

The Lantern



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Life Down in “The Valley”

If a prospective student was directed to look at the intramural fields, and told by Mrs. Snider: “This is the funnest view of campus,” they would be slightly confused. Is an empty lot really the ‘funnest’ thing John Brown University has to offer? However, they would soon learned that it was much more than an empty lot, today, and in previous decades.

At the beginning of John Brown University’s history the intramural fields held livestock (mostly cows, though there were a few horses). It was not until the 1940s that construction was started on the fields to build a swimming pool and an activities building which housed such sports as basketball and volleyball. Mrs. Snider, a student during this time, remembers the picnics that were often held around the gym; and of the watermelon feasts that were held

each summer, in which she recalls: “they’d cut off a big slab for you—your face would be covered in watermelon.”

The only way for students to get to the recreational area (often referred to by students as “the Valley”) was by walking down West University Street; therefore, in 1947 the One Hundred stairs were created. By 1948 graduates were using the stairs for commencement photos. In the 1950s, after a serious accident during a “Youth for Christ” camp, the guardrails and barriers were added. The small bridge which connects the One Hundred stairs to the intramural fields was built in 1952 as a senior class project.

The school eventually decided to demolish the gym and pool because the pool had numerous leaks, and thus they built the Outdoor gym and swimming pool in 1950s



Murray Sells Physical Education Building.

By 1964 the intramural fields were being used for intercollegiate baseball. Even though a varsity field was constructed for the baseball team by the soccer fields, they continued to use the intramural fields because of the attention they attracted being near a road. The sports spotlights were installed in the mid 1960s. In more recent times the intramural fields have become wide open spaces used for a wide array of intramural sports such as soccer, football, softball, and many more.

In 2004 the Ultimate Frisbee club started using the space as practice fields. Today the intramural fields offer students a chance to escape from school and work and play “college sports”.

Above: Intramural Fields in 1920

Below: Students pose for Commencement photo on One Hundred Stairs





Insights

From the works
of John Brown, Sr.

Why should a great, young, virile race, blessed with a heritage of a continent yet undeveloped and with resources everywhere about us untapped, and untouched—why should that young giant amongst the nations, envied

by the nations of the world, reach the pitiful state where before we have scarcely begun to live, the announcement goes forth, that as a nation we are beginning to die, and this, mind you, with vast resources untapped, with an abounding plenty around us, and literally with millions of jobs waiting for trained hands and willing hearts...The tragic fact, to my mind, in America today [1938] is that as a people we have allowed the wrong type of leadership to climb into places of authority, and that leadership secured by designing men has been prostituted to the low end of seducing the youth of this nation from the fundamental bedrock principles out of which our greatness as a nation came. Too often these men make a joke of every sacred fact lying at the heart of the home and Church and state...Why is the youth of this nation losing the vision that our fathers had and the faith that our fathers had—the faith that sent them out into the world to live unselfishly, courageously, and well? Facts are, where not so many years ago the youth of the schoolroom was pointed to the God of our fathers and to the flag and to the rich inheritance into which every American child was born, and out of that vision there came the challenge, “Three cheers for God and Christ and home and true Americanism,” today in too many schoolrooms, the “three cheers” is changed to “three sneers,” and the three sneers are directed at everything that our fathers once considered fundamental and sacred. Youth is...being trained away from God.

Excerpt from “The American Crisis and the Way Out”



The Cathedral in 1944 (above); 1952 (below); and 1960 (below right)



Milestones

September 22, 1920: There were 150 students present at the beginning of the second school year.

September 21, 1967: Joe Breen, junior, of Salisbury, North Carolina, was the 700th student to enroll at JBU for the fall semester. He was greeted by President John Brown, Jr., as Dr. Robert Cox, Registrar, completed his registration papers.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

An excerpt from the November 7, 1941 edition of the *Threefold Advocate*

Our own Rev. Stuart R. Schimpf arose from his bed to the cry of “The dog house is on fire!” Thursday morning at about three a.m.

Dashing madly outside with bare feet and in his pajamas, he managed, after three tries, to move the large dog house from its position against the house where the flames were beginning to gnaw at the asbestos shingles. The flames had enveloped it so completely that when the “parson” grabbed it, his hands were severely burned.

The garden hose came into action next, and the fire was brought under control. It was caused by an electric bulb used to heat the dog house.

Several humorous remarks were made concerning the fire, including that of one fellow who said it was a good thing that Mr. Schimpf wasn’t “in the dog house” that night.

Here’s our vote of praise to Rev. Schimpf, a fireman after Fire Chief Jim Russell’s own heart.