

1992

Campus Tour

The American College

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Welcome to The American College. The College celebrated its *Campus* sixty-fifth anniversary in 1992--almost half the College's unique history has unfolded here in Bryn Mawr.

We are fortunate! The American College is a wonderful legacy from those who believe in professional life insurance education--it is a physical gift from donors and students and it is a visionary gift from its founder and those who have continued to develop the educational programs.

Major contributors are recognized in many ways throughout the campus. The educational program speaks for itself. Its growth and success are a tribute to Solomon S. Huebner's vision and to the vision of those who have developed the College's study programs over the last sixty-five years. Throughout the campus you will find special recognition of individuals who have made contributions to the development of the College. Huebner Hall for the founder and third president of the College and Gregg Conference Center in honor of the fifth president are examples.

Gregg Conference Center

We begin our tour in the Gregg Center--the College's newest building was dedicated in 1981 in honor of Davis W. Gregg, president of the College from 1954 to 1983 (the fifth president of the College). Dave Gregg was a Huebner Fellow, a man who knew Huebner well and who followed his ideals and built on them with vision.

- Solomon Huebner envisioned the idea of college-level professional education for agents.
- Huebner founded The American College in 1927.
- Huebner also advocated advanced and graduate-level professional education for agents. The Gregg Center was built to create a facility for graduate-level and advanced professional education.
- This building has three major wings: an auditorium, dining and reception area; a central area devoted to classrooms and major meeting areas; and a residential wing for those attending seminars and for the graduate residency program.
- The College awards two masters degrees--the MSFS and the MSM.
- The College's masters programs require 2 one-week residency seminars. The Center is active with life insurance premier schools and management education programs year round. The College welcomes outside clients to use the Center for education and training programs.
- And the Center also promotes College community outreach.

- The Center also welcomes its use for social functions. Weddings are popular and many a bride has her wedding pictures taken down by Reese Lake.
- Perhaps you have noticed the art exhibitions on the main floor and the ground floor galleries. The College hosts six exhibitions a year focusing on Delaware Valley artists. The community is invited to an opening reception and are welcome to view the art during regular College hours. It is a way for the public to become familiar with the College and a way to make the Center attractive to those who come here. Excellence in art and horticulture and architecture are indicative of the excellence of the school.
- The Center is built on the site of the Owen Wister estate. Wister wrote The Virginian on this site. Another tidbit--he was the grandson of Fanny Kemble, a legend as a Shakespearean actress in the era which included George Bernard Shaw.

Myrick Pavilion

Let us move on to Myrick Pavilion, once the carriage house to the original Flagg and McIlvain estate.

- This is the second parcel of land the College acquired.

- In 1965 it was converted to a dining facility for the College.
- Dedicated in honor of Julian Myrick, Chairman of the Board of Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York and Chairman of the Board of The American College from 1938 to 1960. He was a trustee for more than thirty years beginning his term in 1929.
- Myrick was a great gentleman. He was a member of the U.S. Davis Cup Committee. He played tennis well into his eighties. He played with the Queen of Spain and was honored by France for his tennis.
- Charles Ives, one of America's greatest composers, was Myrick's partner in the Mutual Life of New York Agency. The Myrick and Ives Agency was one of the outstanding agencies in early life insurance history. It was very successful. Ives went on to spend all his time in music and Myrick became Chief Executive of MONY.

Trees

Note: As we walk around the campus note the magnificent specimen trees--dedicated trees and class trees.

- Specimen trees were originally planted in the early 1900s by Stanley Flagg (owner of the original estate where Huebner and Myrick buildings were built by the College). Flagg sold to McIlvain.

- Flagg sent young horticulturist Harry Wood all over the country to buy specimen trees.
- Harry Wood later became horticulturist for the renowned Swarthmore College Arboretum. When The American College was ready to break ground for Huebner Hall, Wood came to mark all the special trees for us.
- It's quite a story. Wood came with old sheets. He tore them in strips and marked the trees. The land was then cleared carefully. At this point the old mansion was a wreck and the grass and shrubs were overgrown to a height that a man would be lost in them.
- Today the College carefully maintains the trees. We have a horticulture brochure that will enable you to walk the grounds. Please do pick one up at the Gregg Hall front desk if you are interested. The College now employs an outstanding young horticulturist who is very successfully developing the campus horticulture into arboretum status. We have garden clubs visit and the community enjoys the grounds.

Huebner Hall

As we walk past Myrick and continue on to Huebner Hall, let us think briefly about the history of the College's campus.

The first campus was in a drawer in the faculty office of Solomon Huebner's desk at the University of Pennsylvania in Logan Hall. Then the College had its first permanent home in a mansion on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. When this was outgrown, the College bought ten acres in Bryn Mawr, nine miles west of Philadelphia. Huebner Hall now stands on those original ten acres. Over the thirty-year period since we moved here in 1961, the College has grown to include forty acres and eight buildings and a widely expanded educational program.

