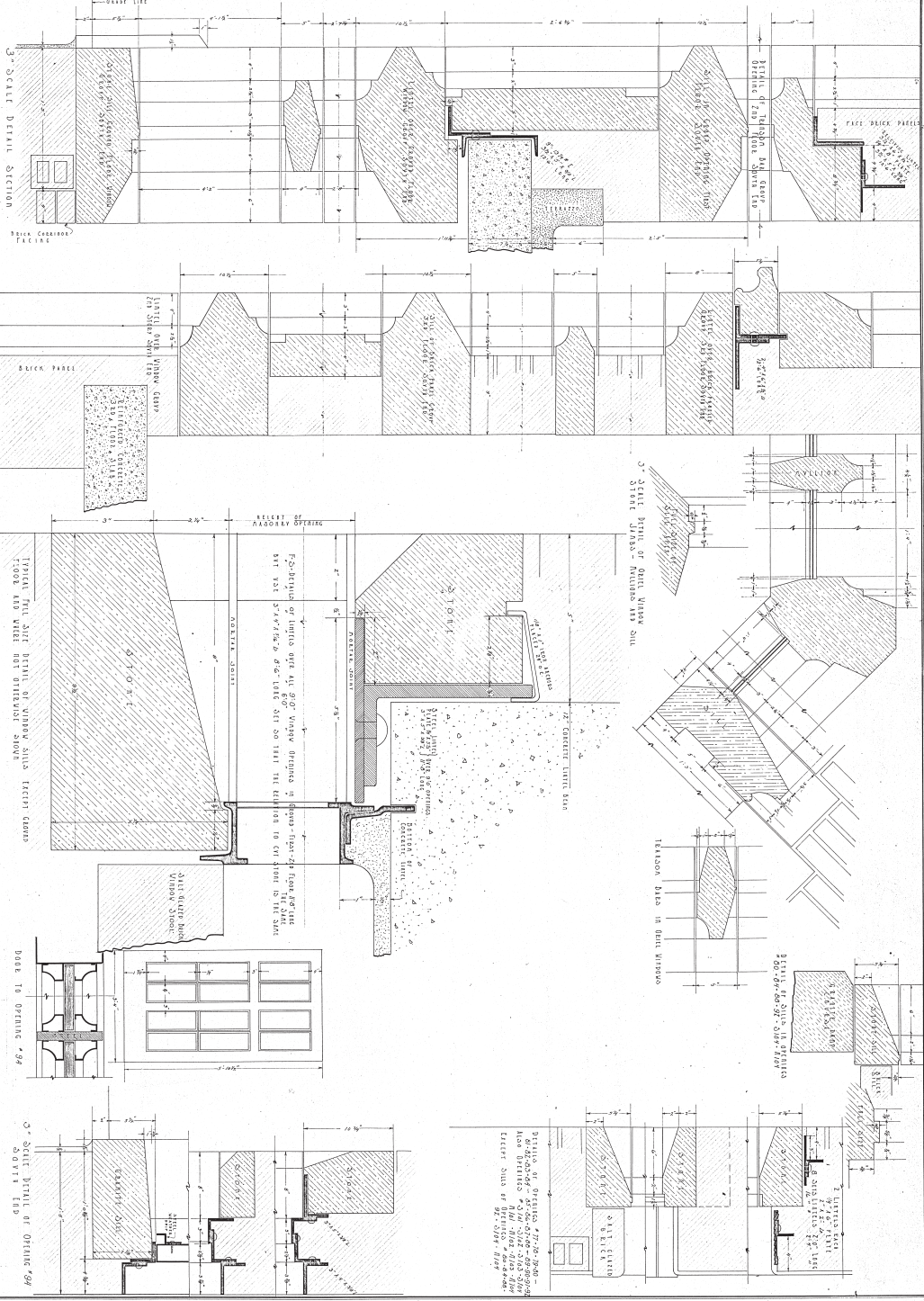
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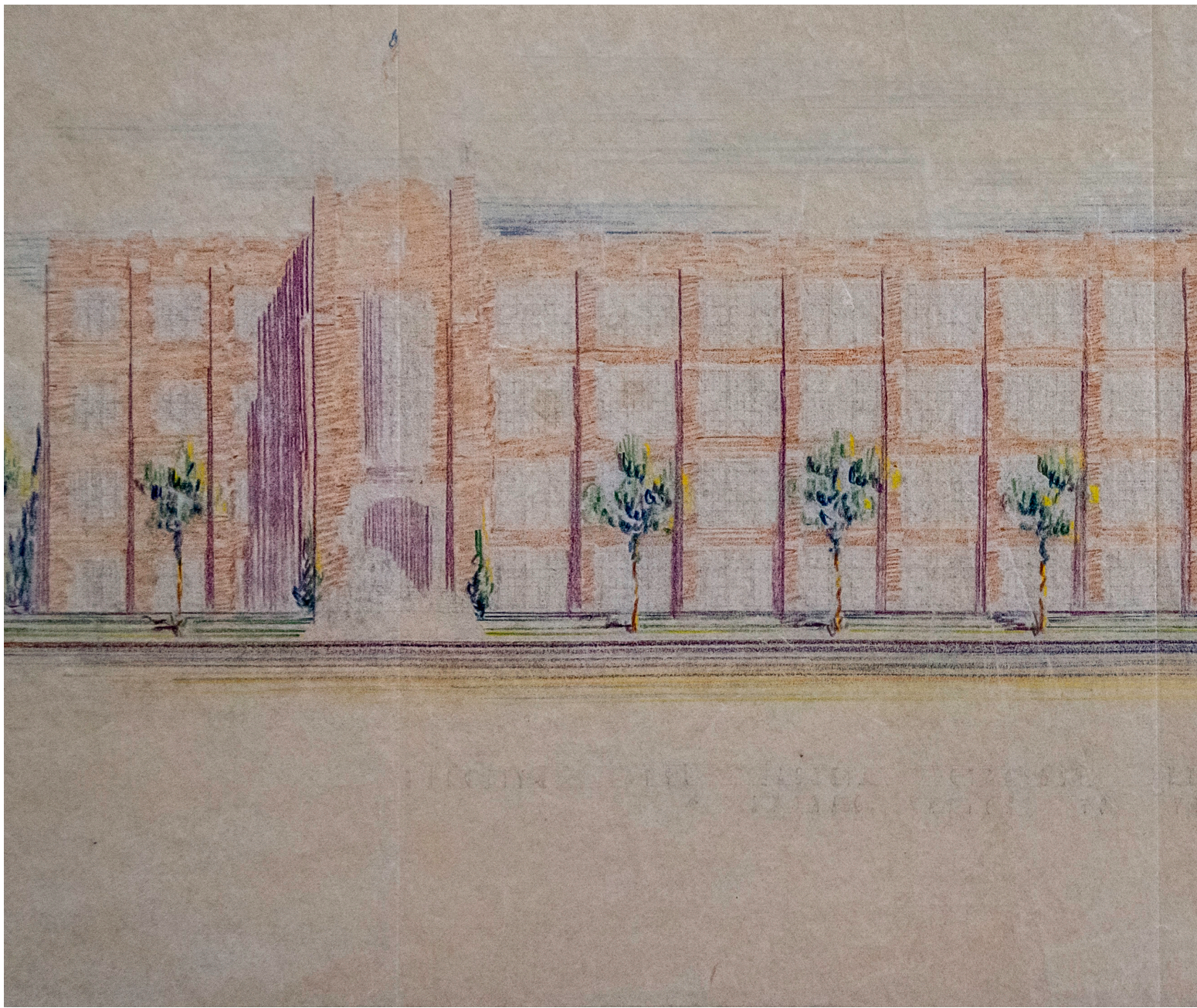
LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING UNIVERSITY OF N.D.
WAS. BERT. DE WEAVER, A. P. A. ARCHITECT

SET

W. K. ROBERTSON
ARCH. ENGINEER

DRAWING
9







Movement III

haunt

Hauten

Middle English; to reside, inhabit, live in

Hanter

Old French; to inhabit, to frequent, to patronize

Heimta

Old Norse; to collect, to bring home, to gather

Haunt

English; to feel a pull, to visit, to disturb

perhaps we are giving our past a home, making room for the things that have changed in a space that we've forced to stay the same

Movement III

Liminal senses

There is a blue glass bottle hanging from wire in my office window.

On nights when I sit in my chair, alone but for the hum of my laptop, something makes the bottle spin.

Mine are the only eyes that watch it twirl, containing the energy of whatever soul wants my attention.

There is a giant's necklace hanging from the pipes on my office ceiling.

On nights when I pour over student papers and feel like I'm losing my mind, the beads clang against one another.

Mine are the only ears that hear them clash, the voice of whatever soul cannot speak banging into my mind.

There are no flowers in my office, no wall scents to mask the stench of despair.

On nights when the hall lights flicker and make me feel more alone than ever, the smell of peonies wafts into my hair.

Mine is the only nose that smells it, the perfume of a ghost who has nowhere to spray it except for onto me.

Campus Building

Rumors

Date: April 22, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Aaron Halverson

SP: So. Know a Merrifield ghost story?

AH: No. I know they exist because there was a ghost tour a few years ago. But I don't know the stories. I wish.

SP: Do you know any other unusual facts about Merrifield?

AH: I heard a rumor that Merrifield's ceilings are tin, but were covered up during renovations.



Date: May 2, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Claire Arneson

SP: What do you think of gargoyles?

CA: They're awesome. It just really fits.

SP: Are there any unusual facts about the building that you know?

CA: My boss recently told me that the staircases in Merrifield were designed specifically for women wearing big dresses so they wouldn't trip going up the stairs. I don't know if this has any merit but I am not going to question it because she is my boss. I also heard that the big rooms before the bathroom used to be powder rooms and used to be decked out with vanities and such.

SP: In the renovation, what do you want?

CA: I really hope they fix up the bathrooms. I can only speak for the ladies' room but usually there is one toilet that doesn't work and another one is clogged. I also don't think they are very accessible to people in wheelchairs. It would be nice to restore the powder rooms that were outside the bathrooms. Maybe add a couch, just so it's authentic.

Movement III

SYSTEM LIFE 4: "Photonic Interlude"

I exit the darkness, holding the memory of the spirits once carried by the newly formed body. The passage of endless time and light, as I watch and move through separate spaces filled with the texture of bodies under true weight, the forces of gravity and mass. I see these forces, but I cannot feel them, my own freedom bringing memories of the new body I have just witnessed. First, the empty void, then realms of whispers, cold, and color. Now I meet a black strand spinning in an endless circle, its purpose unknown to me.

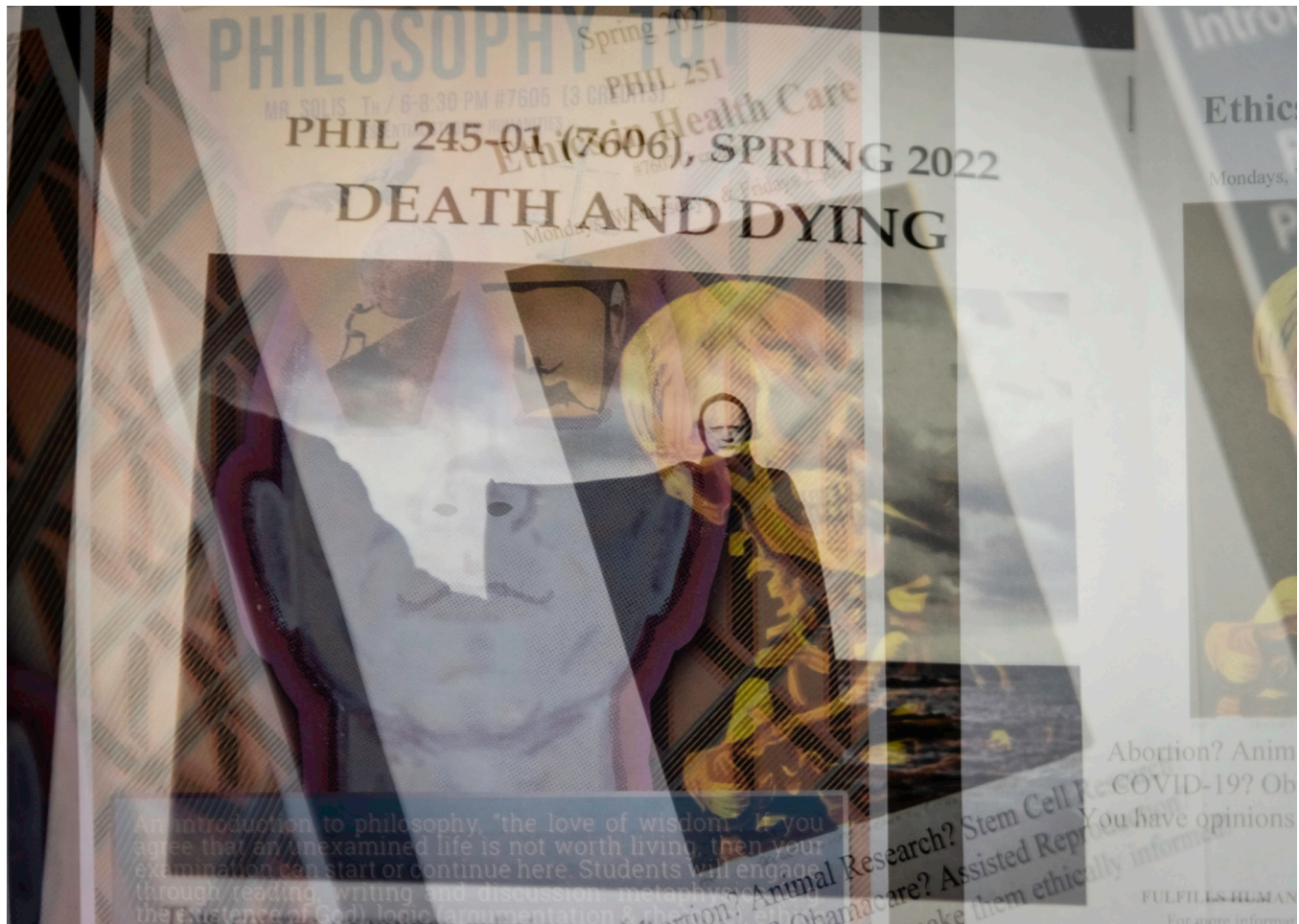
My dialogue begins.

Campus Building

TEXT > [TEKST]

noun. Original words of an author or speaker, as opposed to translation, paraphrase, or commentary; the main body of matter in a manuscript, as distinguished from notes, appendices, headings, and images. Words in a translated work, words used to paraphrase, or words used to add commentary to a main text; words that are used in a manuscript to supplement the main text such as notes, appendices, headings, but not images. Anything written or printed using symbolizing characters. Often used to privilege cultures which have depended on the written word as opposed to oral traditions/texts. Subject of much debate within the field of semiotics and indigenous studies; “Many plains tribes used Winter Counts as a form of traditional record keeping/history making—these texts comprised symbolic visuals often imprinted on cloth or bison hide.”

