



Residential Renewal

UM'S NEW NORTH QUAD BUILDING IS MORE THAN JUST A DORM

by Rebekah Murray

THE LAST TIME UM students witnessed the construction of a new residence hall they were walking around campus in bell bottoms. The year was 1967 when Bursley Hall was completed.

Soon, students will again observe a residence hall in construction. The North Quad Residential and Academic Complex will be an impressive multi-purpose facility with suite-style rooms, a dining hall, and a community learning center, along with faculty and staff offices, classrooms, and lounges. The proposed 350,000-square-foot complex will be a contemporary blend of academics and student life.

The academic components of North Quad will include LSA's Department of Screen Arts and Cultures, Department of Communication Studies, Language Resource Center, and Sweetland Writing Center. North Quad will also house UM's School of Information. "The units were carefully picked for their synergy," says Robert Johnston, Director of Facilities and Operations for the College of LSA. "The impact and use of technology are a key part of each of these disciplines."

Plans for North Quad's interior combine technology with resources for learning. The building will include television studios, high-tech research spaces, a cyber café, media-savvy classrooms, and a "media gateway" that includes resource areas and spaces for individuals and larger groups to study. While incorporating today's latest technology, planners are exploring ways to make North Quad adaptable for technological advances yet to come.

"Today's students expect an interactive experience, an expert teacher who can be a coach and a partner," says LSA Dean Terrence J. McDonald. "We're making the transition from the days of the lecture hall, where teaching was fact sharing—I give you a fact in a lecture and you give it back to me on an exam—to the world of active learning where a technologically enabled classroom challenges and enriches the roles of faculty and students."

Additional North Quad conveniences will include music practice rooms, informal performance spaces, and a multicultural lounge. These resources will allow students to pursue interests and hobbies outside their academic area of study. Students will also have more opportunities to interact with peers and faculty outside the classroom. "We want to give North Quad a small-town feel," says Robert Megginson, LSA Associate Dean for Undergraduate and Graduate Education. "The idea is to create a

RENEWAL

The 100-year-old Henry S. Frieze Building, below, is giving way to the North Quad Residential and Academic Complex.



Courtesy of the Bentley Historical Library

residential neighborhood.”

The residential neighborhood concept stemmed from the Presidential Task Force on Residential Life and Learning: Building on Michigan Tradition. Megginson co-chaired this task force, convened by President Mary Sue Coleman in the fall of 2004 to develop a broad vision for residential life.

“Our goal was to look at ways to integrate academic and residential life more imaginatively and fully,” Megginson says. “We wanted to provide opportunities for personal and intellectual development, and ensure that all students in residence halls have an excellent, well-equipped environment for personal and intellectual growth.”

To this end, students have been asking for increased technology, wireless Internet, larger rooms, more comfortable living spaces, and updated dining facilities, according to alumna Amy Keller ('05) who served on the presidential task force. Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and University Housing Director Carole Henry has been working to meet these needs, as well as working with the task force as a co-chair.

“Students are savvy consumers with high expectations for residential life,” Henry says. “We want our buildings to support the way students learn. Our student living environments must be comparable to the academic quality of our university.”

That quality is achieved through the people UM recruits. “We won't be able to attract high-quality

faculty and students without high-quality facilities,” Johnston says. “New buildings and renovations are important to maintaining the excellence of the LSA experience.”

The North Quad complex will stand at the corner of State Street and Huron Street. This is the site of the current Frieze Building, once the Ann Arbor High School. To tear down such a historic building was not an easy decision for university planners.

“We did not make this decision lightly,” Johnston says. “The building was built for high school students at the turn of the century. It has wide corridors, a poor structure, bad heating, no air conditioning and the windows are rotting out. If we kept the building we would be locked into its inefficiencies. It was not built to do what we're asking of it now.”

While demolition is scheduled to begin this summer, plans may include preserving a historic structure adjacent to the Frieze Building. The exterior of a library, built with a grant from industrialist Andrew Carnegie in the early 1900s, may be preserved and incorporated in North Quad's design. Estimated costs for demolition and building are \$79 million for the academic section and \$58 million for North Quad's residential portion. Funding will be provided from University Housing, the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, LSA, and investment proceeds.

Rebekah Murray is Assistant Editor of LSA magazine.

HISTORY

UM built its most recent residence hall, Bursley Hall, in 1967.



Courtesy of the Bentley Historical Library

Building on Tradition

A sampling of other campus construction projects includes:

- An \$8.5 million re-design of the Student Activities Building, scheduled to begin this fall. The interior renovation will make the building easier to navigate. Plans include increasing the size of the Huetwell Visitors' Center, and

adding multi-media technology, a reception area, and an auditorium for tour group presentations.

- Last fall, improvements were completed on the William Monroe Trotter Multicultural Center. The center now has more usable space, more bathrooms, improved electrical systems, better

plumbing, and updated technology.

- A new Medical School facility was recently completed. The six-level, 470,000-square-foot Biomedical Science Research Building is on Huron Street across from UM's new Palmer Drive complex.
- Construction of the new Thayer Building,

located at the site of the old Corner House at Thayer Street and East Washington Street, will be completed this spring. The building will house LSA's Asian Languages and Cultures, the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, and Near-Eastern Studies.

- Two more LSA projects are now complete, the

new Undergraduate Science Building in the Palmer Drive development, and the renovation of the five-story LSA Building on State Street in central campus.

Naming opportunities are available in the North Quad complex. For more information, please call 734-615-6333.