M is for Memorial

From 1934-1973, the MO building stood proudly on the campus of John Brown University. When the building was originally dedicated in July of 1934, it was given the name “Helen the First” in loving memory of the 2nd born Brown daughter. Helen breathed inspiration into the lives of both faculty and students, and her’s was the first death connected to the campus. In the 50’s, the building was renovated thanks to the generous gifts from loved ones and friends who desired the building be renamed to Helen Brown Hodges.

When the building later became an all-male dorm, it was titled “Helen Brown Memorial Dormitory”, or MO for short. During its existence as a men’s dormitory, MO became a residence of pride and practical jokes.

MO dormitory proudly displayed a residence flag on the East side of the building, a flag that has become iconic of the ingenuity and mischief of the era. It was common practice around the late 1960’s for non-MO residents to kidnap the flag in creative ways. Garry Friesen, a JBU alum and former resident of MO, reminisced “The dorm’s name was not ‘Memorial’ like the historians claim. It was ‘M’dot ‘O’dot. The ‘M.O.’ stood for ‘Men Only’ in contrast to the J. Alvin ‘boys dorm’. Often the boys tried to steal the men’s flag, but we always retrieved it”. However, the flag eventually disappeared one final time, and try as they might, the residents could not recover their beloved symbol of pride. Lost for several decades, the legend of the MO flag drifted into obscurity.

During Homecoming 2011, however, the mystery of the missing MO flag was finally solved. At the start of Garry Friesen’s chapel address, Friesen proudly stated that he had an announcement to make. With the great reverence owed to such an item, he revealed the long lost flag of MO and presented it as a historical gift to the university. Like the father in the parable of the prodigal son, JBU gladly welcomed the long-lost flag home along with the legacy of pride that it embodies.

Excerpt from “Upon This Rock”

- Matthew 16:18

The church stands as a giant lighthouse. The church stands as a vehicle of truth to all the nations, and as a channel of life to all the world. The church is not built up of stone, brick, cement, steel, pine and glass, but is built up of men, women, children—flesh, bone, brain, and blood! Rather, the church of Christ is built up of all men and women everywhere who have been “by one Spirit baptized into one body.”

The church, like the Kingdom of God, “cometh not with observation.” When you speak of the church most men immediately sweep into retrospect all church buildings and the diversified congregations assembled there, and the sum total of this picture becomes to them “the Church.”

But the buildings-temple, cathedral, chapel, or hall, is only the house in which the church meets for worship! The church is a spiritual institution-invisible, indivisible, intangible, imponderable! The church cannot be weighed, tabulated, segregated, defined! It stands the most tremendously important factor in the affairs of the world, and yet men can walk through the real church, and never realize it is there.
ECHOES OF THE PAST

A Break for the Broke:
The Advocate's Scott Branch explores ideas for an inexpensive Spring Break [excerpts]
March 9, 1984

Lately, it seems that whenever I sit down in my uncomfortable classroom chair, or take my place, tray and silverware in hand, in death row, [...] I'm bombarded from all sides with the gory details of planned trips to sunny Florida, coastal California, balmy Barbados, and sundry other pleasure pits of the North American imagination.

But, as we all know too well, each form of pleasure has its price, and a spring vacation to Ft. Lauderdale is no exception to most college students' rapidly depleting bank accounts. So, to all you wonderful citizens of JBU whose wallets echo when you shout into them and whose bouncing checks are classic examples of the elastic properties of money, I've got news for you! There is no need to stay behind, choking in the dust, as your friends drive off on a Mexico wondertrip! [...] There's hope for your mundane existence! Through much time and effort consuming research, I've discovered these near cost-free alternatives to an expensive west coast tan.

First off, for those of you with little finances but lots of daring do, there's Kurt Schmidt's backpacking trip across Arkansas and back. All you need are your legs, a positive outlook on absolutely un-breathtaking scenery, and a little food (real men don't stop at McDonald's). [...] Thrill to the ecstasy of Kurt's knowledgeable narrations of the beauties of the Arkansas brush. He'll make you see the construction of native establishments in a light you'd never known before. Revel in the joy of trudging along for miles on sore feet and aching feet. Dig a latrine for the first time! Learn what life as a building constructor is all about! See Kurt for more details.

Or how about being a part of Kelly Arant's new video project being filmed by Kelly Creech himself. It's a three-hour aerobic program designed to make Jane Fonda drop in surrender. Kelly will teach you exercise moves that will burn you, hurt you, and destroy your body. Do you want to tighten that tummy? Do you want to trim those thighs? Then this is for you! [...] If none of the above selections appeal to your senses of culture achievement and artistic enlightenment, then you'll go wild about the next few options I have in store for you! For the English majors and other masochists, Skip Pickle will enthral you with the deep hiding meanings from 'Moby Dick' that hundreds of literary geniuses have passed over before. Such classics as 'The Scarlet Letter,' 'Great Expectations,' and 'Narcissus and Goldmund' will come alive before your eyes with fresh force and vitality when Skip clears away the obscurity and you see, for the first time, what the authors really meant. You'll learn to love the novels you paid someone else to read for you in high school. Sing up time for this week long session of literary dissection will be announced soon. [...] These are just the beginnings of a whole new brand of affordable ways to spend your spring break ways. (Hey! that rhymes!) With a little imagination and some luck, you can turn nothing into anything and anything into fun. Listen, if advertisers can call Jello 'fun,' then certainly we can do a whole lot better than that! So go ahead, start thinking, and you'll have your friends wishing they did more with their money that get a tan.

Milestones

February 17-18, 1958
JBU's Aviation club takes a trip Witchita Kansas. The club toured the Boeing and Cessna aircraft plants with plans to visit Beechcraft as well.

February 14, 1989
JBU offers to deliver "sweetheart cakes" to dorm rooms on valentines day.
Cakes include a message and cost $8.50

February 14, 2002
During the demolition of the Central Plant, the origional cornerstone of the Hyde Building was uncovered perfectly preserved. This cornerstone, hidden behind other layers of brick, was engraved saying "1928 gift of the Alumni Association."