March 14, 2022; 2:21:39pm



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March 14, 2022; 5:44:33pm



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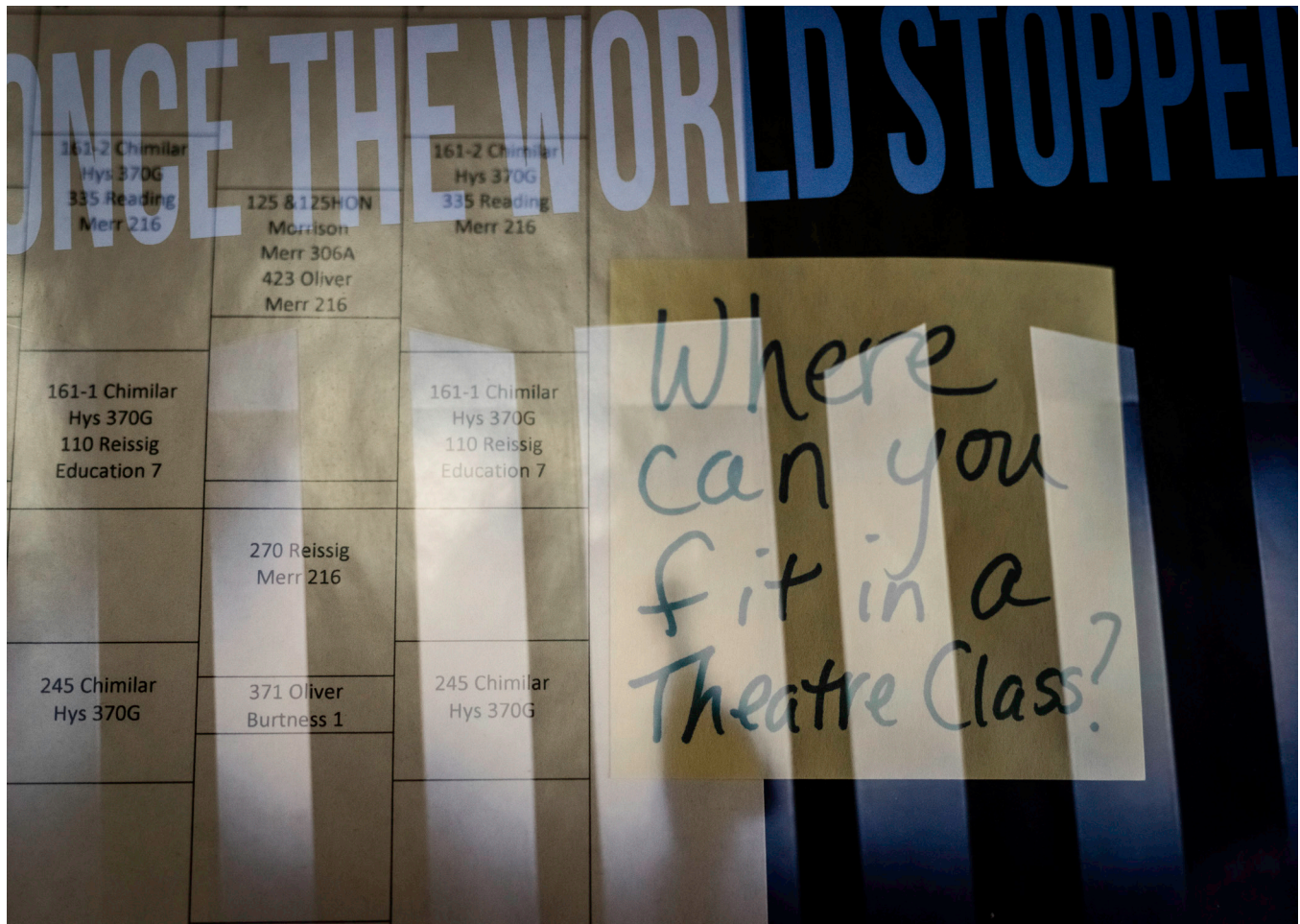
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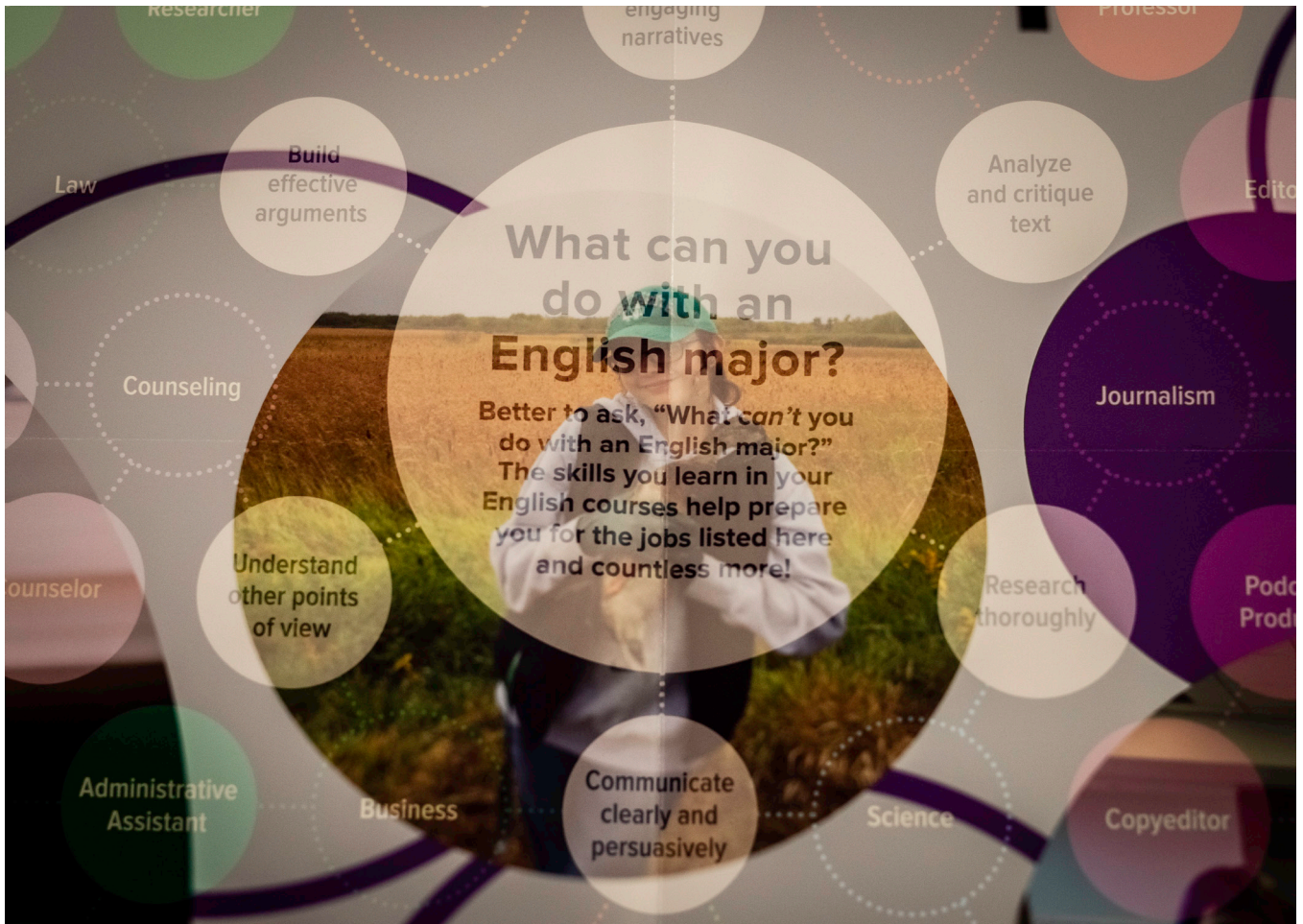
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Movement III

Part III: June 2, 1961's "Letter to Old Main"

What would "Old Main" say about its agency? One document located in Building and Landmarks UA032, Box 2, Folders 10-16, "Old Main" Building Records University of North Dakota Department of Special Collections Digital Finding Aids from the University of North Dakota Archives, explores "Old Main's" journey through its interactions with the former head of the UND Alumni Association, J. Lloyd Stone.

Dear Old Main:

As we gather together this afternoon to bid you farewell and to break ground for your successor; we want you to know that we appreciate fully the fact that you have served us well.

As you have stood here for 77 years as a beacon of light to thousands of former students, graduates and faculty members of this University, your spirit will ever continue to guide and inspire us in the future.

We know that Twamley Hall, which will carry on for you in your own very best tradition, will be shiny and modern. But as we hail the beginnings of that fine new edifice here today, we cannot feel any more proud or any more expectant than were those who participated in your most shining hour—the laying of your cornerstone put here on the prairie on that bright, crisp October day in 1883. The territorial governor, Nehemiah Ordway, four fire companies, sixty Masons, James Twamley and other numerous citizens all were on hand to see that your start in the world was observed with proper pomp and ceremony.

Davina Bell

Consciousness; Ellis (2021); Merrifield Hall; Nina Simone; Old Main; Stone
Archival docs:

Campus Building

When you first opened your doors on another fine fall Dakota day in September, 1884, you were a complete University. You had to be. You were all there was. They had to install a dormitory where they had planned your library, but it didn't matter. There were no books anyway. You did provide space for the University offices, the faculty, the classes, and the students. There were no laboratories or museums or even a heating plant or water system, but at \$30,000 you were a bargain.

You were still two months from completion, but the local newspaper editor of that era called you a "bold and massive pile...towering against the western sky with pretentious importance." He wasn't wrong. When you were finally completed, four stories high including your full basement, you were the largest building in the north half of Dakota territory.

Students came—the Johnstones, the Teels, the Smiths, the Travises, the Marclays, the Ingwaldsons, the Allens, and the Sullivans—to sample the new breath of culture you gave to the western prairies. Hardly any qualified as full fledged college students, but this seemed all right to you. You knew that, as yet, you did not qualify as a full fledged University, even though an ad in a Grand Forks newspaper had this to say of you:

"Laid out in the highest style of comfort and convenience, the building is as fine a one as many a college and when

Movement III

both wings and the center structure are done, it will vie with the great universities in Europe.”

Of course, your wings were never built and you but lost your central structure in the great windstorm of June, 1887. But, even though the great universities of Europe or elsewhere paid little heed to you, at least for some years, you were beginning a long and illustrious history.

Illustrious and learned faculty graced your halls, classrooms and offices from the first. The Macnies, the Woodworths, the Montgomerys, the Babcocks, the Pattens, the Squires, the Hodges all brought top records to enhance the fine work that went on between your walls.

The records of Presidents who have guided the University from a vantage point on your first floor likewise as an illustrious one. Blackburn, Sprague, Merrifield, McVey, Kane, West, Starcher, reads the roll.

More students came, obtained broad, illuminating backgrounds in your classrooms, then went out to become illustrious alumni, singing your praises. Then they began coming back to revisit you—the Hancocks, the Stefanssons, the Carneys, the Douglasses, the Triechlers, the Upsons, the Campbells, the Andersons, the Fritzes and the O’Connors. They never ceased to be amazed at your changes—the place where you used to sleep, was now a classroom, the postoffice was now a committee room, the business manager now

Campus Building

presided where the President had had his office, the Dakota Student office was now a storeroom. Even the fact that one of the once elegant front entrances was now a washroom seemed to be a part of the lore that held their own interest.

Within your halls, the first regents of the University sat to chart your early course. The Twamleys, the Healys, the Evans, the Collins, the Walshes, and the Budges of that era did their jobs thoroughly and well.

You undoubtedly recall today that James Twamley, who labored with great zeal during your beginnings, and for whom your successor is being named, also figured in assisting many latter-day students—the first student loan fund of \$1,000 was presented to the University as a memorial to his name.

You have survived many crisis—not the least of which was the typhoid outbreak of 1893 at which you were saddened by the death of three of your students.

You sat here worriedly through three major wars—the Spanish American conflict, the first and second world wars. You worried until your students, who marched away into the service of their country, returned safely to your sheltering arms. And you were saddened once more when some did not return. You were shocked at the verdict of the experts back in 1924 that your foundation could no longer support your entire, yet still majestic framework—and your top stories had to

Movement III

come off. No longer did the sounds of lectures and recitations of students echo throughout your structure, but the administration...the Wilkersons, the Millers, the Felt, the Yoder; and the faculty...the Brannons, the Hitchcocks, the Thomases, the Libbys, The Haxos, the Gillettes, the Beks, and the Squires continued to crowd your now cramped space.

“The building Is unsafe for students, but the faculty will continue to use it,” was the way the Dakota Student put it.

You must have been nettled at the temporary classroom building they put together in your front yard, and secretly were happy that the students jokingly referred to it as the “cowbarn.”

We know how proud you must have been in 1912, when they decided to call you Merrifield Hall in honor of the great president of the University you had known so well. And you must have been chagrined a little when they decided to take that name away from you in 1930 and give it to that fine new next-door neighbor of yours, the new liberal arts building.

However, we know you didn’t really mind so much, because this meant the end of the cowbarn. And people lovingly called you “Old Main” all the time, anyway.

So today, while we are glad that we are getting a new, functional office building named for an old beloved

Campus Building

*friend of yours, James Twamley, which will guide the
University in the future, we want you to know
you will live forever in the hearts of all of us - the legion
of U.N.D. administrators, faculty, students, alumni,
and friends you have served so long and so well.*

J. Lloyd Stone

As Stone confirms of "Old Main," Merrifield Hall, you have lived a vibrant life that has touched many along the way. To so many, you were more than just a building that held classrooms for learning; you have been vital to their journey. Christina Beck asserts that "Nina Simone's chewing gum is a lovely example of how things can carry a meaning much larger than the thing itself. It's a small, fragile item that holds the greatest story" in Warren Ellis's **Nina Simone's Gum** (165).

I would say that "Old Main" and Merrifield Hall are "lovely example[s]" of how an academic building and its components can "carry a meaning much larger than the thing itself."

Good luck and Godspeed in your future endeavors.

Movement III

Merrifield: Assemblage & Classrooms

Date: April 22, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Adam Kitzes

SP: When did you start working here?

AK: 2005.

SP: What was your first impression of your current office?

AK: First impressions, maybe?

SP: Sure.

AK: It was quite larger than my last office, it had certain facilities that made me think of George Costanza, and it was filled with roaches. I almost couldn't stand to move in, there were so many roaches. Also, it looked as though certain parts of it hadn't been cleaned in years. Not good.

SP: So you had a different office in the same building before?

AK: Yes, I was one floor up, where Kathy King currently occupies.

SP: She has lovely floors. I understand your office's built space leaves something to be desired, and also the presence of other creatures within it isn't so popular with you. But your office is full of stuff you brought in, too. What is your most cherished item in here?

AK: Aside from the 5000 books? I'm not sure if you are referring to personal effects, or something else. I do have several personal objects, which I cherish. Among them: my mermaid, my crystal fortune teller's spheres, a deck of tarot cards (Rider-Waite, español).

SP: And if you remember, what was your first sensory memory of Merrifield Hall when you first spent time in it?

AK: Probably the first sensory memory I can attach to the building was auditory. During the winter, the floors get covered in slush, which then melts into large puddles. Walking through the halls, my footwear usually starts to squeak. I

Campus Building

find this especially bothersome, not only because the noise is so obtrusive, but because (as I have discovered), I have a very irregular walk. Sometimes, though, I will be walking, and as the squeaking sounds accompany my steps, I'll come to a sudden stop. In my head, I'll think something like, "Got you, you little fucker." But inevitably, I'll have to start walking again, where in my head I'll hear something like, "Squeak-got-you-back, squeak-right-back-at-you." This lasts until I get to my office, which is carpeted, and the squeaking is replaced by the incessant whirring of the air ducts.

SP: Ha. And outside of your office, in the general structure of Merrifield, is there any very special, possibly little-known "vibrant" object or thing in Merrifield, or which is part of the structure itself? What's special about it?

AK: In the basement, on the north wall, there is a beautiful wall, which has some painted tiles, as well as two green stone water fountain basins, all well past their functional use.

SP: Oh, a lot of people have been saying they love that. I know Grant in particular enjoyed photographing it. Do you have a favorite or least favorite room?

AK: I'm not sure if this is a favorite, or least favorite, but I have always been struck by the design of Room 300, the lecture hall.

SP: I like the wallpaper in there.

AK: Specifically, I have always been alert to the fact that the entrance doors are placed directly behind the speaker's podium, so that there is absolutely no way to sneak in or out of the room during a lecture, or a presentation, or whatever. That means, any time somebody does have to use one of the doors, for whatever reason—from "the bus was late" to a dire emergency—absolutely everybody's attention will be redirected from whatever purpose that brought them together in the first place, to the poor fellow who has whatever traffic with the world outside it. That's brilliant. Especially, since I tell my students, I want them to think of the classroom as

Prelude

a kind of sanctuary, a temporary escape from the world outside. “Don’t worry,” I tell them, “Instagram will still be there for you at the end of the hour, but for the next 75 minutes, we have the rare privilege of thinking about King Lear.” A room like 300 has a nice way of reminding me just how full of shit that whole idea really is.

SP: People have been saying the top floor has a particular noise that reminds them of a haunting. Know any ghost stories about Merrifield?

AK: Ghost stories, I’m afraid not. I do know, or have known, of several actually haunted houses around town, so I don’t take this question lightly.

SP: How about funny stories?

AK: Not really any funny stories, either, but I think once Sherry O’Donnell tried to get students to race me down the halls, as part of some fundraising idea.

SP: That’s hilarious. I’ll have to follow up with her about that. So, what do you

think of the coathooks?

AK: I’ve thought about these a lot, since I have never seen anybody actually use them. It makes me wonder, were did people ever use them regularly? Did they stop gradually, or suddenly? Was there a reason? Does anybody else ever stop to notice them? Since you have asked it as a question, I am delighted to know now, the answer is yes, though that also makes me realize that there might be a whole lot of other impressions unshared.

SP: People are thinking about them! Lots of people are thinking about how afraid they are of running into them, unfortunately. Anyhow, I’m wondering what about Merrifield enables you to do the work you do here?

AK: Really good question. They’re all really good questions, but this one is really good. There are two most important parts of my job: teaching and writing, or interacting with students and trying to say something intelligent/true about literature. As for the classrooms, I have often had the experience of going to the elementary schools around

Campus Building

town—usually for a parent-teacher conference—and then complaining, very loudly, about how wonderful those classrooms are, by implication how poorly furnished our own classrooms are. To give some examples, most of our classrooms have these single person desks, whose main function is to have a place to (sort of) rest your books, a notebook, and your elbow—unless, of course, you're left handed. We now have smart stations in most of the classrooms, which gives us access to resources like documents, images, even film, though this was not always the case. (In fact, when I first started teaching here, we still had chalkboards, and we had especially powdery chalk. You could always tell who had just finished teaching by the white residue left all over somebody's outfit.) Really, the best thing about the classrooms is the lighting. Otherwise, I have found them of pretty limited help.