The young architectural firm of Mitchell/Giurgola Associates was commissioned to do Huebner Hall. Ground was broken in 1959. The College moved in in 1961. For the firm of Mitchell Giurgola Associates it was one of the first commissions. The firm and the College have grown together, both have achieved international recognition for excellence. Mitchell/Giurgola won the international commission for the Parliament Building in Canberra, Australia--a commission won in an international competition that was highly competitive.

The firm's first commission was the Kitty Hawk Memorial in North Carolina. Another commission was for the building in 1976 which now houses the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. The firm has designed four new buildings on the College campus and restored three. Both Huebner Hall and Million Dollar Round Table Foundation Hall have won the American Institute's Honor Award among many other citations of excellence. The reason the campus looks so well is that Mitchell Giurgola drew up a master plan for the campus in 1966 so that everything on the campus has a united appearance.

As we approach Huebner Hall, let us think about who Solomon S. Huebner was:

- Solomon S. Huebner was the founder of The American College in 1927. His concept of a college-level professional education program for agents changed the philosophy of life insurance selling.
- Huebner initiated the idea of professional education for life insurance agents at the college level. He first described it at a Baltimore Life Underwriter meeting in 1914 and as a major paper for the 1914 NALU meeting.
- Huebner founded the first academic department of insurance at a university at the University of Pennsylvania. He began to teach the first organized classes on the economics of life insurance in 1904.
- Huebner wrote the first life insurance textbook in 1915, Life Insurance.
- Huebner developed the Human Life Value theory, the basis of all insurance thinking today in a text he wrote The Economics of Life Insurance (1924). He first outlined the Life Value theory at the Los Angeles meeting of NALU in 1924.

- Just inside the door of Huebner Hall is a bronze portrait bust of Huebner executed by sculptor Edward Fenno Hoffman. Hoffman, now deceased, is an internationally known sculptor who created seven pieces of sculpture for the College over a twenty-year period.

As we enter Huebner Hall, the Archives Room, a small museum is straight ahead. In the near future a new Archives Room will be built in Gregg Hall. Downstairs is housed the College computer. The offices of the American Society of CLU and ChFC are located in this building. It is here that Executive Vice President John Driskill is located.

As you walk around the Archives Room in Huebner Hall you may notice the fine ivory collection that was a gift to the College of the first president, Edward A. Woods. You will notice the books written by Huebner throughout his career.

You certainly will notice that they have been translated into Japanese and Chinese. Huebner lectured extensively around the world. On the left side of the room you will find The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science--here is published the first text Huebner used for his classes. Also here are the texts he wrote on the stock market, the commodity markets and the U. S. Shipping Law which he wrote.

As we leave Huebner Hall, let us retrace our steps past Myrick Pavilion. As we go, we can look across the campus to Million Dollar Round Table Foundation Hall and Reese Lake and the Woodland Garden. We will walk down the hill and up to Foundation Hall through the Woodland Garden.

Reese Lake is dedicated to Joseph Reese who was chairman of the College's Buildings and Grounds Committee for over 30 years. In the 1890s there was a large dam and lake here. Gentlemen rowed ladies about on Sunday afternoons. When the dam broke in the 1920s it could only be replaced with our ponds--to protect the flood plain.

MDRT Foundation Hall

MDRT Foundation Hall is the center of all academic activities. The College is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of School and colleges.

MDRT Foundation Hall was built in 1972 as a state-of-the-art educational facility with a new library, multimedia studios, and faculty offices. Again Mitchell/Giurgola were the architects and again the building won the Honor Award of the American Institute of Architects.

It was named Million Dollar Round Table Foundation Hall because the first major pledge to make it financially possible came from the Million Dollar Round Table Foundation. This building houses:

- The Library which has been planned as a major research facility for the faculty. It is one of the best insurance library facilities in the country.

- The on-line computer catalog, Sophie Z, given in memory of Sophie Zimmerman, Charles J. Zimmerman's sister, is state-of-the-art. Our library catalog is as sophisticated as any in a university.
- The Library has extensive computer search technology.
- The Oral History collection is accessible through the computer catalog and is a major resource on the history of the College and the life insurance business. Over one hundred interviews have been taped.
- The office of the President is located in MDRT Hall as are all faculty offices.
- In MDRT Foundation Hall the EOD (Examinations on Demand) were developed. Over 70% of the College's examinations are now taken by computer. Quite a difference from the once a year five-hour pencil and paper exams given up to 1970.

Other Buildings on Campus

We will not have time to visit any of the other buildings. The General Services building has in it the Print Shop and Mail Room--vital--and Dechert Hall houses the Office of the Registrar, Student Services and Registration.