



Photo courtesy University Archives

sidered very daring. But her career spanned the time of our show, so we are preparing her dance to show people what could not be seen in Villard Hall. The same thing is true for Ruth St. Dennis (Duncan's predecessor). We are trying to give people an idea of cultural life at the time, on and off-campus."

Robinson listed a number of highly-respected designers and actors who have worked at the University, including Donald Shirley, perennial scene designer for the Miss Universe pageants. Robinson said budgetary restraints would not permit them to come and perform at the centennial production.

Keith Richard, University archivist, described the campus as it looked before Villard Hall was opened in 1886. "In 1876, the University was 17.5 acres of emptiness, with the exception of two old oak trees that are still standing on the edge of the campus out by Franklin Boulevard: Deady Hall, and a couple of outhouses."

There were 96 students at the collegiate level, as well as a college preparatory grade school which included the higher elementary and high-school grades. For a long time, the University supplied Eugene with an elementary school, Richard said.

Faculty members included the university president, who also taught Latin, as well as a mathematics teacher, a theology-history teacher, the grade-school principal and her assistant.

Statewide, the University was already building a reputation by the turn of the century. World War I saw the flourishing of the University's reputation as an institution of higher learning, and the enrollment topped 2,000 students for the first time, Richard said. After World War II, the GI Bill resulted in a "tremendous" enrollment increase, he added.

Sam Dicken, professor emeritus of geography, came to the University from Minnesota in 1947, as part of the postwar influx of faculty and students.

"When I first came to UofO... I didn't know Horace Robinson real well, but I would see him at a faculty supper once in a while, and sometimes we would see him at the plays," Dicken recalled. "I had the impression that he was a very unusual person,

but after talking to him a few minutes, he just seemed very nice, very matter-of-fact. We had several mutual friends in the speech department.

"When I came to the University, I became head of the geography department, so I had to sign the inventory, and a lot of our equipment was in the basement of Villard Hall. At that time, the basement floor of Villard was dirt, but there were several sections which had steel fences and were locked off so people wouldn't steal. Well, one of the things I had on the inventory was three airplane engines.

Dicken explained that a fellow geography professor had been in civilian pilot-training during World War II. "After the war ended, he was responsible for a lot of stuff, and for safety's sake he couldn't just go and bury it, so the engines ended up in Villard," Dicken said. "They were spares, I guess. There were also several thousand dishes, inherited from the civilian pilot-training, and an ancient mimeograph-machine that we used in the department for several years until we got a better one. That was my experience with Villard Hall."

Observances celebrating University and community experiences with Villard Hall will feature nostalgic exhibits from the edifice's early days, including a display of volumes from the original Henry Villard library donation, a bust of Villard and the exposed brick wall, ivy and east Villard foundation located within the present-day scene shop.

Henry Villard was a German immigrant, pioneer Northwest railroad magnate and philanthropist who helped bring the railroad to Eugene in 1871. Through his leadership, his financial and material generosity, he was instrumental in founding the University in the 1870s.

Robinson said a costume parade will be featured at the start of intermission for each performance of the centennial revue at the theatre which bears his name.

"We hope the audience will join us for this revival of the traditional 'walk-around,'" Robinson said. "Back in the 1800s, couples would stroll along the sidewalks by Villard Hall during the intermission, socializing and enjoying the grounds."

All tickets for the revue are reserved and cost \$5. To order tickets, contact the Robinson Theatre box office at 686-4191.

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