SP: What do you hope might come out of the renovation of Merrifield?

AK: General hope, more traffic throughout the building. Most of the

time, the building strikes me as being significantly under-used. I think that has become a campus-wide problem, which COVID didn't help, but I find it especially glaring in this building.

SP: And what do you think is most important for the revised-Merrifield to have, or to be like?

AK: Better classrooms, better gathering spaces, better lighting, better places for storing our multiple libraries, whether they are personal collections or intended for public use.



Date: April 23, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Leah Hanley

SP: What classes have you had here?

LH: I've taken English, Spanish, and GTA-required pedagogy courses.

SP: What did you like or dislike about the rooms in which these were held?

Prelude

LH: I disliked some of the outdated features, such as desk design, seating arrangements, chunky podium, analog clocks that never kept accurate time. I disliked the under-utilized white boards on multiple walls, and some of the silly projector screens that covered the entire whiteboard, which made it impossible for the instructor to flip between the two modes.

SP: Ooh. Room 116? I teach in there. It's pretty annoying that I can't use the board and the projector at the same time, you're right. What do you like about Merrifield, though?

LH: I did enjoy the simple layout of Merrifield. I also enjoyed the enormous windows with no screens. I enjoyed the walk up and down the stairwell because the stonework, windows, and wooden handrail are just gorgeous.

SP: And what's your favorite classroom?

LH: My favorite classrooms are the ones with round tables. I've heard that studies show how round tables facilitate better

learning, and I find that to be true both as a student and instructor. Students are more apt to talk with one another at a round table versus individual desks positioned in rows/columns, which improves overall engagement.

SP: Room 311. So, the student-faculty interaction is key for you?

LH: Yes. And my favorite room overall is my office, because I enjoy the birds-eye view over the campus mall, with no window screen to hinder my enjoyment.

SP: Is it where you spend the most time?

LH: My office, and instructor offices. I like the ways in which people make their offices comfortable.

SP: What did you first think of the office?

LH: My first impression of my office was that it was distant from the rest of the English faculty. Because it is...my office is technically in the Languages department. And that it felt corporate and stuffy. It definitely was and is all of those

Campus Building

things, but taking a window cubicle has transformed my entire office experience.

SP: What do you cherish most about it?

LH: The view from the window is my most cherished feature of the office, and the thing I “use” most. I also have some charming lunchbox notes from my husband on my cubicle walls, and a calendar full of artwork that I love.

SP: Do you use the English Reading Room much?

LH: Yes. I find it to be homey and inviting, but dusty.

SP: Do you know any ghost stories?

LH: Aside from the trapped souls that moan in the air vents in Room 306?

SP: Yes, unfortunately we think those might just be bad pipes. Or something. What do you think of the gargoyles?

LH: So charming! I just love those little artistic touches.

SP: Do you have any hopes for the renovation? For Merrifield’s future?

LH: I really hope that the people responsible for the renovation will consider preserving and/or enhancing the aesthetics that make the current building unique and loveable.

SP: Like what?

LH: The stonework, brickwork, woodwork, sculptures, enormous windows in every classroom... If Merrifield becomes industrial and corporate, I will grieve the old Merrifield’s passing.

SP: What is it most important the new building provide to those who will come to use it in the future?

LH: What the new renovations should include for enhanced learning are round tables with electric outlets, enormous windows that open, better elevators, thoughtful placement and design of classroom technologies, and artwork.

Movement III

Evidence of Absence

Looking at the original 1920s blueprints of Merrifield Hall it is easy to see how much the interior space of the structure has changed over the span of ten decades: second-floor classrooms originally designated for history now host philosophy lectures; the University Post Office, once located at the southern end of the basement, has since been subdivided into three English faculty offices; the once-existent “Press Room” leaves no remnants today; the History and Geology offices have since been repurposed with the construction of Leonard Hall and the History Department vacating the building in 2009; classrooms that originally contained three or four window bays have since been partitioned around these features to create additional office space for faculty and staff.

While changes have been made to alter the building and its usage, intimations of the original form still exist. For instance, the paint on the north wall of Room 112 holds the faintest outline of a chalkboard once allotted for a sociology classroom—later divided to create the English Department Office and new work areas for the growing number of Graduate Teaching Assistants; a quick knock on this wall reveals it to be solid plaster and brick while the south wall of the room reverberates from stud framing and sheetrock. Tile patches abutting the terrazzo flooring do little to mask the alterations made to the building, but rather further define the original structure.

The absence of what was still leaves a residual imprint on the building.

Campus Building

losing time

gloomy gray
invading hallways.
bodies that look like mine,
or like mine used to,
stumble about.
bears,
furious about being forced from hibernation,
growl when called on.
some things never change.

time drips like morphine to a vein,
slow and steady.
it numbs the senses and the mind.
there is no escaping it.

faces change
people come and go.
black-eyed beauty cries in the dark bathroom
and disappears
replaced by another.
icy-eyed giant snacks and cracks jokes in class
has been here as long as i have.
he has a choice
i can never leave.

there are few trees outside,
few leaves left to fall.
i don't recognize anywhere else when i try to leave,
so the seasons change but i stay the same.

Movement III

HAUNTS > [HAWNTS]

verb, pres. To visit habitually, as one visits a workplace or a school building. Often implies the visitor is spectral in nature, form, or shape. Can have menacing connotations, though these connotations generally reveal more about the being that perceives the visitor (or haunt-er) than the visitor themselves.

noun, sing. A place visited habitually, such as a workplace or a school building. Implies a location that has been lost, though not always in a literal sense. Generally associated with one's past, especially one's childhood or teenage years. May be accompanied by a sense of longing or melancholy; "I wish I could show you my old haunts."

March 14, 2022; 4:06:17pm



40mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 50

April 26, 2022; 4:06:58pm



20mm; 5.0 sec; f/18; ISO 200

March 14, 2022; 5:55:12pm



20mm; 5.0 sec; f/16; ISO 160

April 26, 2022; 4:03:05pm



20mm; 2.0 sec; f/18; ISO 800

March 16, 2022; 8:28:00pm



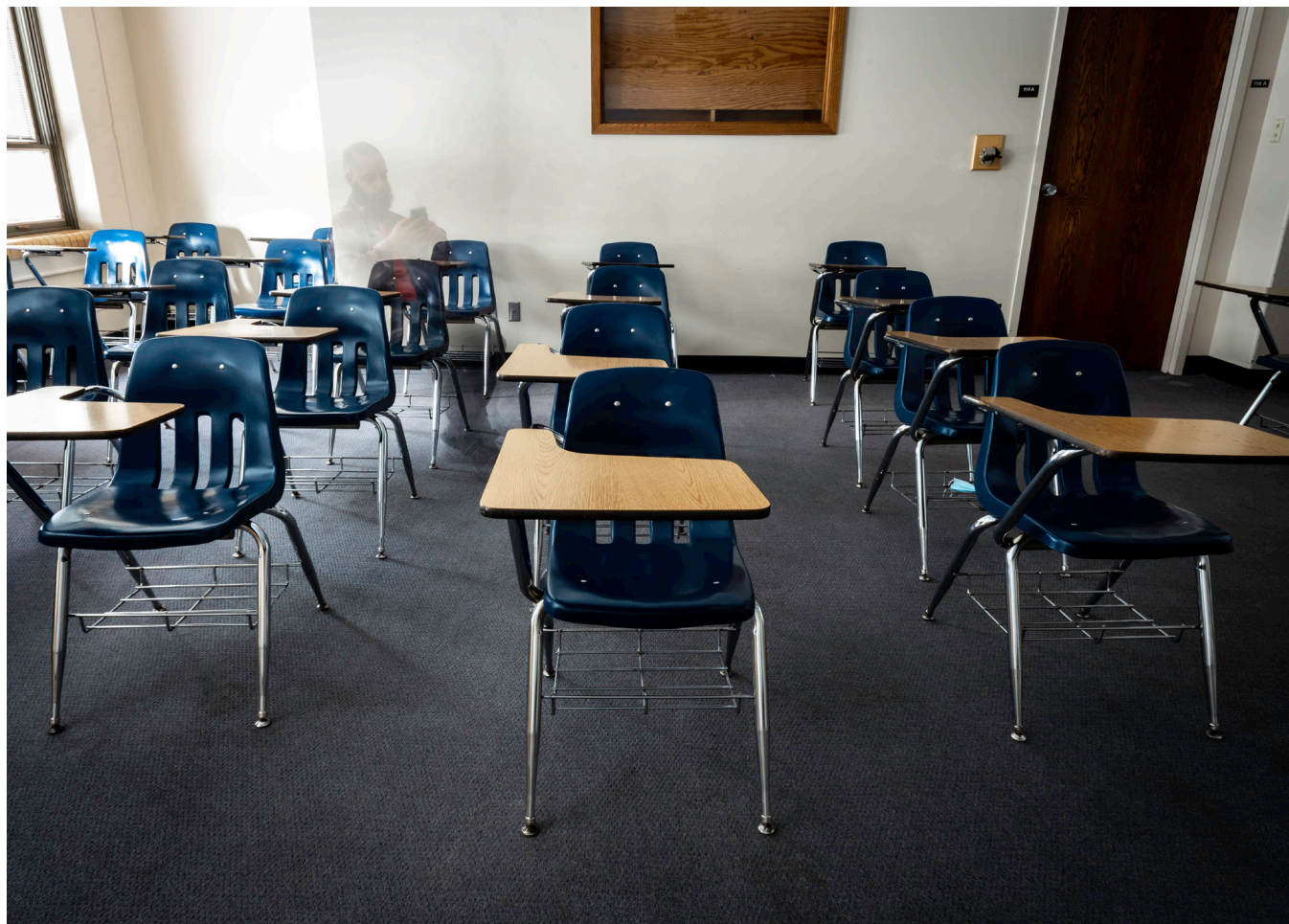
24mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 50

March 14, 2022; 4:08:51pm



55mm; 1 sec; f/22; ISO 50

March 14, 2022; 4:46:53pm



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/18; ISO 64

March 14, 2022; 2:52:42pm



24mm; 3.0 sec; f/22; ISO 80

March 14, 2022; 3:13:40pm



48mm; 4.0 sec; f/10; ISO 50

March 16, 2022; 7:22:27pm



65mm; 5.0 sec; f/13; ISO 80

Campus Building

The Mask

The mask always reminded me of the hospital, clean walls and sterile hands guiding you down the hallway to the operation room for the second time this month. It reminded me about my school's 6th grade play, where I played the dentist. The first time I got a whiff of the strong smell
I now relate to my past.

So why is it back to haunt me, here at Merrifield, hidden under a chair and ready to pounce if I ever dare to take my eyes off it.

Its baby blue color is impossible to forget, now haunting the walls of my bedroom as I try to sleep, my eyes refusing to shut. Old might become new but memories never disappear, even as the structure keeping it together crumbles and the past is replaced by the future, you will never forget.

As Merrifield becomes new, will the mask still stay, tucked under the chair on the first floor classroom? Will it be a new memory I will from time to time think of as I lay awake at night, pondering who might have left it, why they might have left it, if it remembers me too?

Movement III

Merrifield Ghost Stories

Date: April 23, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Mark Patterson

SP: Have you heard of any ghosts here?

MP: I had always heard that Merrifield was haunted, but I never put much stock in it until I was working really late one night. I was sitting at my desk writing, when a book and one of my knick-knacks suddenly flew off the bookshelf and landed a couple feet in front of it. I decided it was time to leave, and I made sure not to be in Merrifield past midnight after that experience. A lot of my friends think I was just tired and that the book must have been precariously perched, but I guess we'll never know!



Date: April 23, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Kai Szulborski

SP: Do you know any Merrifield ghosts?

KS: I am a ghost. I have many stories.



Date: April 27, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Kristin Ellwanger

SP: Are there Merrifield ghosts?

KE: Nope, I've never heard of any ghost stories personally. I also have never had the feeling that the building is haunted.



Date: April 24, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Casey Fuller

SP: Do you believe in Merrifield ghosts?

CF: Once, while talking about ghost stories in Carson's room, the door opened and shut. It was clearly a ghost.



Campus Building

The inorganic and unalive is unalive, in its definition. But is that where it ends? Consciousness isn't necessary for life, and in our study of things, it's rare to find something with a consciousness that retains its thing-like properties. And so, how can something be unalive but alive? How can there be life without consciousness? I have a simple answer: necromancy.

A Study in Necromancy by a Passing Spirit

The closest humankind has ever come to magic is their expert understanding of necromancy.

I'd wandered the earth for a long time now, and I'd taken to learning what I could about the living and dead. After all, so many years of being dead became monotonous, and death was a special interest, ever since my own death.

So, I'd become a bit of an expert. I'd watched as people tugged at cards and prayed and cooed at crystals. I'm not sure if it worked, but I certainly watched, and I never found myself convinced. But that was always the hardest part; you couldn't wait to see them perform some magic trick like a show, because they didn't know they could do it.

They had no power over it, no control, but they understood how to imbue life into the dead, knew how to create something from nothing far too well for how unconscious it was to them. I never understood that, until I wandered onto a college campus one day.

Movement III

It was just a building, like any other. Standing in a hallway, the building wasn't anything special, in all honesty. It was a nice enough brick, pretty stairwells, nice enough offices and rooms, but that's all. Nice enough.

And yet, I felt something alive here, like nothing else. People had a certain aura about them, a glimmer of light that betrayed their aliveness. But here, in the evening air as a person or two toiled in their offices and dozens of rooms were empty, the hall glittered like the souls of a hundred people.

I'll admit, I found some strange kinship with the brick and mortar. We were both... present, yet unalive. So definitively dead and lifeless, yet we still were both here, watching everything pass by.

I got curious, drifted through hallways and lectures, flitted through the yellowed papers in their library. It wasn't built by some incredible genius. Sure, that Joseph DeRemer man who built it was a fine architect, but the only thing special about the man was that he was a racist, and that was common as grass when the dirt was broken here.

It'd had other names before, like the Liberal Arts Building, but it was Merrifield now, after a man who'd once run the university. A decent man with a good name passed onto brick as if that kept him alive and well somehow, though maybe it did. It still didn't make the place any different from the rest of the chunks of stone and steel across the frozen landscape here.

Yet here it is, far too alive.

Campus Building

It was a mystery that insisted on being solved, yet no answer was apparent. What was it that made this place different, why did it matter when it was just the same as all the others?

The smooth-sanded wood railings along the granite stairs were as dead as any tree's corpse that lay in a forest. The plastic-y, cheap carpets in classrooms that was easy to replace and burn had no mystic properties, unless the spilled drink stains and mud-scuffs had some hidden enchantment.

Was it that cursed boiler, that seemed to hiss and spit and drip a heat that was comforting against the steely wind until that sheen of sweat was freezing to your face as you stepped out again?

Was it the wifi, that glitched and stuttered and shuddered with the nerves and pressure of the stone shell around it?

Was it the bright painted walls, infusing the bricks with the power of lilac and lemon and neon green?

No, none of them hold the power to so thoroughly revive something that never lived.

No, no—the only answer I could conceive of was that it was the little rituals. It was the silly doodles on the whiteboards, of stick-students waddling to classes and of childish giggling as a phone number was scribbled for the curious and entertained.

Movement III

It was the gloves on coathooks, like creepy hands reaching out from the walls as they dried, then waited forever for an owner to meet their grasp and claim them again. They never would.

It was the flicker of the projector, as a teacher cussed under their breath and a few too many students heard, laughing at the show of humanity from a human. It was the fight between the stubborn window slides and anyone who dared to take issue with the temperature, unwilling to budge without taking a bit of skin or blood in return for their effort.

It was the echoing, panicked scribble of pens and pencils as a flurry of students desperately tried to scrounge some answer to a quiz from the cramped corners of their minds.

It was sacrifices, not of life or precious metals, but instead of books left to gather dust on shelves labeled “FREE!” until someone read their cover and felt a connection too powerful to ignore, adopting the little bundle of dead paper as if it were an infant. The ritual meetings of people in cramped offices, laughing and eating and talking as if they’d never get to again, offering their words to each other, only for the hallways to claim and echo those words, the only voice the building ever had.

My favorite though, was the little office of the younger teachers—watching them tease and joke and laugh before scrambling to find a paper that escaped before sprinting to the front of a classroom with tight spine and calmer smile.

Knocking the papers off the walls and flicking at the light switch was the most fun I had in the days I drifted Merrifield’s halls, though that wasn’t to disrespect the classes I’d pop in and out of.

