

ARCHIVE PHOTO  
**Samson Friendly,**  
 after whom Friendly  
 Hall was named.

# Re-dedication of Friendly Hall honors support by unique man

□ Samson Friendly revered for kindness to campus, students

By Julie Swensen  
*Oregon Daily Emerald*

For University students who have difficulty paying their tuition, the idea of a man who would loan money — without asking for interest or a written promise of repayment — would seem too good to be true. But such a man did exist here, and as a result of that man's generosity, Friendly Hall bears his name.

Samson Friendly would call struggling University students into his local store, ask how much they owed, and would write them checks for several hundred dollars. He wasn't doing it for notoriety; nobody except the University president knew about his philanthropy until after he died.

"He was a unique individual," said University Archivist Keith Richard. "He was not only a supporter vocally, but through his generosity in time, money and effort — not only to the University, but to the students."

Friendly, who is regarded as one of the greatest supporters the University has ever had, will be remembered Friday with a re-dedication ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary of Friendly Hall. The building, which was built in 1893 and originally served as a coed dormitory, later was named after him because of his dedication to the University and his rapport with the students.

Samson Friendly moved to Eugene from New York in 1864 and became a local merchant. Back then, Eugene was a small town with kerosene lamps on the street, few buildings, and no banks or newspapers. The only route to San Francisco was by stagecoach over the mountains, and a trip to Portland took three days, according to historical documents from the University

College of Arts and Sciences.

During this period, a fundraising campaign was launched to start a state university in Eugene. Friendly became a key figure in the effort and helped in raising funds to build Deady Hall, the University's first building.

Friendly was elected to the City Council twice, served two terms as mayor and was the president of the Eugene Board of Trade. In 1895, he became a member of the University Board of Regents, on which he served for 20 years.

Friendly was well-liked by students and faculty. He would join in any celebration at the University, and sometimes was hoisted by students who would chant "We want Sam Friendly!" Instead of a traditional suit and tie, he would wear the school colors to rallies and sporting events, and would faithfully attend dedications of new buildings.

After he died in 1915 at the age of 73, *The Guard* wrote in a tribute, "The University was an element in his daily life: He loved it as one of his family; his struggles and sacrifices for it have been those of a man for his son."

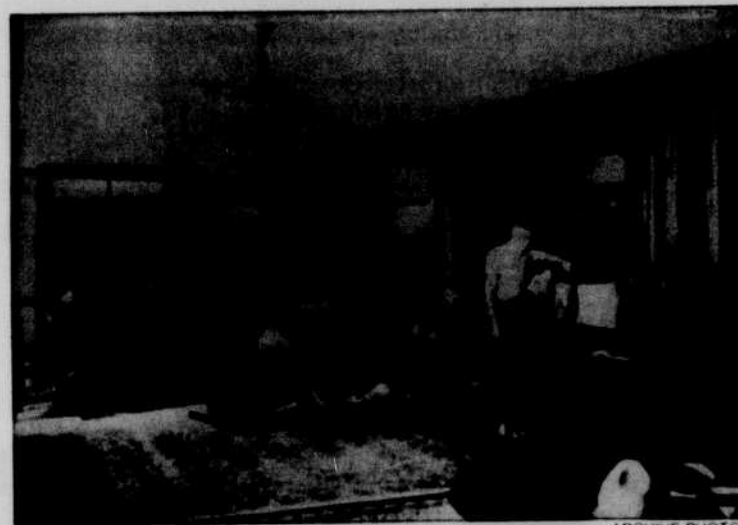
The *Oregon Emerald*, which referred to Friendly as a "best friend," wrote, "It is proper that his memory should live on the campus of the University he so loyally served." Soon afterward, students petitioned the University to have the dormitory named after Friendly, and in 1916, Friendly Hall was dedicated.

The dormitory, which was coed from 1893 to 1895, later was changed to an all-men's dormitory, and housed about 75 men in the mid-1920's, according to a letter written by Herschel J. Brown, a Friendly Hall resident and a 1926 University graduate.

Residents of Friendly Hall had the finest dining room at the University, and at times even



ARCHIVE PHOTO  
 To commemorate Friendly Hall's centennial celebration, the College of Arts and Sciences commissioned an original dry-point etching of the building by award-winning Eugene artist Jani Hoberg. Only 75 of the 11-by-15 inch prints are available. Prints can be purchased for \$200 at the College of Arts and Sciences.



ARCHIVE PHOTO  
 Friendly Hall residents often passed the time by playing the piano and reading books. The building, which originally was a coed dormitory for two years, was an all-men's dormitory from 1895 to 1928.

the governor attended dinner there. The students spent most of their time studying, as there were few distractions.

"There were no radios or TVs — only a hand-cranked Victrola," Brown wrote.

However, the residents did find time for pranks, as they would fill a paper bag with water and drop it on students going through the front door. Freshmen also were paddled, and were made to sit either on a cake of ice or a seat wired for electricity. Back then, going to the Eugene Millrace was a dating pastime, as was going to the cemetery, where the thing to do was "park your gal on a tombstone," which was called "pig-

ging," he wrote.

Friendly Hall was a dormitory until 1928, when Straub Hall became the new men's residence hall. Interestingly, the dormitory that later would bear Friendly's name angered then-University President John Wesley Johnson.

President Johnson, who said that dormitories shouldn't be on campus and that he "didn't want to babysit," resigned from the presidency and began teaching Latin instead, said Cindy Guy, assistant director of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Samson Friendly's grandson Fred Friendly — a former president of CBS who is one of the best-known American broadcasters — will be the guest

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speaker at the celebration, which will take place Friday at 3 p.m. in front of Friendly Hall, with a historic campus tour to follow at 4:30 p.m. Fred Friendly teamed with Edward R. Murrow to start the groundbreaking television news program "See It Now" in 1951.

Besides Fred Friendly's keynote address, the ceremony will feature the creation of a "memory vault," which will be placed inside the wall in the hallway by the south entrance of the building, near the Samson Friendly dedication plaque, Richard said.

The vault, which won't be opened until 2093, will be filled with such items as news from University sports and student organizations, information about AIDS, and what life on campus is like today, Guy said.