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Chronology - Evolution of the Bryn Mawr Campus of The American College

The American College

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Chronology - Evolution of the
Bryn Mawr Campus of The American College

- 1957 A property search was begun for a possible move to the suburbs from the College's original location on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania
- A special committee made a report to the Board of Trustees which evaluated the options of acquiring (1) property or an existing building in Center City or (2) an old estate or grounds in the western suburbs
- The College's original proposal to purchase the Denny property in St. Davids was unsuccessful
- 1959 The college purchased 11.15 acres at 266 Bryn Mawr Avenue
- 1960 Construction begun of Huebner Hall, designed by the youthful architectural firm of Mitchell/Giurgola (one of their first projects)
- Grounds were developed under direction of Harry Wood (horticultural consultant for Swarthmore College, who had worked on the estate when it was owned by Stanley Flagg)
- 1961 Staff moves into Huebner Hall; dedication of building held in June
- 1963 Nearby carriage house and one acre acquired; 50-foot easement granted to give access to Vauclain Road
- 1964 Board of Trustees approved Mitchell/Giurgola plans for conversion of carriage house to dining/conference facilities and quarters for custodian; renamed Myrick Pavilion and dedicated in 1965
- 1966 College approved agreement for Mitchell/Giurgola to develop long-range plan for development of campus
- 1967 Seiler property (four acres land, two buildings) acquired; the Georgian manor house, renamed Dechert Hall, converted to offices

- 1967/68 West basement of Huebner Hall renovated to provide educational offices for Institute of CPCU, which leased space on campus until 1973 when they purchased their own property in Malvern
- 1968 Dedication of Reese Lake
Adult Learning Research Laboratory facility approved by Board
- 1969-70 Mitchell/Giurgola drawings presented for Research Laboratory (now known as MDRT Foundation Hall); construction begun in June 1970 and completed in 1972
- 1972 College acquired seven acres of Wister property (future site of Gregg Hall)
- 1973 New road constructed across top of campus
- 1977 Board approved purchase of just over nine acres of the Carter property, adjacent to College, for future use
- 1978 McCahan Hall renovated to provide additional space for Communications and Development offices
Construction begun on General Services Building to accommodate print shop, mailroom, and storage areas; completed in 1979
- 1979 Construction begun on Gregg Hall (then known as Graduate Studies Center); completed and dedicated in 1981
- 1985 College acquired the remainder of the Carter property (acreage and main house) for future use

May 1988

Architectural Highlights of The American College

Mitchell/Giurgola, A.I.A., is the architectural firm responsible for the design of the major buildings of the American College as well as the master plan for the development of the campus.

The firm is internationally recognized for their elegance and sophistication of design. Two of the buildings on the American College's campus, Huebner Hall and MDRT Foundation Hall, have received awards for design excellence from the American Institute of Architects.

In addition to their work for the College, Mitchell/Giurgola has completed other award-winning designs for the Parliament Buildings in Canberra, Australia, and the Volvo headquarters in Sweden. The Liberty Bell Pavilion is among the many Philadelphia buildings designed by the firm.

Huebner Hall - 1961

Placed along a ridge that dominates the site, and positioned to eliminate the need to destroy any trees, Huebner Hall (named for the founder of the College, Solomon S. Huebner) commands extensive views.

The structural system is an integration of cast-in-place, precast and precast/pre-tensional concrete components, cellular steel flooring, masonry cavity walls, and dual-functioning inside/outside concrete window walls. The College's administrative and financial offices, computer center, and Archives are housed here, and the headquarters of the American Society of CLU & ChFC are located on the second floor.

Myrick Pavilion - 1965

This was originally the carriage house on the estate upon which Huebner Hall is built. The architects retained the original walls of locally quarried stone, wrapping glass walls around them to provide substantial and handsome interior partitions at minimum cost. A kitchen area was constructed on one side and the loft area became a caretaker's quarters. Note also the interesting use of chain instead of the more traditional rainspouts. Originally restored by Mitchell/Giurgola as the College's first dining hall, it was modified in 1981 to accommodate auxiliary offices for the American Society of CLU & ChFC.

Reese Lake - 1968

The architects designed a focal point for the restored pond area which includes a bas-relief of its benefactor, Joseph H. Reese, by renowned sculptor Edward Fenno Hoffmann III. Nearby is the tranquil setting of the Woodland Garden, a gift of Mr. & Mrs. Joseph E. Boettner.

MDRT Foundation Hall - 1972

Here, Mitchell/Giurgola once again took advantage of a hillside setting to nestle a five-story building into the site to create an aesthetically pleasing structure in a residential area. The architects expressed their concept of a partnership with the elements by using natural materials--grey granite, baked clay tiles, and large windows to reflect the wooded environment.

The building was designed to make use of advanced technology for education and includes a TV studio. It houses the Vane B. Lucas Memorial Library, the office of the president, the Oral History Center, offices of the dean and faculty of the Huebner School and the Graduate School of Financial Sciences, and other executive and administrative offices.

Davis W. Gregg Hall - 1981

Throughout its history, the American College has recognized the importance of continuing education and graduate education, and the Gregg Educational Conference Center was designed to provide residency rooms for these programs. An art gallery was incorporated into the central floor corridors for aesthetics and maximum use of space. Glass brick was used in the fire towers to provide light and conserve energy. Consistent with their earlier buildings on campus, the architects took advantage of a hillside to site the building naturally into the landscape.