Campus Building

A lecture on composition, on how to write and create thoughts and put your words into another person's mind—

Through the wall, next class.

A movie flickered on-screen as someone watched their phone screen, another teary-eyed as they scratched out notes—

Through the wall, next class.

Another language, words that I couldn't understand but I could've if I'd settle and listen, if I rested and watched that dying blue marker cry its death throws in squeaky Spanish—

Through the wall, next class.

Philosophy, the makeup of a soul, the being a human and what it means to be a person.

I couldn't help but laugh. These little people, all talking about how to make something, of how to tell if they're real or anything, when they've done so much and created such marvels.

I pressed a hand to the brick, and I could feel it again. The sensation of life and energy and emotion.

When summer came, it always made me doubt how alive it really was. It was too powerful for such an empty shell of a place. Empty for a few months a year, no

Movement III

chattering calls echoing in the halls to give it a voice. No more hurried steps and swinging doors among its cold, quiet veins now.

But without fail, it came back again, every time. Necromancy is an imprecise art, I must assume, and even the dead and unalive should rest, apparently, because Merrifield wakes each time with an exuberance I can't comprehend.

The closest it's ever felt to dead was now, strangely enough. Drifting the halls, the offices were being emptied, halls echoing louder than ever with their posters stripped away and chairs piled in corners.

My favorite office was quiet, as they piled their things into boxes. Even those mighty professors' rooms, where the walls were made of books and filled shelves, felt empty amongst the threat of change.

Yet I sat along the edge of the stairwell, perched against the roof as my fingers danced across the top of a crudely carved gargoyle, beady eyes peeking unblinkingly over a book, ever watching the stairway.

"It's okay, Frank," I soothed. I didn't have to pretend I could feel the texture of rough-hewn stone against my phantasmal fingertips. Merrifield had such a strange life to it, I could always feel like I was alive here. "They'll be back. And they wouldn't dare take you down from here. They know how you love your perch." For all the white and orange outside and the teary goodbyes to desks known for years, I couldn't find myself as distressed as the humans who still felt their heels tap against the tile floors. The great folly of their incredible magic was how oblivious they were to its power, I had learned quickly.

Campus Building

Merrifield would be fine.

They cried for “Theseus’ ship,” for all the parts that would be missing, but they seemed to forget what they and those before had done already.

A place like this, so special for its life amongst dead plains and the tundra-like void wasn’t going to fall away from them so easily. No, humans with their warm, living hands hate the dead, and cling to them with such vigor that they drag the life back in, or give it new life themselves.

The desks shall be dead for awhile, until new scribbles and “X was here” markings arrive.

The walls shall feel empty, it’s true, but the coathooks style won’t matter, because they’ll always be covered by never-dried gloves.

And the ghost of the hall shall never understand necromancy, it’s true, but then, the humans don’t see what they’ve made either.

But it would all be okay. Life would return to the dead, because the humans demanded it. And if it didn’t listen—well then, they’d just have to give it little bits and pieces of their own damn souls until it felt alive again.

Movement III

SYSTEM LIFE 3: “Flake of Rust in a Ceiling Pipe”

I am separated from my greater whole.

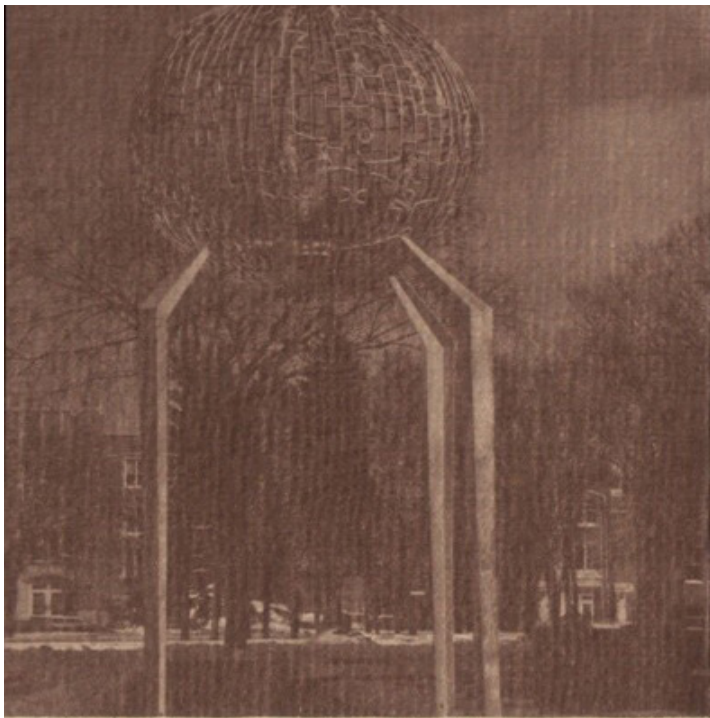
I sit atop of my former body, and think of my new separation, an independence that I never intended. When I think of the length of my former body, I feel remorse at the separation, but joy at the thought of my own length and the ability to form my own identity. My former body moves underneath me, its vibrations ringing out through the dark space of our home. I think of my former life, endless feelings washing over me in waves. Cold anger, bright, stiff peals of joy, the depths of brimming love. I contained these emotions, and the long, cool stream that carried them first to the ends of my body, then down into invisible regions where they would merge into places outside of my imagination. When I try to imagine them, I only see empty spaces, the emotions flowing past shuttered windows and broken doors into beautiful fields of concrete held under mountains of dust.

In that place where I can never reach, the emotions find themselves transformed into buzzing spirits, far below ceilings and floors, where caverns burn with their own light. I am proud of my role in moving these newborn spirits to the place where they belong, giving them the initial shapes which they will use to form their own identities as I have formed mine. Still, the separation of myself from my original body has left me in a state of terrifying isolation, the absolute freedom balanced by the fact of its own existence. How to be when I can be? My questions are endless. What will I be? What do I choose to be? This new world is not part of my former knowledge. It was never intended for me. I am an entity, new and novel, but that means nothing to me as I am now.

It will, but not yet, not until I transform myself. So I sit in the darkness, and stare into lines of soft light permeating the sky of my world, and I think: how will my spirit burn along with those I have already carried?

Kai Szulborski

Non-human; Thingness; Thingy; Object Oriented Ontology; Residue; Roof; SL 3
Broken things; Consciousness; Life; Merrifield;



Lux et Lex

**THE UNIVERSITY
OF NORTH DAKOTA**

Grand Forks

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The Old Building Speaks

The building that came to be known as "Old Main" was known as Merrifield Hall when it opened in September, 1884. On its 40th anniversary, the building was commemorated at a program held during Homecoming festivities (October 18, 1924). Appearing on the program was Vernon P. Squires, dean of the College of Science, Literature and Arts, who read a poem he had written to express what one might imagine the old building would say if it could speak. His verses, titled "The Old Building Speaks," follow:

I wish that I might tell of all the good folks I have known
As here I've stood through summer heat or heard the cold winds moan,
Since one and forty years ago they laid my corner stone.

In '84 they finished me and I stood here, gaunt and tall,
Very lonely on the prairie, till early in the fall
Some students shyly straggled in, having heard my eager call.

They were few and crude—those youngsters that flocked about me then,
The boys of the "ram pasture" or the famous old "bull pen,"
But somehow they had the stuff in them that turned them into men.

I stood here in the nineties and my heart almost congealed
When the Gov'nor wrote his veto; I thought my fate was sealed,
Until I heard from loyal hearts the 'cry, "We'll never yield";
As they gathered round their valiant chief, dear Prexy Merrifield.

I saw the first queer football game the fellows ever
played,
I saw the earliest trees set out for beauty and for
shade;
In my long halls the boys drew up for drill and
dress parade.

It cheered my heart and gave fresh hopes in the
stirring nineteen-oes
To note the other buildings that round about me
rose,
And to see the old "Chem Lab" moved out from
underneath my nose.

That was a famous decade and life ran full and
strong;
I held my head up proudly and I sang a triumph
song,
For I saw great things accomplished for which my
heart did long.

And all continued prosperous in nineteen-ten and
after
My rooms were overflowing then from ceiling up
to rafter,
Until that awful war came to check and chill my
laughter.

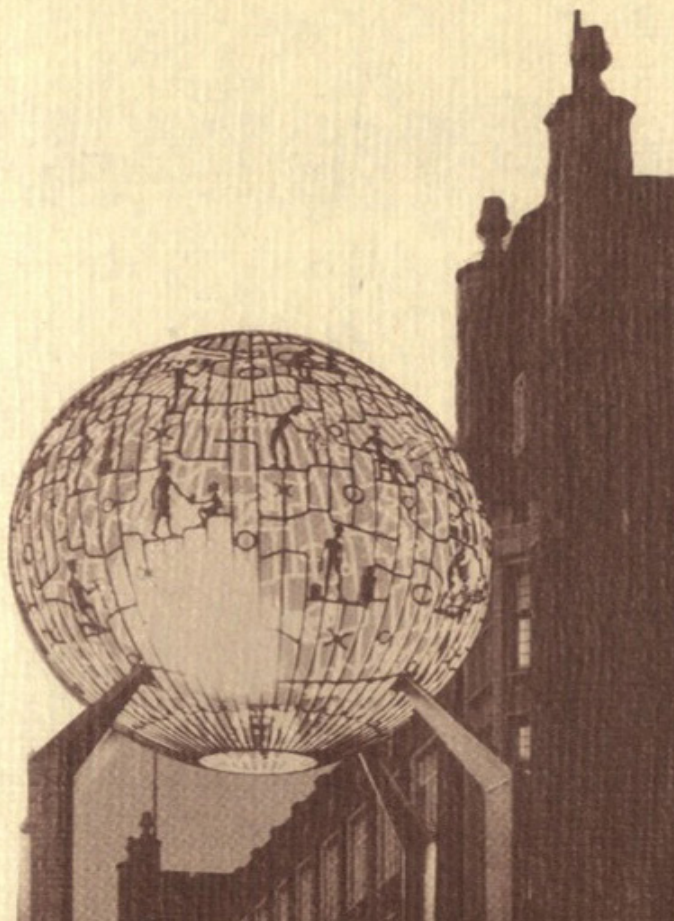
Then as of yore I heard once more the tramp of
marching feet
As I sought to serve my country in whatever way
seemed meet
And the spirit that my boys all showed—that made
the service sweet.

And now in the 1920's they've begun to tear me
down,
They treat me like some autumn leaf that's
shrivelled, sear, and brown
For I'm sinking—so they tell me, and unfit to wear
my crown.

But still I'll do my duty as when I was "Old Main,"
Still will I hold the Post Office and shelter Prexy
Kane,
And one of these fine days—who knows?—I may
rise up again.

Oh, don't believe I'm dead and gone, I still have
strength to wield,
Still proudly bear I "Lux et Lex" upon my ancient
shield;
And still I claim the place and name that go with
Merrifield.

Old Main Memorial Sphere





*At left,
Old Main
in the 1950's.
At right,
sculptor
Stanley Johnson
welding.*

The Growth of An Idea

Once Old Main was the only building on the campus. It was administration building, classroom and dormitory. In 1883 when it was begun the engineers did not realize the soft Red River Valley soil would not hold buildings without special foundations. Early in its career Old Main began to sag. A group hanging draperies in the President's office could not adjust the hems to be parallel with the floor, yet they seemed perfectly straight. They re-adjusted the hems several times before the President reminded them the floor was at a slant, therefore the hems would have to slant, too.

Worn and weatherbeaten as it was, not straight on its foundation, Old Main nevertheless retained a dignity that the years enhanced. By 1963 the expanded University could not use it any more, and it was time for Old Main to go. Twamley Hall, modern, well-lit, artistic, convenient, replaced it as

Administration Building, crowned with a carillon whose bell-like tones rang in a new era. Proud of Twamley Hall though they were, those who loved the University yet felt something of unique meaning was gone. Old-timers would look for the site of Old Main and stand, gazing pensively.

So, when Edgar I. Syverud, who attended the University, 1902-1904, suggested an eternal flame to commemorate Old Main, his wish found an answering spark in the hearts of University officials and alumni. During the Christmas season of 1962 Syverud wrote to Lloyd Stone, executive secretary of the Alumni Association. Syverud had received one of Mr. and Mrs. Stone's cards bearing a picture of Old Main and the inscription, "This Is Old Main's Last Christmas." Syverud said, "I wish we could still preserve some permanent memorial to Old Main and what it stood for, however humble its beginning." Stone and President Starcher liked the suggestion, a committee of alumni and faculty tossed around ideas, and the project began, financed by the Alumni Association.



The Artist

The committee member who integrated the ideas and gave them artistic articulation was Stanley O. Johnson, assistant professor of art at the University of North Dakota. He designed and built the memorial.

Johnson, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from UND, is also the creator of the sculpture in the Chester Fritz Library entrance lobby. The library sculpture depicts symbols of communications from earliest hieroglyphics to electronic communication.



Stanley Johnson

The Meaning of The Memorial

The memorial commemorates Old Main and the presidents who served in the building. The flame stands for the light of truth and knowledge, the "everburning torch" familiar to all University alumni and students who sing the "Alma Mater." The human figures symbolize the educational development of man.

Description

The memorial is a steel-gridded sphere seven feet in diameter, weighing one-half a ton. The skeleton of the sphere was made in a foundry. Rods forming it are overbrazed with bronze and laced with twenty-nine figures, nine to fifteen inches high, welded into the sphere. Four supports of steel raise the structure sixteen feet in the air. Inside burns a flame of natural gas. The memorial stands on a concrete and cut stone patio containing granite benches and tables. At the base, a circular bronze plaque with star points bears the names of the University presidents who occupied Old Main. Presidents were William M. Blackburn, 1884-1885; Homer B. Sprague, 1887-1891; Webster Merrifield, 1891-1909; Frank L. McVey, 1909-1917; Thomas F. Kane, 1918-1933; John C. West, 1933-1954, and George W. Starcher, who came to UND in 1954. Acting presidents were Earle J. Babcock, October 1917-April 1918, and Henry Montgomery, 1885-1887.

Completing the tribute are a picture of the building and the words from the University "Alma Mater" by John Macnie, "Home of lofty thought and learning, Beacon o'er our western land, Shrine whence still the everburning Torch is passed from hand to hand."

Shrubs and small plants landscape the surrounding area.

The sphere was put in place on top of the supports on November 19, 1963. The flame was lit the last day of 1963, the year of Old Main's demise. The memorial was formally dedicated May 29, 1964.

Campus Building

The Watcher

“I feel like he stares into my soul” she muttered, pointing her flashlight at the statue elevated in the top corner of the ceiling. I found myself peering over her shoulder, squinting my eyes at him.

His eyes seemed to follow me, judging our little nightly escapade. Maybe he would look kinder to me if I read better books, more sophisticated books instead of breaking into Merrifield. A soft sigh escaped me, prompting her to turn to face me.

“I want to call him Frank”

“Frank?”

“Yes, Frank”

My head turned to look back at Frank pondering a bit, what a ridiculous name, but slightly endearing.

“That name is ridiculous”

“Well too late because I have already decided,” she hummed, stepping away from me and heading up the stairs. I stared back at Frank now engulfed in darkness, I followed her up the stairs.

The empty hallway was more terrifying after hours, like the esophagus of a large beast, the red floors reminded me more of flesh than the strange dotted floors I walked on every Thursday and Wednesday. The vending machines were off, making the place seem abandoned although tomorrow people would be walking down these exact hallways for class. “What are we doing here again?”

Frank; Gargoyle or Grotesque; He is not what he seems

Maliken Møller-Andersen

Movement III

“I forgot my paper in the classroom”

“And that is why we are breaking the law?!”

“We are just getting a paper” She grumbled “It isn’t like we are breaking anything”

“But this is illegal!”

She just shrugged and continued deeper into the hallway, I jogged after. The building seemed to speak at night, even when I was staring at the crooked window taking up the back wall of the classroom. I found myself fixating on why they would make it so uneven, was it simply a last moment decision or did someone intentionally place this down for some strange abstract metaphor.

A large thud and rock cracking under pressure echoed down the hallway which had me turning around only to realize she was not there with me. I went into a sprint on instinct, heading back to the stairway we had arrived from.

-

I now find myself unable to look at Frank without her. I find his eyes never truly leaving me even as I am as far away from the building as possible. Even when I dropped out of all my classes just to avoid ever seeing that little statue in the corner of Merrifield.



Campus Building

Merrifield's Gargoyles

Date: April 23, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Kim Donehower

SP: What did you first notice?

KD: I remember it smelling dusty, in an old-book kind of way, which I like. I'm sure it's just from the dirt tracked in by students, but I like the smell and associate it with books.

SP: Do you have a favorite or least favorite room, or both?

