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File photo

The McMorrان House, now occupied by University President Myles Brand, has recently been renovated at a cost of \$62,000.

Repairs made to McMorrان House

By Peter Stanley
Emerald Contributor

University President Myles Brand has a new roof over his head just in time to beat the winter rains.

The tan wood shake roof, finished last week, replaces the old, leaky roof of the McMorrان House, the official residence of University presidents since 1940. The stately brick residence sits atop a hill overlooking McMorrان Lane and Fairmount Boulevard on the southeastern side of the University.

The roof, which cost \$62,000, is part of a series of renovations done on the house to prepare it for Brand. Repairs were also done on the chimney, windows, doors and on other maintenance items.

Prior to hiring Brand, the State Board of Higher Education considered selling the house. Ex-president Paul Olum recommended the sale because the building needed serious repairs and lacked sufficient facilities for entertaining. Instead, the board decided that renovating the building would be less expensive than finding a new one.

In an appraisal, a Eugene realtor called the house "a jewel" and said it "deserves the treatment of any special treasure. There are so few homes that offer the unique styling and architectural design in a location so desirable."

McMorrان House was one of four stately homes built in the South University neighborhood in 1926 by wealthy Eugene residents, creat-

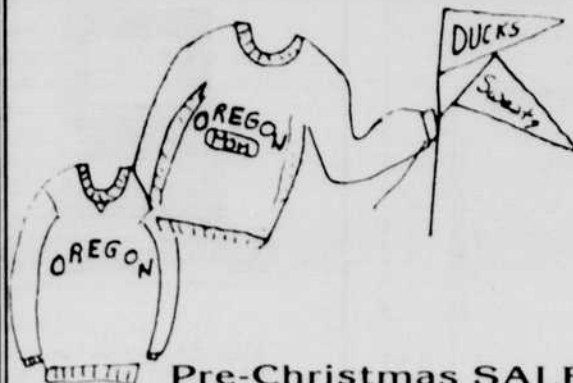
ing an exclusive residential compound. George McMorrان, a merchant, built the house now used by Brand in the English Norman Country style for a cost of \$25,000.

Another of the four homes built on the hill above McMorrان House is now occupied by the Oregon Chancellor of Higher Education, Thomas Bartlett. Treetops, as it is known, was deeded to the University by its original owner, Campbell Church, on the condition that it be occupied by either the president or the chancellor. Failing this condition, the home resorts to Church's heirs.

The University acquired McMorrان House in 1940 as a partial gift and a partial sale. George McMorrان offered to sell/donate the house to the University for \$15,000, about 60 percent of its value. The State Board was unable to pay that price, and instead the faculty raised the money. McMorrان House then became the president's house, and Collier House, previously the president's home, became the Faculty Club.

Since 1979 McMorrان has not been occupied by the president. Ex-presidents Boyd and Olum requested exemption from the Board's mandatory residency requirement on personal grounds. In the interim it was occupied by three vice-presidents, most recently by Provost Norman Westells. In June, Brand became the first president to occupy the house in 10 years.

Further changes will be made to the house in the future, including disabled accessibility and remodeling of the kitchen, meant to improve the home for entertaining.

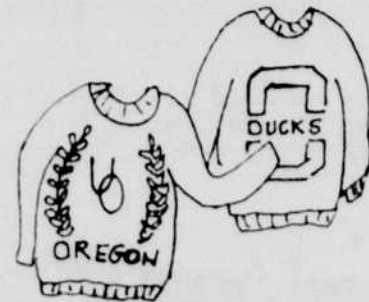


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