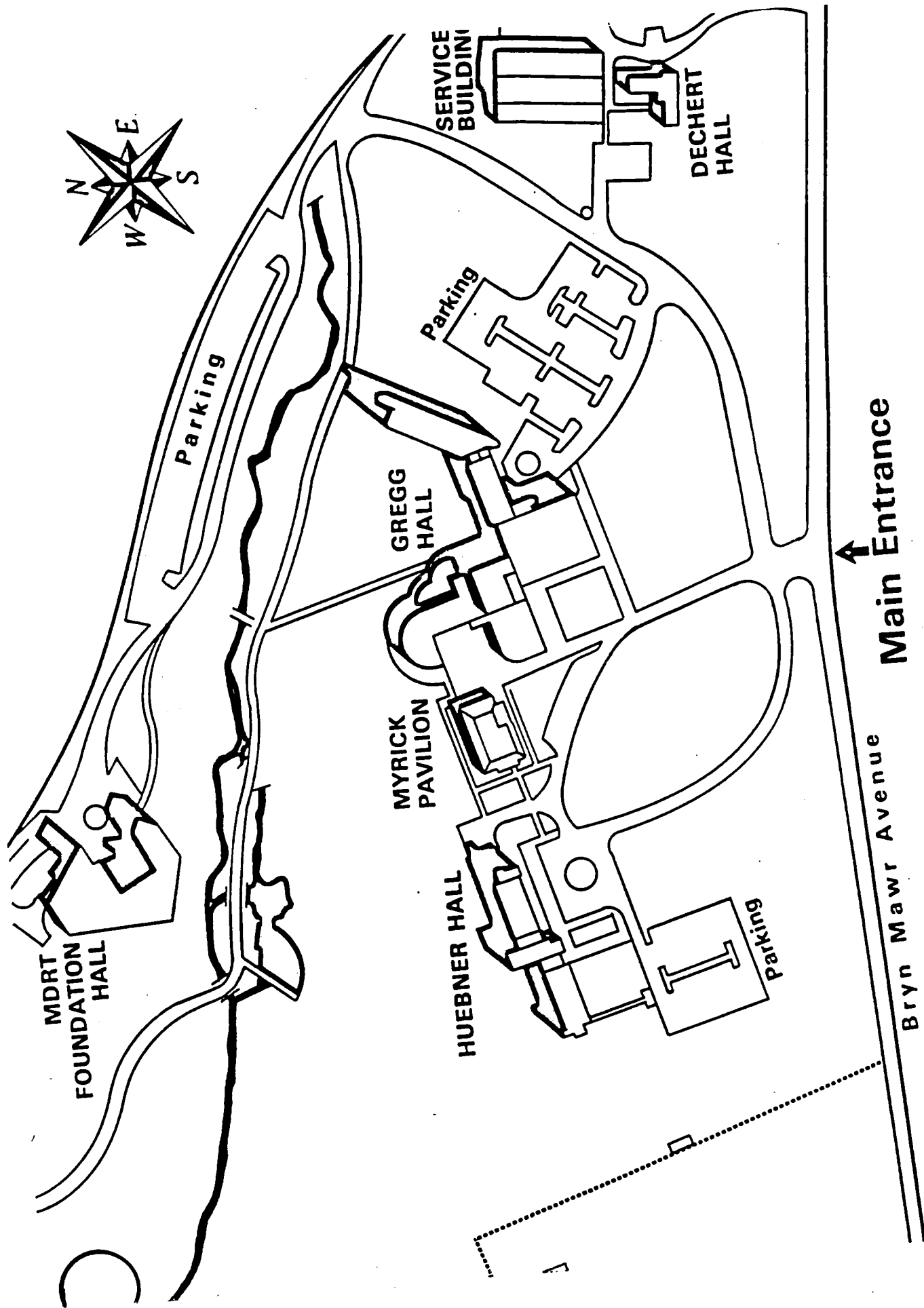
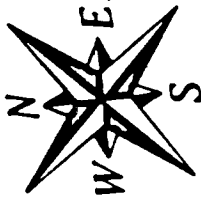
Gregg Hall contains three distinct areas: a residence wing with 50 fully appointed sleeping rooms, each with private bath; a central core devoted to classrooms, meeting rooms, faculty offices, and a 250-seat auditorium; and a spacious dining room, commons, and reception/front desk facility. The building is staffed 24 hours a day and is normally open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

Architectural Awards

Huebner Hall	Best building of the decade (1960s)
MDRT Foundation Hall	American Institute of Architects Gold Medal for design concept, 1972
	Governor's Award to architects Mitchell/ Giurgola, 1980
Horticulture	Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce Landscape Horticulture Award for investment in planting and tree maintenance, 1974

For further reading, please see:

Mitchell/Giurgola, Architects - New York: Rizzoli, 1985



MDRT
FOUNDATION
HALL

Parking

GREGG
HALL

MYRICK
PAVILION

HUEBNER HALL

Parking

SERVICE
BUILDING

DECHERT
HALL

Parking

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Main Entrance

Bryn Mawr Avenue