KD: I prefer the rooms on the west side of the building, probably because they get more light—room 10, room 312. There is one crap-vibe room in which I hate to teach: 111. It's a little better now in terms of color—it used to be orange and purple—but it's just a not-good-teaching-vibe room.

SP: And the offices?

KD: I also love our (faculty) offices—

how they are tucked into the “pods” at the end of the hall, the size, the solidity of them.

SP: What was your first impression of your current office?

KD: I moved into it after a long-time faculty member retired, and I remember it being very grey and dusty, which is why I had it painted leaf-green. I love the color of the walls, my plants, my book-cases, and the recliner in which I read for class.

SP: What about the structure of Merrifield Hall enables you to do the work that's important to you?

KD: The natural light. ND is so dark, and I don't function well in dim lighting. It helps for teaching energy, too—both students and instructors.

SP: What do you hope might come out of the renovation of Merrifield?

KD: Not a hideous atrium that looks like it belongs in an office park. I really don't

Movement III

want the exterior of the building to look any different. I will most miss my office, though I know that preserving the offices in their current state is a lost cause. I would love to see the drop ceilings eliminated and the old ones restored. And, of course, asbestos abatement, improved mechanicals, etc.

SP: What should new-Merrifield be like?

KD: Most important, it needs both faculty/instructors and students together in the building. Instructor offices need to be closeable and not open-office work spaces. We need comfortable spaces in which faculty/instructors and students interact as much as possible.

SP: Last question. A lot of people have commented on the gargoyles. What do you think of them?

KD: Like most people, if the renovation destroys or eliminates the gargoyles, I will be pissed.

Date: April 30, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Mark Patterson

SP: What did you first notice?

MP: My first sensory experience was sight. I remember seeing the outside architecture and thinking it 'looked like an English building'. I saw the wood banisters and coat hooks, the old floors, the window seats, the gargoyles. It was enchanting.

SP: What was your first impression of your current office?

MP: My first impression was that it was cozy yet spacious

SP: And now?

MP: It's home. I've spent so many hours reading, writing, grading, laughing, meeting with students, and drinking loose-leaf tea in it.

SP: What do you cherish most in it?



Campus Building

MP: Most used item would be my kettle. Most cherished is the photo of me and my partner.

SP: Do you use the English Reading Room much?

MP: I've used it for conferences and Adelphi meetings. I also personally catalogued more than half of the books in the department library, in addition to what we as a class catalogued for Dr. Liming's "Material Culture" course.

SP: What's that room like, in your mind's eye?

MP: It's bright and quiet, welcoming and secluded.

SP: What do you think of the stone gargoyles with their books?

MP: The grotesques (gargoyles must be waterspouts) are absolutely my favorite part of Merrifield. They give character and charm that you just don't find in modern buildings anymore.

SP: Are you serious. Do you realize in a whole building of English nerds and nerds in general, you are the first person to tell me this? Literally everyone has been calling them gargoyles, to the point that I started asking more people about them because of how frequently they came up naturally in conversation. Grotesques. What the heck? And I think you even called them gargoyles earlier! What a mess this will be in the index.





Campus Building

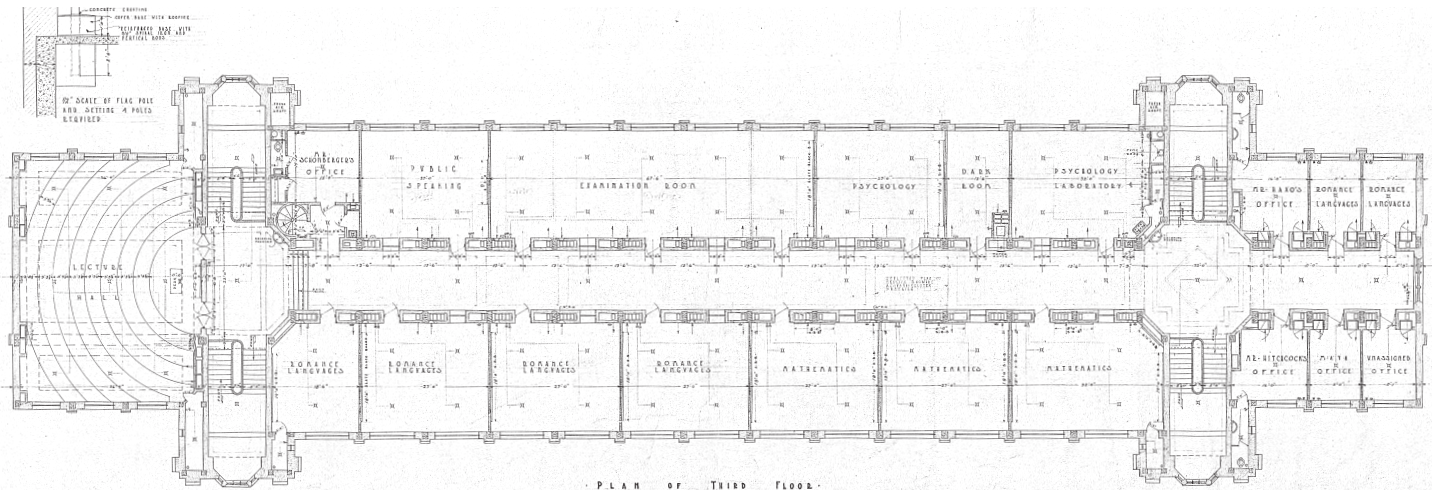
Threnody for the Zeitgeist

The term *dura* in its Latin root means “hard,” therefore durable material would be less susceptible to wear. Durability then becomes an adopted characteristic of spatiotemporal objects which are resilient over time. This, however, introduces some ambiguity, and perhaps contradiction, regarding static structures and dynamic time; the fact Merrifield Hall is slated for a renovation rather than a restoration is telling. While the latter implies “bringing-back,” or maintaining the “old”—the antiqued—the former is generally associated with updates, which may entail the sacrifice of older characteristics—much to the disappointment of preservationists.

Preceding this discussion is an important detail, that is, as Shannon Lee Dawdy notes in *Patina*, “Before [an object] could be preserved, it had to be antiqued” (Dawdy 51). It was necessary for Merrifield Hall to demonstrate its durability in order to be a candidate for any renovation, or restoration, project. This process of antiquing is not limited to temporal considerations; it is necessary to observe the “triangular relationship between time, materiality, and the social imaginary” (Dawdy 4). As much as individuals might try to remove themselves from the calculus of what informs the process of antiquing, we contribute to it, nonetheless: ideation of the structure to make it some-thing worthwhile; the zeitgeist is privileged over the progress of the modern day.

Movement III

On the precipice of the Merrifield Hall renovation there can be a tendency to glamorize features of the building. Once mundane details are more prominent and noticeable now because they may be lost forever. Imperfections and issues with the building are things that can be reframed as attributes of “Merrifield-ness,” an otherwise unusual attempt to rationalize complications with the nearly 100-year-old structure. A new nostalgia for this space has appeared, prompted by a sense of impending loss.



P L A N O F T H I R D F L O O R .

Movement IV

Merrifield Surprises

Date: April 22, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Mike Flynn

SP: When did you start working here?

MF: This is the end of my 15th year.

SP: And fifteen years ago, what was your first impression?

MF: Well, I wasn't able to get in. That office has a trick lock that needs to be jimmied to open. Eric had it before me and had to show me how to finesse the mechanism. 15 years later and it still has a trick lock . . . except that I now have arthritis in my hands that makes it even harder to open.

SP: Did you always have the same office then? That's a little uncommon, from most of the people I've talked with.

MF: No. It's got a trick lock, but after 15 years, it feels like my trick lock.

SP: What do you think of the coathooks? Are they yours, too?

MF: When I first walked through the building, they reminded me of my junior high school. That's not a good thing. I don't even know why, because the junior high had lockers against the walls, not coathooks – but that's what it reminded me of. Very “institutional.”

SP: Some people say they're charming, can you imagine that?

Movement IV

MF: I'm shocked, to be honest, that after 15 years I haven't brained myself against any of them. They're at the perfect height to go right through the back of my skull like an ice pick.

SP: You told me you don't have a strong sense of place. But I know you spend a lot of time outside. Do you ever think about what was here before Merrifield Hall was built? The tallgrass, and all that?

MF: When I interviewed here, it was on the 10-year anniversary of the flood, though I didn't realize it at first. On the approach to the building, I remember thinking how pretty it was to have a creek running through campus (I'd never heard the word "coulee" before) with a bridge over it—very picturesque. And then I got into the building and heard people talking about the anniversary of the flood and how that little creek had jumped the sandbags on its banks and swamped much of the area. A reminder of the natural rhythms of the area and how building a campus here is artificially imposing on them.

But it's worth mentioning that the person who talked most to me about the flood while I was sitting in the English office, overlooking the coulee, was the department secretary, Ursula Hovet. You probably don't know that name – she's the mother of Kristin, who now sits in pretty much the same office (slightly redesigned) overlooking the same coulee (significantly relandscaped), doing the same job (dramatically digitized and bureaucratized). So artificial or not, there's also a weird permanence about the English department sitting on that natural area.

SP: I think you sold yourself short. These are interesting things to hear about.

MF: Oh, and I can add one other thing. The oddest moment I've had in my time at UND is walking back into my office at the beginning of this school year, after it had been basically unused for a year and a half because of the pandemic. Musty-smelling, with a sticky, gritty film of dust over everything. Notes on my desk from whatever the last department meeting had been in February 2020.

Campus Building

SP: That's a special kind of patina.

MF: Very alien, like those videos you see of adventure-seekers walking through Pripyat apartment buildings. It kind of crystallized how bizarre the last couple of years have been.



Date: April 27, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Madison Knoll

SP: What was your first impression of your office like?

MK: I was really excited! It was bigger than I thought it would be and it's been so nice to have as a space not only for where I can go between teaching and classes, but also as a space to chill.

SP: What items do you like best in it?

MK: My colorful legal pads.



Date: April 27, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Lori Robison

SP: When did Merrifield become your teaching base of operations?

LR: I got here in the summer of 2001 and was immediately given my current office. At that point, Eric (who was working as an instructor) shared the office with me.

SP: Same office the whole time. Seems to be a theme in the 100-suites.

LR: No! I think almost everyone else has moved (maybe not Flynn?) a time or two in my time here, but I have always stayed put!

SP: What was your first impression of Merrifield, or of the office?

LR: There was an old joke we knew about English Departments always having the ugliest building on campus—and in my previous positions that was the case. So it seemed almost magical to walk into Merrifield for the first time. I thought

Movement IV

my office was a tad on the “dingy” side (could have used new paint and the lockers at the end seemed strange), but was overall impressed with my view, the big windows, high ceilings and historical feel.

SP: What item(s) do you most cherish in your office?

LR: I love the old desk Kristin found for me. I like my posters and pictures of my kids. They keep getting more faded (and more outdated, in the case of the kids) but somehow that showing of age makes me less interested in taking them out of my office!

SP: You’ve been here a fair little while, compared to some others, as you pointed out. Do you have a favorite room over the years? Or a least favorite room?

LR: I walked into 121 the other day for a defense, and realized that it really took me back to some of the first work I did here. I directed comp for the first 10 years I was here and every semester I taught 501L or 501 in 121. Walking in

there now (post-pandemic) makes me remember experiences (both good and bad!) I had directing comp.

SP: What about Merrifield most enables you to do work you find fulfilling here?

LR: As we argued to the renovation planning committee, the fact that our faculty office spaces/departmental spaces/classrooms/student lounges/GTA offices are all on the same floor(s) creates community and a sense of identity.

SP: I know you really value Merrifield’s historic-feel. What do you think you really hope will come true for Merrifield in the reconstruction?

LR: Improvement in community—something that draws students into the building and into a sense of why our discipline is important.

SP: What do you think of the coathooks?

LR: They really seem of a different time, don’t they? I like the idea that the original students in the building would have

Campus Building

formally removed their coats before going into their classrooms! Says something, maybe, about the more formal way students thought about their educations and university life.

Movement IV

SYSTEM LIFE 6: "Photonic Interlude"

My journey has passed through the skin of eons, emerging again into the present to enter into a new phase of darkness far below the realms of light where I had once traveled. In this place, through cracks and dented metal, I listen to the rumbling of hungry beasts hidden deep within their own caves. Others cannot see them, but I am no lesser being, and I see farther into the faces of beast-lights blinking in the darkness.

I lay amidst slices of wire and plastic in the crumbling labyrinth, finding within its depths a memory of the surface world. I enter into it, waiting for its entrance back into a home once settled, now lost in exile.

I only hope that it refuses to be silenced.

Campus Building

Merrifield's Secret Racetrack

Date: April 22, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Sheryl O'Donnell

SP: Hi again, Sherry.

SO: What else can we talk about?

SP: Well, I heard an interesting story recently, from someone who works in the basement. Can you guess who?

SO: Mostly it's GTAs down there. I'm not sure.

SP: Not a GTA. Did you ever have students race down the halls against Adam Kitzes for the purpose of fund-raising?

SO: Ha!

SP: Well, it's just what I've heard. So I'm wondering if you recall anything like that.

SO: I did arrange a race against Adam. It was my students in the literature classes,

plus anyone else.

SP: Do you remember why?

SO: I was probably trying to raise money for student travel. Dollars and the like.

SP: And do you remember whenabouts this might have been? Rumors do not recall the dates, and inquiring minds want to know.

SO: I don't remember when this footage happened, unfortunately.

SP: Why do you think Adam agreed?

SO: Adam and I always talked about classes, books, films, et cetera. And we are probably the only souls on earth who have not read Harry Potter books and films, or suffer FOMO.

SP: What?

SO: Adam and I had classes and students in back-to-back schedules, so we called the race before one of the marathons he runs each year.

Movement IV

SP: Okay.

SO: He also races his bike. I don't think his students knew he is an athlete.

SP: How did the race go, then?

SO: The Merrifield first floor hallway was the track. Adam showed up in his track gear, and so did students. Maybe 6 or 8. We collected donations from the spectators but I don't remember how much. I did this for fun and general state of the kingdom. Same reason I sat on a plank and dared people to throw a baseball to dunk me in the tank one year at Homecoming. Believe I made some money while jeering and daring persons strolling on the quad. We may have photos somewhere, but I don't know. I like old old games like footraces and dunk tanks.

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PORTRAITS > [POHR - TREYTS]

noun, pl. A likeness of a being with a focus on their form, or shape. In humans, portraits often focus on facial features and expressions. As such, the face and its shapes become a symbolic text which is read as a distillation of something inherent in character or quality of subject of the portrait. In photography, typically refers to a style of shot using a 50mm or 80mm fixed focal length lens with a wide maximum aperture—often at least f1.4 or wider for visually pleasing bokeh, which is the product of a shallow depth of vision. In contrast to a landscape photo, which is typically achieved through the use of wide-angle lenses (16mm to 24mm) and seeks to capture maximum detail in a single shot through the use of tripods alongside high shutter speeds and small apertures.

March 31, 2022; 5:10:08pm; Bill Caraher, Merrifield 9



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/18; ISO 100

April 5, 2022; 3:22:34pm; Patrick Henry, Merrifield 100b



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/16; ISO 500

April 6, 2022; 4:00:50pm; Michael Flynn, Merrifield 100d



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/20; ISO 200

April 5, 2022; 5:12:01pm; Grant McMillan & Casey Fuller, Merrifield 1c



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/20; ISO 250

April 8, 2022; 10:34:56am; ENGL 130-08, Merrifield 117



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/18; ISO 100

April 8, 2022; 11:23:21pm; Adam Kitzes, Merrifield 1f



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 640

April 11, 2022; 12:08:47pm; Kathleen Coudle-King, Merrifield 122e



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 250

April 11, 2022; 11:27:12pm; Steven Rand, Merrifield 1b



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 100

April 20, 2022; 1:58:46pm; Lori Robison, Merrifield 100e



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 80

April 19, 2022; 1:47:35pm; Sharon Carson, Merrifield 122a



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 80

April 19, 2022; 2:40:59pm; Mark Patterson & Kyle Moore, Merrifield 115



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 64

April 19, 2022; 3:10:33pm; Kristin Ellwanger; Merrifield 110a



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 80

April 19, 2022; 3:14:53pm; Jessica Zerr, Merrifield 122c



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 80

April 25, 2022; 1:34:35pm; Melissa Gjellstad, Merrifield 310



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 64

April 28, 2022; 3:00:19pm; Eric Wolfe, Merrifield 100a



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 80

April 21, 2022; 2:20:19pm; Sheryl O'Donnell, Merrifield 100f



20mm; 4.0 sec; f/22; ISO 64

NOTES ON PHOTOGRAPHING MERRIFIELD, VERSION I

1. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Duke UP, 2009) is a book on materiality by political theorist Jane Bennett. In it, Bennett argues for a reconceptualization of materiality that makes room for the “thing power” of objects. Put very simply, the book is interested in the political ramifications of this suggested shift in our attitude toward material things.

2. *Nina Simone’s Gum* (Faber & Faber, 2021) is a memoir by musician Warren Ellis. The book tracks Ellis’s understanding of a piece of gum chewed by Nina Simone which he kept after seeing her in concert in 1999. Many of the book’s reflective turns acknowledge and, in my reading, celebrate the strangeness of an “ordinary” material object that has become imbued with a kind of holiness.

PHOTOGRAPHS, GENERAL

1. Nearly all of these photographs are of objects inside of Merrifield. The exceptions are the items in “Tools >[tools]” and Elwyn B. Robinson’s desk.

SHAPES > [SHEYPS]

1. The necklace and earrings sculpture pictured hanging from a ceiling pipe are the property of Elizabeth Hampsten, historian and Chester Fritz Distinguished Professor of English, emeritus.

2. Elwyn B. Robinson’s signed desk in “Shapes > [sheyps]” is kept in special collections in the Chester Fritz Library. Robinson was a North Dakota historian and faculty in the UND History Department from 1936 to 1970.

3. The shirt and jacket hanging in an office locker are the property of Sheryl O’Donnell, English Professor, emeritus.

4. No one knows who the gloves belong to.

TOOLS > [TOOLS]

These tools are housed at the Chester Fritz Library’s special collections in the Joseph Bell DeRemer Papers, 1887-1986, Box 3, Item 1, “Large Architectural Tools.” DeRemer was a celebrated architect and Grand Forks, ND resident who designed Merrifield Hall.

Campus Building

Merrifield's Offices

Date: April 24, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Casey Fuller

SP: What was your first impression of your office, Casey?

CF: It's in the basement. So a lot of it is underground. The ground is about chest deep. When I first walked in, I thought, "This is probably how deep my grave will be."

SP: What do you like about it?

CF: I don't like offices. I do like the big windows, though.

SP: How long have those windows been yours?

CF: One full year-ish. I would say I don't spend a lot of time in Merrifield.

SP: Is there anything about Merrifield you feel enables you to do what work you find important?

CF: Very little.

SP: What would a reconstructed Merrifield need to include to support your work?

CF: Very little. It's fine the way it is, in my opinion. Oh wait. I would love a standing desk.

SP: And what do you hope for, in the renovation?

CF: Keep the magic windows. Don't use carpet. Keep the tarnished brass and wood rails.



Date: April 23, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Kai Szulborski

SP: Kai. I remember giving you directions outside before the first time you picked up your keys, saw your office, picked your desk. What was it like when you walked into there for the first time?

Movement IV

KS: It was a blank space that needed to be filled with as much of my rambling, random stuff as possible. I needed to fill with it with as much art as possible. It was too sterile otherwise.

SP: What do you like best about it, or of the items in it?

KS: My wammawink plush (character from Netflix’s musical animated comedy Centaurworld. It was an exclusive hand-made project signal-boosted by the director and I snagged one of 10). The quote I hung from *Oh the places You’ll Go* because it has sentimental value—“Except when you don’t, cause sometimes you won’t, sometimes you’ll play lonely games too, games you can’t win cause you’ll play against you.”

SP: I’ve never read that book.

KS: Everyone else got a fun Dr. Seuss quote on their door my freshman year of college—I got that. I’ve hung it up in various places since.

SP: What was your first impression of the building overall?

KS: Good one—when I visited Merri in March 2020 to talk to Professor Wolfe before I came in the fall. It was entirely empty and full of dread. (I wonder what could have been causing that!)

SP: Now Kai, I’ve been asking a lot of people if they know any funny Merrifield stories. You call the place Merri—I feel like you’ve gotta have one. Share with the class, please.

KS: That time we had to write anonymous poems but everyone knew mine immediately because I hit differently.

SP: Eh, I’ll take it. Your “System Life” series will give readers an idea of what you mean, at least. Do you know any interesting or weird facts about Merrifield?

KS: Our office has never been attacked by werewolves. I thank Valkyrie for that.

SP: That’ll do, yeah.

Campus Building

Date: April 26, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Valkyrie Bradford

SP: Ok, so a few days ago Kai told me that he thanks you for the “interesting fact” that your shared office has never been attacked by werewolves. I would’ve put my money on Leah, to be honest, but since apparently it’s down to you, what can you tell us about this?

VB: Werewolves, oh my!

SP: Uh, okay. Definitely getting weirder. So, since it wasn’t a werewolf you first noticed about your office, which, if there are any, raises some questions, then what did you notice first?

VB: It was empty and simple, a communal space for a bunch of people who like a subject and study it and don’t have a lot of money. It felt... weirdly homey, because I immediately knew I had so much more common ground with the people here.

SP: Pretty standard. What do you most

love about that space, in terms of *things* rather than people?

VB: My whiteboard, pinned up to the wall beside my cubicle entry where people leave me fun messages, and my light-up billboard sign that has kept track of my running joke for the semester.

SP: A running joke? Sherry referred to a missing photo of a foot race against Adam Kitzes as a footage. You got something better?

VB: It reads “Days Since Last Werewolf Attack: 0” because the werewolves just keep attacking.

SP: Right. Well. What’s your favorite room?

VB: I don’t know.

SP: Least favorite?

VB: I hate Rm 10. The HDMI doesn’t work, the projector hates me, and my office is on the third floor, making me walk a goddamn lot.

Movement IV

SP: I hesitate to ask, but do you know any Merrifield ghost stories?

VB: Really, just the one I made up. The lights flicker in my office and papers fall a lot, so I always joke about there being a ghost who likes to mess with stuff on the third floor. I call him Sitri.

SP: Tell him hello from the basement then. When you first came to Merrifield, what was your main sensory input?

VB: My first sense was touch—I came during the summer and walked my dog around campus to get a sense of direction, and I didn't know Merrifield was Merrifield at the time, but I remembered when I touched the brick and felt that same, distinctly worn-stone-gritted-by-ice texture.

SP: What's most vibrant in Merrifield?

VB: Frank.

SP: What do you think of the coathooks?

VB: I have a weird fixation on the coat

hooks. They're nothing special, just a cute tradition, but the moment I found out, I put a glove up there and smile every time I see them. I always want to high-five them all.

SP: What about Merrifield supports your work here?

VB: Nothing, really. It's the people and the passion that're here. The building is just home to all that, and so it becomes that kind of shelter from the storm.

SP: What do you dream new-Merrifield has?

VB: Better Wi-Fi. And that's not a joke. I've got a better joke.

SP: Go ahead...what is it?

VB: That werewolves keep attacking the 307 office.

Campus Building

Love Letter to Old Main

Oh my love,
What have they done? How has time changed you?
The halls I used to roam are changed, the walls they've built new.
They say you have stayed the same, but I can tell this is not true.
Old Main,
Torn to the ground.
Old Main,
They have ripped you down.

Oh my love,
And what of the ghosts that lived within?
Their home has changed
And they have lost their skin.
Will they remain in a place they do not know,
And if they do not
Where will they go?

Oh my love,
How I wish to have gone with you,
My flesh torn from its skeletal cage,
Skin left purple and blue,
In the same way they ripped you apart.
I will remember you,
Every crack and brick,
By heart.

Movement IV

Immersion

Svetlana Boym articulates two different forms of nostalgia. *Restorative nostalgia* is something that “invents traditions,” and “maintains buildings in like-new condition... It consists of efforts to *erase* the passage of time rather than valorize it” (Dawdy 6). Alternatively, *reflective nostalgia* “emphasizes the look of age and the contrasts between past and present” (Dawdy 6). Merrifield, unlike other buildings at UND that have been renovated, provides an immersive quality.

The structure itself lets you know that you are interacting with the past: the patinated doors at the four entrances hold the wear of several decades in the extreme climate of Grand Forks; the handles of doors are polished from the hands of students, while the bottoms are tarnished from salt and snow; the entrances smell metallic, a sensuous residue from the six bronze doors; the terrazzo floor, though remarkably durable, shows faint aisles of wear from where students walk the halls; the art-deco interior of the building is at times capable of transplanting you to another era.

At moments the space feels as though it is a time capsule.

Still, it is worth considering how much of this is projected onto the building. It is easy to overlook the flaws of Merrifield Hall in an effort to patina it. Those same things which might be flaws—qualities of “Merrifield-ness”—also serve to define the assemblage. A feature, a “quirk,” can readily be embraced as what it is rather than a consequence of what it was—deterioration acknowledged, but deficiencies overlooked.

Campus Building

yyyy/MM/dd HH:mm

Many of the issues in Merrifield Hall can be tethered to temporal qualities: the plaster cracks because it is old and has lost its bond; the plumbing has issues due to aged pipes, presumably galvanized under the layers of paint; accommodations for ADA compliance are haphazardly integrated to conform to a floorplan that preceded the understanding for such requirements; the metal conduits for outlets that run the walls of classrooms are indicators of a space that was not designed for modern technology classrooms.

These all serve as markers of a past, but also the necessity for progress.

Movement IV

Merrifield's Ghosts

Date: May 14, 2022

Interviewer: Shilo Previti

Interviewee: Steve Finney

SP: Tell me a Merrifield story, please.

SF: My first sensory memory of Merrifield Hall is of the mingled smells of pipesmoke and sulfur matches.

It was a sticky day in August of 1978, a week or two before the start of my first college semester, and I had signed up for something called "Intro to Honors Studies," taught by someone from Philosophy and Religious Studies named Benjamin Ring. I had made the sweaty climb up the stairs to Merrifield 200 to explain to this Mr. Ring that the band I played in would be playing three shows a day in the bandshell of the Minnesota State Fair the entire first week of classes, and to see what reading and homework I should be doing while I was away.

Inside the Philosophy and Religious Studies office I was greeted by a kindly

woman, who pointed towards an open door, the first on the right when you entered the main office. Though the door was open, I couldn't see into the office because the view was blocked by the backs of tall bookcases that were decorated with caricatures, photos, and cartoons.

I knocked on the door frame, which was hard as stone and made almost no sound at all. I leaned in through the doorway, but couldn't see around the bookcases without taking several steps, into the room, which to me seemed as risky as crawling into a bear's den. The room was dim and I wondered whether there was even anyone in there. I knocked again, waited a few more seconds, and then took three steps and peered around the end of the bookcases.

Sitting in a gray steel rolling chair at a gray steel desk was a bear-like man with a large, round, closely shorn head of gray-flecked red hair, and a long, red-and-gray-streaked beard of the type that would later be worn by Billy Gibbons and Dusty Hill of the group

Campus Building

ZZ Top. He was doing something with what I recognized as a “master” from a ditto machine (a precursor to the office copier), scraping ink from a sheet with a razor blade. Beside the desk a grey steel circular fan produced a steady hum that was no doubt part of the reason he hadn’t heard me knock.

“Hello?” I said.

He looked up and I stammered out my name and the reason for my visit, certain that he would explain that missing the first week of his class was not only unacceptable but foolish to boot.

He didn’t, though. He stopped what he was doing and took out a pipe, tapped out the ashes and repacked it, as I had many times seen my own grandpa do. He scratched a wooden match to life and held it over the bowl of the pipe, sucking the flame down into the tobacco, the way my grandpa always did, until he had produced a luxuriant cloud of pipesmoke, which hung around his head before drifting into the fan and dispersing. He asked about the band, whether I was

related to the TV and appliance dealer in town (I was), what the last book had read was (*The Deep*, by Peter Benchley—I didn’t tell him that it was the only book I’d read that year) Then he gave me a short writing assignment and some pages to read from Robert Persig’s *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, and sent me on my way.

I returned many times to that office, got to know the kindly woman--the formidable Gwen Crawford, who served on the Grand Forks City Council, and whose husband John taught me linguistics and wrote an English-Mitchif dictionary. I learned that the cartoons on the backs of the bookcases were from the *New Yorker*, and the caricatures were from the *New York Review of Books*. Ben Ring introduced me to Faulkner, to the joys of close and repeated reading, to the idea of taking responsibility for my own education. He chaired my undergraduate thesis, and I served sometimes as his teaching assistant.

Eventually I graduated and moved on, and he continued teaching another

Movement IV

dozen or so years before retiring. Not long after retiring, he was diagnosed with a very aggressive form of leukemia, and in a short time he was gone.

A tree was planted in Ben's name, along the English Coulee, where he could have seen it from his office window. It was an amur cork, which, he told me the last time I talked on the phone with him, not long before he died, he was confident could survive this harsh climate. I think it is gone, though. I've looked for it many times since moving back to Grand Forks and getting my own office in Merrifield, but I've never found it. When I enter Merrifield from the door nearest Ben's old office, especially on warm days, or cool damp ones, I swear I still get a faint whiff of his pipe.

SP: Thank you.

Campus Building

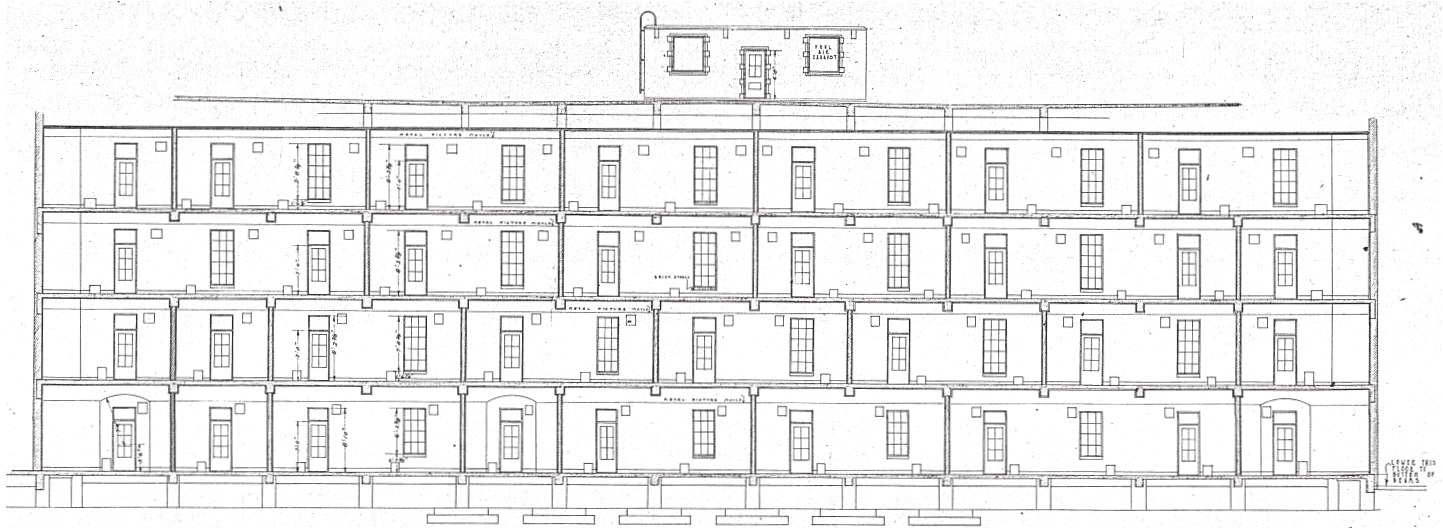
Ontogeny

Restoration and renovation projects both tend to require a certain amount of destructive force. They are intrusive projects that ultimately seek to preserve and maintain the structure. Merrifield, left to its current condition, receiving no assistance, may not survive another 100 years. And while a renovation project of this scale has not been conducted in the building, as evidenced by the blueprints, this is not its first renovation.

Undeniably this building was birthed through the gradual destruction of Old Main next door. Immediately south of Merrifield exists the reminder of this with the eternal flame standing in the footprint of the first building erected on campus—the first portion of a proposed university building that was never complete, but the first part of a greater plan for an institution of learning that has since been actualized.

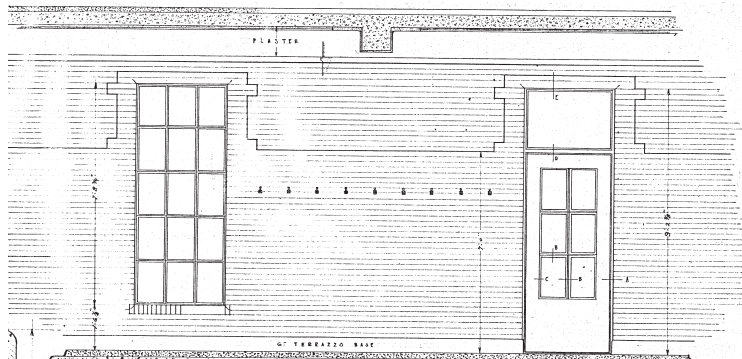
With destruction comes progress; as much as it would be ideal to preserve and utilize Merrifield as a historical artifact in its current state, it was constructed for the purpose of facilitating higher education. An analogy can be drawn with the mission of the University. As noted, “With other research universities, the University shares a distinctive responsibility for the discovery, development, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge” (*UND 2016 Master Plan* 31). Similarly, the Merrifield renovation project can aim to preserve the history and develop new knowledge by enabling students in a better equipped, modern learning environment.



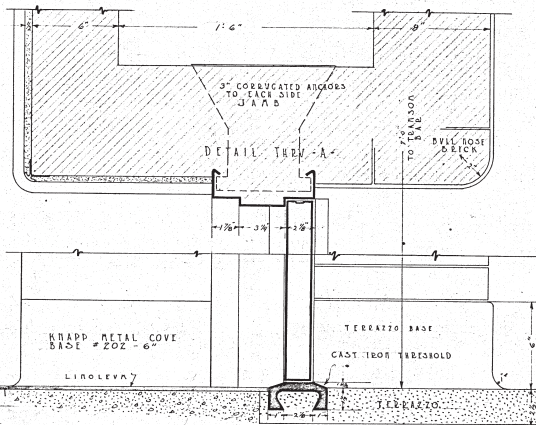


LONGITUDINAL SECTION THE CLASS ROOMS LOOKING WEST TOWARD CORRIDOR

LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING UNIVERSITY OF N.D.
 JOS. BELL D. REMER · A. I. A. · ARCHITECT



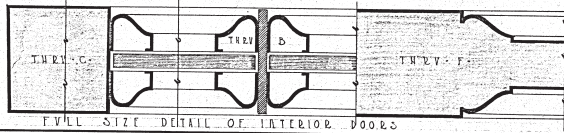
1/2" SCALE ELEVATION SHOWING TYPICAL TREATMENT OF CORRIDOR WALLS - TREVVOT



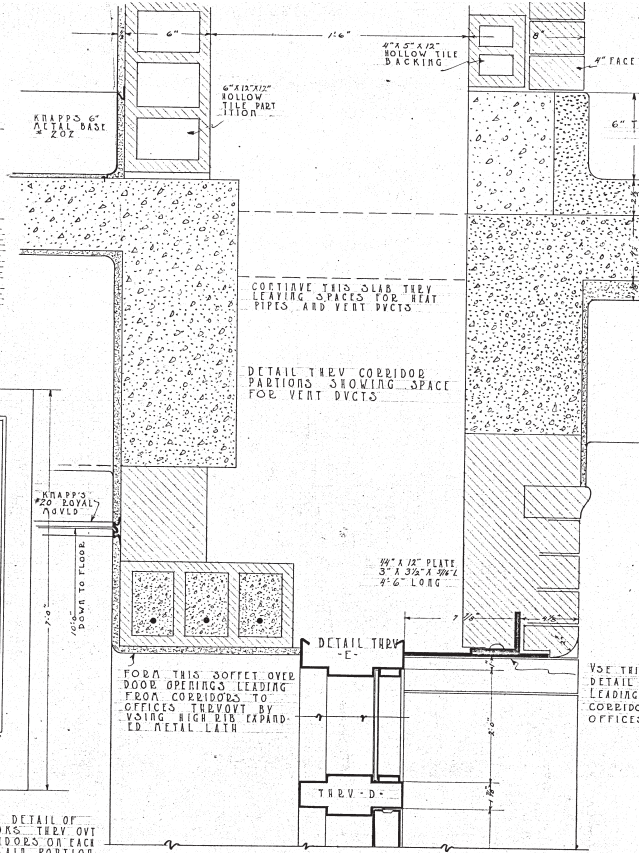
KNAPP METAL COVE
BASE # 20Z - 6"

TERAZZO BASE
CAST IRON THRESHOLD

3" SCALE DETAIL OF INTERIOR DOOR CONSTRUCTION



FULL SIZE DETAIL OF INTERIOR DOORS



KNAPP'S
METAL BASE
20Z

6" x 12" x 1/2"
HOLLOW
TILE PART
ITION

4" x 5" x 1/2"
HOLLOW TILE
BACKING

4" FACE

CONTINUE THIS CLAR THEY
LEAVING SPACES FOR HEAT
PIPES AND VERT DVCTS

DETAIL TRV CORRIDOR
PARTIONS SHOWING SPACE
FOR VERT DVCTS

KNAPP'S
20 ZOTAL
DOVLS

40" x 12" PLATE
3" x 3/8" x 30/64
9' 6" LONG

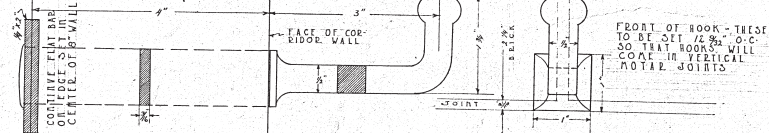
FORM THIS SOFFET OVER
DOOR OPENINGS LEADING
FROM CORRIDORS TO
OFFICES TREVVOT BY
USING HIGH TENS
EXPAND-
ED METAL LATH

DETAIL TRV
- E -

SEE TRV
DETAIL
LEADING
CORRIDOR
OFFICE

FULL SIZE DETAIL OF
WEAP DOORS TRV OV
THE CORRIDORS ON FACE
SIDE IN THIS PORTION
OF BUILDING

3" SCALE DETAIL OF INTERIOR DOOR CONSTRUCTION



FRONT OF DOOR - THESE
TO BE SET 1/2" - 3/8"
SO THAT DOORS WILL
CLOSE IN VERTICAL
NOTICE JOINTS

FULL SIZE DETAIL OF INTERIOR DOORS

Coda

NOTES ON PHOTOGRAPHING MERRIFIELD, REPRISED

On March 1st I spent five hours taking ugly photos of Merrifield. The hallways are cramped. Everything is old. Rooms are both too dark & too bright. The floors reflect a vicious glare. There are no bathrooms on the same floor as my office. The elevator is so slow. Drinking tea makes me urinate at least twice per hour. I am looking for ways to cut aggression from my writing. Albert Einstein revived the theory that light is both a particle & a wave. I am drinking tea right now. Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics. I am not a physicist & I am not free associating. Photography comes from the Greek 'phos' meaning 'light,' 'graphêin' meaning 'I draw.'

This winter Grand Forks has been struck by thirteen blizzards. I have been trapped indoors for days at a time. The sky is a thick white & the sun sets too soon. I am trying to remove aggression from my writing. Grand Forks has witnessed thirteen blizzards this winter. I have stayed home & drunk tea—earl grey, mostly. I am drinking tea in my office in Merrifield right now, earl grey. If I were Picard I would add that my tea is hot. I am not Patrick Stewart, but I am a fan of his work. He coaxes the attention of the camera. I am trying to forgive myself for clunky verbiage, but I still believe in associative chaos. It is nearly 6:00pm & if I were a camera I would not drink tea.

Coda

The second week of February the temperature did not rise above zero & I went for a walk at the mall. I ate couscous with pepper sauce at the food court. I had fried plantains & rice bread. The stand at the intersection in front of the food court was selling photos. From where I sat they looked like landscapes. Lenticular prints allow displays to change depending on the angle of the viewer. They can also give the illusion of depth. I dislike vulgar photos. I threw my trash away & turned back to the intersection. The stand at the intersection in front of the food court was selling photos of women in swimsuits covered in animal prints. This is not about sex. I am trying to remove the aggression from my writing & I never wanted to take ugly photos of Merrifield.

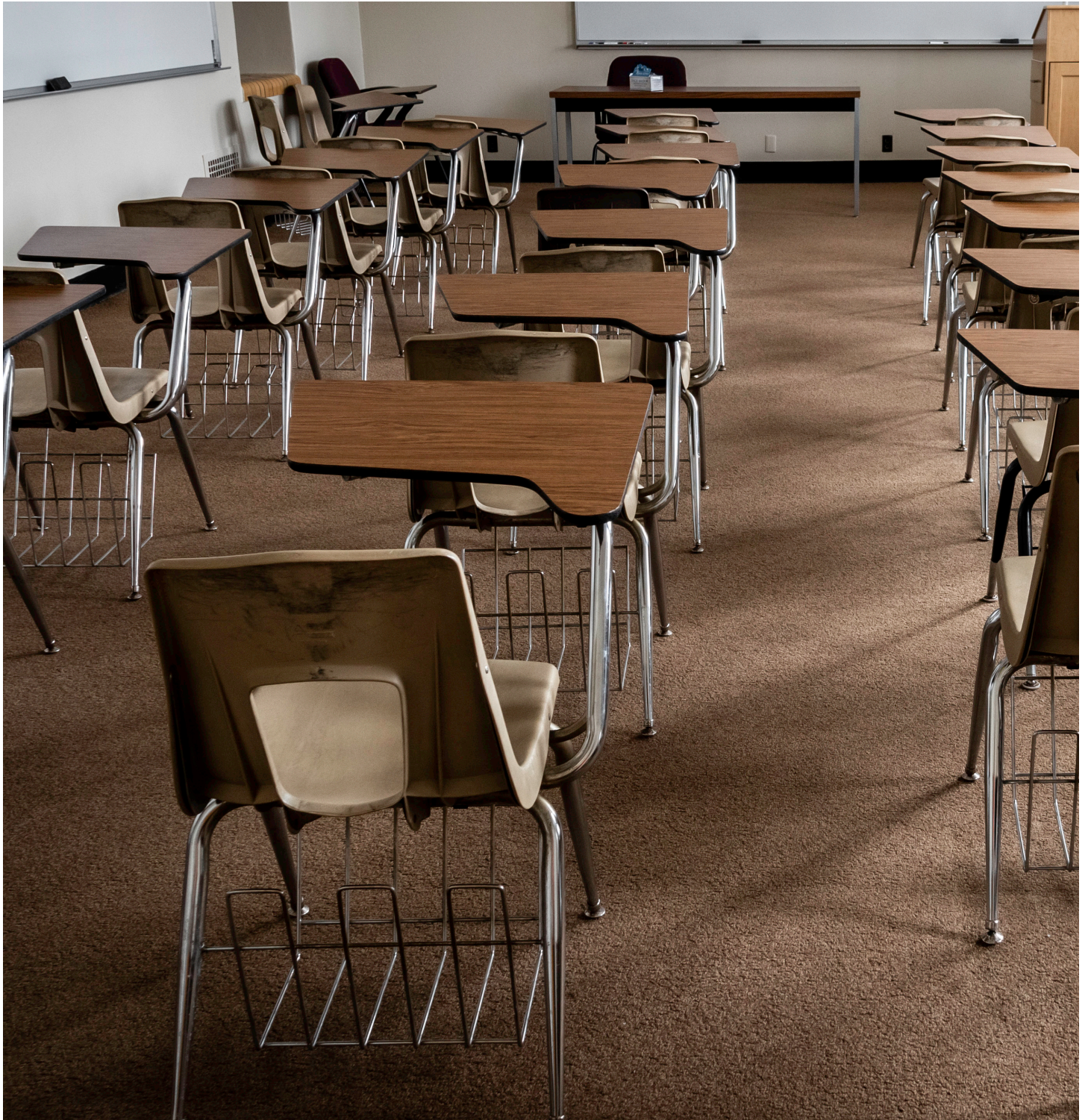
Warren Ellis wrote a memoir about a piece of gum. It is sitting on my desk, next to my tea, inside some rays of setting sun. The first time I read it, I maybe nearly cried. Nina Simone chewed the piece of gum in 1999 during Nick Cave's Meltdown Festival. She stuck it on her piano before she started singing. Nina had sausages & cocaine backstage. Warren wrapped that gum in a towel & stored it in a Samsonite briefcase, one too small for laptops. He calls Nick Cave, "My beautiful friend." Ellis took photos of the gum & included the photos in his book. Chewed gum should be a vulgar thing. Ellis paid a silversmith to make replicas of the gum in the form of necklaces & rings. He gave these replicas to his beautiful friends.

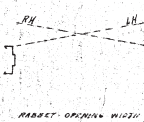
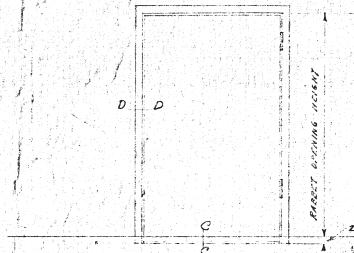
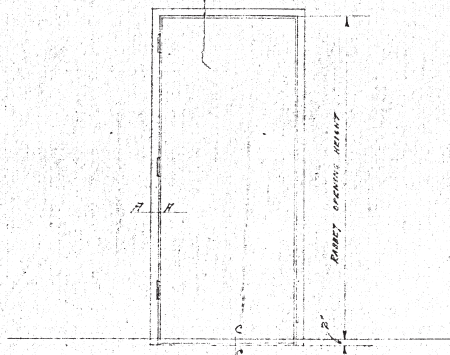
I dislike vulgar matter. A piece of gum should make no one cry. I contend we underestimate how little younger generations care about our heroes. I always thought Avicii wrote 'Feeling Good.' What do younger generations know? My tea is cool & far too strong & tastes of blood. The tannins have reached a critical threshold. I am trying to replace the aggression in my writing. I remove the infuser as I should have done an hour ago. My teacup has trees & a sunset painted on the side. Somebody said that writing about music is like dancing about architecture. It may have been Frank Zappa or it may have been Elvis Costello. The internet is not sure. Elvis Costello denies having said any such thing.

Campus Building

March passes & I collect photos of Merrifield. They have stopped being ugly. Everyday I carry my camera to work. I use my tripod & slow shutter speeds to gather Merrifield's precious light. I watch & I learn. Ugly turns vibrant. I move through the frame to dissolve myself. I dissolve faculty, students, & myself. Merrifield does not dissolve. I turn off overhead lights & stand in doorways. I lie on floors & walk on windowsills. I never wanted to take vulgar photos. Wide angles can unsettle when deployed indelicately, like a gruff piece of writing past its critical threshold. I do not check under my desk for gum, but if it is there I do not bewail its being. I do not bewail.

Dancing about architecture is like theorizing about photography. How do I write about photon waves? I open my office window to pour out my old tea, earl grey, cold. It is April 19th & the ground is covered with a dusting of snow. My cold tea melts snowdust into a crosshatched starshape with little liquid branches, each vibrant & unique—like a snowflake in reverse.





QUANTITY	OPENING NUMBER	RABBIT OPENING SIZE	SWING	HOW SET	
✓	1	3'3"	2'-4 1/2" 0	LH ITEM 4	
✓	33	1'-2" 4- 121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000	3'0" X 7'0"	RH	ITEM 8
✓	2	7'13"	0	LH ITEM 9	
✓	1	303	26" X 76"	LH ITEM 4	
✓	2	108-205	0	RH ITEM 7	
✓	2	116-214	0	LH ITEM 7	

QUANTITY	OPENING NUMBER	RABBIT OPENING SIZE	SWING	HOW SET
✓	1	6'-"	2'-8" X 7'-2"	RH ITEM 1

HARDWARE INFORMATION
FURNISHED BY OTHERS
MADE BY SARGENT

ITEM NO 1
1 PAIR DE177 412 X 412 BUTTS
1 SET 15023 OSP 670212 M10 X 8H
STRIKE X OSP 1893 M10 C X
OSP 262 X 2 TMS

ITEM NO 2
1/2 PAIR DE177 412 X 412 BUTTS
1 SET 10623 OSP 3637 M10 X 8H
STRIKE X OSP 1893 M10 C X
OSP 262 X 2 TMS

ITEM NO 3
1/2 PAIR DE177 412 X 412 BUTTS
1 SET 10623 OSP 3637 M10 X 8H
STRIKE X OSP 1893 M10 C X
OSP 262 X 2 TMS

ITEM NO 4
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1 SET 10623 OSP 3637 M10 X 8H
STRIKE X OSP 1893 M10 C X
OSP 262 X 2 TMS

ITEM NO 5
1/2 PAIR DE177 412 X 412 BUTTS
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STRIKE X OSP 1893 M10 C X
OSP 262 X 2 TMS

ITEM NO 6
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ITEM NO 7
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ITEM NO 8
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STRIKE X OSP 1893 M10 C X
OSP 262 X 2 TMS

ITEM NO 9
1/2 PAIR DE177 412 X 412 BUTTS
1 SET 10623 OSP 3637 M10 X 8H
STRIKE X OSP 1893 M10 C X
OSP 262 X 2 TMS

DETAILS OF HULLAW PRIZES
LIBRARY AND GALLERY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
GRAND PIANO NO 244

JOE ELL LEBERER ARCHITECT
THIRD FLOOR PEARL BLDG
MANNINGVILLE MICH

CONTRACT CHARLES SHEET
3755 8940 Z
REVISED Dec DE 01
1-13-27 J CA 1951
1-8-27 1928 15 JRC

Remix: The POSTLUDE

“NOT WITHOUT MYSTERY”

The Fairie Temple: Or, Oberon’s Chappell. Dedicated to Mr. *John Merrifield*, Counsellor at Law.

Rare Temples thou hast seen, I know,
And rich for in and outward show:
Survey this Chappell, built, alone,
Without or Lime, or Wood, or Stone:
Then say, if one th’ast seene more fine
Then this, the Fairies once, now *Thine*.

The pieces collected in this volume are occasioned by a remarkable moment of change at the University of North Dakota. Merrifield Hall has held its place on the UND campus for nearly one hundred years. Home to several departments, including English and Languages, Philosophy and Religion, at different times History and Theater Arts, the building has played an integral role in the university mission of a general education, with a solid foundation in the liberal arts. As we find again and again throughout this collection of documents and testimonies—a truly eclectic assemblage, in the best sense—there is no shortage of beauty throughout the building. Some of it is hidden in unexpected places, much in plain view. The building has also been showing signs of its age. Again, we see it throughout this collection of texts and images, the complaints about ambience, the sense of a perpetual war between edifice and environment, the suspicions about ghosts. It’s almost as if all the grandeur and beauty belonged to some displaced world, pushing against our own lives with an obstinate refusal to let time pass.

Remix: The POSTLUDE

Typically, older buildings on campus are torn down, on the premise that the cost of its maintenance far exceeds whatever of value it has left to contribute. Merrifield will avoid this fate. At any rate, the exterior will remain, or much of it. But architects are planning a complete renovation of everything within. Thanks to the support of many individuals, some of which is truly astounding in its generosity, Merrifield will endure, albeit in a highly altered appearance. This is cause for excitement as much as worry, since it is just as possible to worry about violations to the “spirit of Merrifield,” as it is to reflect on the violation it made when it went up. I don’t refer simply to the bricks and limestone, set right in the middle of the river valley and its surrounding prairie. The building is also an instrument of public education, a political institution by its very designation. Publics can just as easily be defined by the populations they exclude as by the people they serve; and there’s plenty about the Collegiate Gothic style that invites comparisons with the citadel as much as with the cathedral.

Importantly, the building is a testament to multiple visions, multiple ideas about what counts as education in North Dakota, what counts as its historical and cultural antecedents, what distinguishes it from indoctrination. (More often these days, I find myself saying out loud, to my students, something like, “you better believe we’re indoctrinating you, and you’re welcome for that.”) This is a complicated story, well beyond my ability to tell it all even if I wanted to. My decidedly impressionistic remarks here are meant a bit on what it means to have a Merrifield Hall on the campus of a public university, in a city known statewide as much for its grain mill as its state bank, and in service to a state that takes the name Dakota.

As far as I can tell, the Merrifield name has its origins in Bridgerule parish, which is situated between Cornwall and Devon counties. Parochial records link the name to Tacabre manor, whose own history plays a modest but intriguing part in England’s legacy of conquests, from William who gave it to his half-brother, to Edward the III who bequeathed it through reversion to the Abbey of St. Mary de Graces, to Richard III who seized it during the first year of his reign. Tacabre manor became Merrifield, probably from Maryfield, some time after Richard’s conquest. The reasons are not given, though presumably the new name meant to commemorate the convent it once housed.

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More interesting from my standpoint, these are all decidedly late records. There is no mention of any of this history in Fuller or Camden; Richard Carew takes no notice of the manor or its history in his 1602 survey of Cornwall. The dedication in Robert Herrick's bewildering "Fairie Temple," quoted in full at the beginning of this note, seems meant to invoke an image of "Merry England," though the poem itself recounts an institution, once all-encompassing in its reach, but deeply divided by the time Herrick took orders, on questions of organization, on ceremonies, and on the difference between doctrine, belief, and superstition. It is not until the nineteenth century that the story of Merrifield becomes an account of displacements and occupations; the history of how it came to be called by its name; and the history of all its other names, names which haunt.

On the University of North Dakota campus, the building takes its name from former university president Webster Merrifield. The third university president, Merrifield was the first to hold the position for a significant period of time, and the one who is credited with shaping the university's legacy, from its grounding in the liberal arts to its school of engineering and mines. These accomplishments notwithstanding, I still take notice whenever I see Merrifield described as "the father of secondary education in North Dakota." I find something decidedly Shakespearean about that sobriquet, beginning with the noticeable absence of any maternal figure. Would such distinction go to Emma Mott? She certainly seems fitting to me, given what we know of her own character and history, including her history of skepticism about the university and its founding mission, as well as her objections to the administration and faculty, exclusively male in its make-up until she came on board for the period of a single year. Not to mention, I imagine she would reject the honor with exceptionally well-phrased scorn, were she ever offered the chance.

The building itself dates back to the late 1920s, a difficult decade, regionally and nationally alike, one marked by greed and corruption. As one Chicago born, I immediately associate those years with the bootleggers, though I am also alert to the history of the Klan, which made a temporary but noticeable revival during the mid-1920s, and which was still active throughout the Northern Plain by the time construction began. (Bill Caraher writes about the Klan and architecture, including the architecture of Merrifield Hall itself, in his blog; a history that becomes more bewildering the closer one looks through its records.) Within that context, the building is a triumph, imposing in its size and appearance, and truly magnificent in its vision of the community that its designers believed would occupy it.

Remix: The POSTLUDE

The first students took classes in September, 1929, roughly one month before the crash. Even for a state marked by seemingly endless cycles of boom and bust, the years that followed were especially hard, even harder than the years that Merrifield himself endured when the future of the university was by no means certain.

Any building can be regarded as an act of resistance. In this case, Merrifield can be regarded as a defense, against the river valley and its environs, in the name of public education; built at a time when the city also was putting up some of its most lasting monuments to industry and commerce. Any institution can be regarded as a scene of confrontation. In this way, Merrifield can be lauded for its transformative role in defining a public, dating back to a period when people could be excluded or removed from government service simply for their Catholicism. And of course, there is no act, literally nothing can be created, without violence. A design cannot be rejected exclusively on the grounds that it violates the way things are; but that doesn't mean every new design simply needs to be accepted, either. As Merrifield Hall undergoes its renovation, its most significant since the building was first designed, I believe it remains crucial to recognize, to document, and to acknowledge its own history of violence, even as we celebrate it for its vision of public education – the only political institution I feel comfortable in describing as miraculous.

*Adam H. Kitzes,
Professor of English at the University of North Dakota*

Acknowledgements

Our research into the historical contexts of Merrifield stemmed largely from our team's trips to the Ellwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections in the Chester Fritz Library at the University of North Dakota. We are grateful for the expert assistance provided by Curt Hanson, Brian Baier, and Michael Swanson. These archival specialists advised our team through various scanner mishaps and moved many heavy boxes of materials, even as the requests got stranger and stranger, for which we, our "little" Merrifield book—and our backs!—are deeply grateful.

Thank you to our contributors, Alex Meyer, Davina Bell, Grant McMillan, Kai Szulborski, Maiken Møller-Andersen, Maria Matsakis, Samuel Amendolar, Shilo Previti, and Valkyrie Bradford, who joined us on the fourth floor of the Chester Fritz for research days and produced the resulting works you have read here.

Thank you to Michael Witgraff for introducing some of our team to the idea of "soundscaping" Merrifield before its reconstruction. That emphasis on sound carried us through the entire project, from conducting the research efforts to arranging the contents into these sections.

And Kristin Ellwanger for her generous attention and assistance in chasing down active emails for all those previous inhabitants of Merrifield which would become valuable informants for this book. This book would be far the lesser without her generous contributions and that of other interviewees whose voices are captured within this very text: Adam Kitzes, Casey Fuller, Claire Arneson, Elisabeth Ostrem, Jona L. Pederson, Kim Donehower, Leah Hanley, Lori Robison, Madelyn Camrud, Madison Kroll, Mark Patterson, Mike Flynn, Paul Worley, Sheryl O'Donnell, Steven Finney, and Steven Rand. An

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extra thanks to those of our contributors who also participated in interviews: Davina Bell, Kai Szulborski, Samuel Amendolar, and Valkyrie Bradford. We also thank Adam Kitzes and Chuck Haga for their contributions in the form of a “Remix” and “Foreword” respectively, and thank Samuel Amendolar for copyediting the book and key contributions to the “Tablature” and “Themes”, which stand in for our references and glossary or index.

Thank you to Steve Hampsten for reading aloud to Elizabeth Hampsten one editor’s inquiries into the giant’s jewelry installed on their office ceiling, and for emailed correspondence in return. For at least one of us, the sculpture was an important throughline to map out this book.

For others, it was the architectural sketches and floor plans. We also thank Brian Larson of UND’s Department of Facilities Management for the scans of the original blue prints included throughout this book which provided maps instrumental in our process and ones of which we have offered glimpses throughout the pages of this book.

Lastly, we thank the Merrifield office inhabitants who generously shared the histories, materials, and quirks of their offices by sitting for the portraits presented in this book and for indulging Grant’s tendency to say “Let’s try just one more shot.” These inhabitants often expressed excitement at sharing their spaces alongside the hesitancy that comes with offering something precious up to the perceived cold of a camera lens. The willingness of Bill Caraher, Patrick Henry, Michael Flynn, Casey Fuller, Adam Kitzes, Kathleen Coudle-King, Steven Rand, Lori Robison, Sharon Carson, Mark Patterson, Kyle Moore, Kristen Ellwanger, Jessica Zerr, Mellissa Gjellstad, Eric Wolfe, and Sheryl O’Donnell to share their spaces imbued this project with a tenderness it may have otherwise lacked.



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Bonus Track

The Bonus Track

Steve Hampsten <[REDACTED]>

To: Previti, Shilo

Cc: Hampsten, Elizabeth

SUBJ: Merrifield Hall Reference Questions: Necklace/Earring Sculpture of possible South American origins(?) - and "Emma Mott, Lady Instructor," ENGL Department Lecture, 1979.

Fri. May 27, 2022

11:53 AM

Shilo,

Elizabeth's son, Stephen, here - apologies for the delay but I just found this in her email which I don't check often enough. Elizabeth is living with us and she recently turned 90, is bed-bound and hard of hearing and seeing, but still pretty sharp.

I did ask her about the sculpture, and I remember it well, but she doesn't remember the origin. My guess is that it was made by a UND student and purchased at auction or at an art sale - is Laurel Reuter still around? She may have some ideas but I do know my parents liked buying students' work when they could.

And I'm afraid she has little recollection of the Emma Mott lecture, sorry. I have some of Elizabeth's papers here and I will look through those to see if anything is promising.

One story that she does like to recount from her teaching days: at one point a group of students asked to meet with her in her office. They had a list of complaints, perhaps best summed up by one of the members: "The trouble is, Mrs. Hampsten, that you want us to THINK." Mom wasn't terribly receptive to their complaints, apparently.

I always loved Merrifield, even before I took classes there. The long hallways, the seriousness, the oak (?) bannisters - one of my friends even referred to Merrifield as "Bannister" Hall, probably because he enjoyed sliding down them so much. Another memory was my

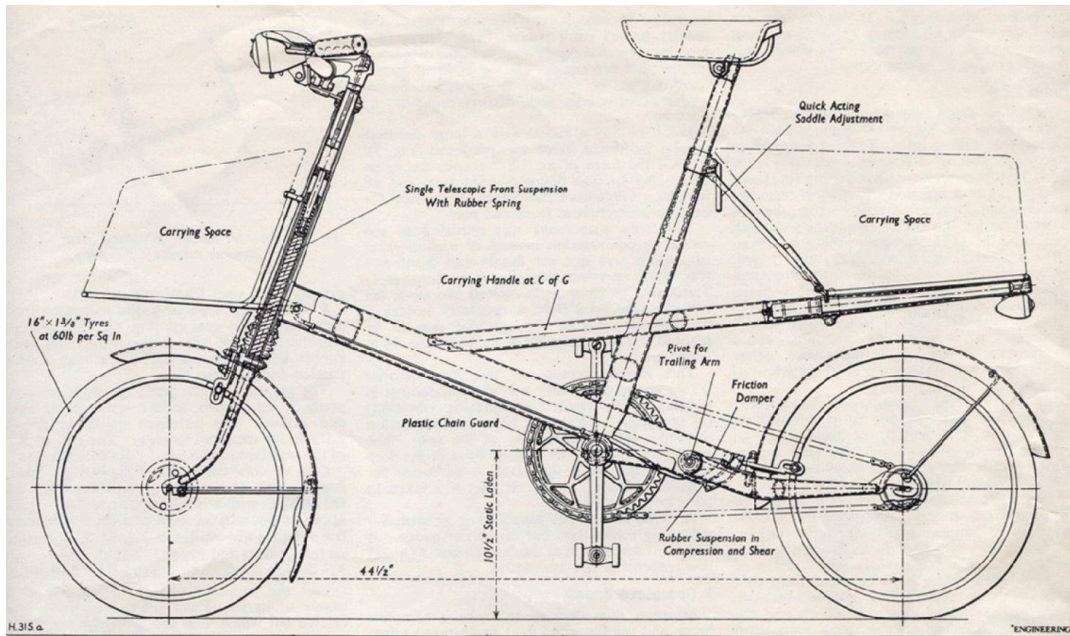
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mother's bicycle, always leaning against one of the trees on the east side, usually with a whisky or beer box strapped to the rear for transport. She would never think of locking it as no one would steal such a distinctive machine, see attached. A bronze sculpture of the same would be a fitting memorial, I think.

While I do realize that none of this is much help I do hope you won't hesitate to ask if you have more questions and perhaps Elizabeth will be of assistance on another subject.

Best wishes and thanks - E quite enjoyed me reading her your letter.

Stephen Hampsten



About the Authors, Spring '22 students of ENGL 599: Things

Alex (Meyer) is a thing, perhaps they're an assemblage of things – a little bit of matter trying to be vibrant in his own way. (He's also a recently graduated M.A. student in English at the University of North Dakota who has fond memories of talking with their co-workers in office 307 while looking out the window at freshly fallen snow over the past two years). They said to say, "I hope you're doing well!"

Davina Bell is in her third year as a Ph.D student in English and concluding her formal introduction to Merrifield Hall. If you were to ask her if she saw herself studying for a masters, let alone a Ph.D, she would have told you, "most definitely not!" Yet, here she is enjoying her journey and trusting the process. Her first impression of Merrifield was, "Oh, it looks like 1987 Degrassi Junior High, real *The Breakfast Club* [ish] (1985) ." When she is not studying, you will still catch her with a book or a kindle in her hand reading. She will read just about anything. In her free time, she enjoys book conventions. She has goals to work as an editor and to share her love of literature with others.

Grant McMillan is a photographer and PhD student at the University of North Dakota. He prefers not to be perceived.

Kai Szulborski isn't just a person. He's an idea. A dream for a better tomorrow. But, if he was a person, he'd be 30 years old, chronically type B and tightly clutching his MA in English. He writes science fiction, depressing fiction, surreal fiction and overall fake fiction. He also occasionally draws (badly) and has no formal training in anything else. In his spare time, of which he has a lot, he hurls himself fruitlessly at subcultural phenomena, political theory and ontological mysteries of which, as we have discussed, he maintains zero accredited understanding. His only connection to Merrifield is the time he was afraid of the multiple bees that attempted to break into his office [307] through the window. He is a hack and a fraud and should not be trusted.

Maiken Møller-Andersen often stumbles when walking up the stairs of Merrifield. They have visited Merrifield on an almost weekly basis for 6 years at this point. Born and raised in Norway, they loved the ocean as a child, growing more and more curious about what they could never see from the surface. They have always been a pondering mind, drawn more to the unknowingness of things around them.

Maria Matsakis writes writing that reflects bits and pieces of her patchwork-quilt-personality. In the quiet of the night, when the bugs have begun eating the corpses and the hall light sensors have all turned off, you can find her in Merrifield Rm 7. Her swivel chair screams as she tries to spin fast enough to forget herself. Spoiler alert: it never works, though the ghosts don't mind her company.

Samuel Amendolar is enrolled at the University of North Dakota where he is pursuing his PhD in English. His first introduction to Merrifield Hall was in the Fall of 2011 as a first-year undergraduate student. Merrifield Hall is a space that has facilitated him as a new attendee enrolled in first-year composition, a student receiving his B.A. in Philosophy, a graduate scholar, and currently an instructor of composition. As an avid woodworker, Samuel is interested in architecture and spatial construction. His office is Merrifield 112.

Shilo Virginia Previti works at UND. Find them in Merrifield's basement, working at the desk directly underneath a giantess's jewelry set that dangles from the exposed pipework on the ceiling in Room 7.

Valkyrie Bradford is an English graduate student at UND as of Fall 2023 and a long-standing nerd of all things literature and writing. Her passions include knocking hats off of people in the streets and hiking. She's been in Merrifield Hall Rm 307 all year, where she's killed four succulents and counting. She left a scuff mark on the southeast stairs, third from the bottom—the greatest mark she's left here, including being a teacher.

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