

Remembering/Reviving Lee Hall

Do any of these historic images, pulled from the files of the Northern Michigan University Archives, bring back memories of the times you had at Lee Hall?

If so, we'd love to hear about them and share them with fellow *Horizons* readers here on this Web site. E-mail horizons@nmu.edu. Be sure to include your name, graduation date and degree, the city and state where you live now, and if you'd like us to publish your e-mail address.

If you would like more information on the renovation and revival of Lee Hall (see article in Foundation News section), please contact the NMU Foundation at 906-227-2627.



Above, the Lee Hall lounge, circa 1949, with portrait of Harry Lee, for whom the hall was dedicated in 1949. As head of Northern's "Placement Bureau" he had an outstanding record of placing graduates in teaching positions, even during the Great Depression. In the room, note the fireplace and abundant ashtrays.

On the next page, students get served in the Lee Hall lunch line (top), stocked by cafeteria workers like these two, in these undated photos. The cafeteria/soda fountain was located in the front part of the building on the main floor. A separate dining room for the female residents of Carey Hall was located behind it.





Above, the Lee Hall ballroom was located on the second floor and could hold 300 dancers. This photo is circa 1949. The room, and adjoining conference room, also was often used for large group meetings, rented to local groups for various functions, and was a popular place for proms and special events.

On the right, in 1951 two fellows in galoshes navigate a slushy sidewalk leading up to the building. As enrollment at Northern Michigan University grew, a larger student union facility was needed and construction began on the Don H. Bottum University Center in 1959. When completed, Lee Hall was converted into a campus television and radio studio. It later housed the Art and Design Department, the University Art Museum and NMU Public Safety and Police Services.



Memories of Lee Hall

As a '52 graduate of John D. Pierce High School, my first memory was attending the Lee Hall groundbreaking ceremony at the north end of the old college cinder running track that ran around the old practice football field. We all had mixed emotions because we could see it was going to clear away some of the beautiful college woods. However, the new cafeteria was a good trade off, as we enjoyed fountain treats, especially after playing tennis on the nearby courts. My fondest memory was our Junior Prom held in the second floor ballroom, which was decorated to the South Pacific theme and we danced the evening away to the Jim Delmet band (I believe Jim was a Northern grad who taught in the Gwinn school system). It was a grand evening and we all had the feeling that Northern was growing with Lee Hall and other new facilities. I then attended Northern '52-'54 and enjoyed many cafeteria coffee breaks with new friends, some with whom I am still in contact!

—Keith Kepler '52-'54



Just read the article on Lee Hall and that you are looking for memories. Are you ready?

First memory was in fall of 1959. My roommate Tanya Lou Burke (Toni the Tiger) and myself signed up for work in Lee Hall Cafe. The early morning shift. Like dumb. We had 8 o'clock classes and being freshmen we were up half the night. Had to go to work at 5 a.m. and we left at 7:45 for class. Anyway, Toni and I worked the breakfast shift for the commuters. I remember the

UGLY, stiffly starched, cinnamon-colored uniforms. At least we didn't have to wash and iron those babies. Never did get a picture of us in them.

I remember all the commuters coming to the cafe and thinking how lucky I was to be living in Carey Hall, room 26, down in the basement. I also remember the cook. He would SPIT on the side of the grill to make sure it was hot enough for eggs, etc. Gross huh? Toni and I never did eat there.

We and lots of other girls did take the food trays from Lee Hall dining room to slide down the back hill behind Carey in winter.

The next memory are the dances in the ballroom. Just fun times. Don't remember anyone being smashed. Just great kids and good times.

I also remember taking an AV class upstairs with John Major as the teacher. The final exam was threading the movie projector, filmstrip projector and answering questions, just a few for final exam. Good class.

The bookstore was also located on first floor. Everything was centrally located and so handy. I remember going there to buy yellow books for exams. Our textbooks were bought there, too. Used ones ran 25 cents to one dollar. New ones were five dollars or so.

The last memory was working in the Bell telephone office with a few other girls on the switchboards. We did our homework when the board wasn't busy. This was one of the most sought-after jobs, just because you could do homework. Now, this is the best part. I just made contact tonight, Nov. 28th, 2007, with my "old" boss, Vince Enrietti. First time

since 1963 that Vince and I chatted. We talked about the switchboards, there were 6 of them. Girls worked the day shifts and boys had the night shifts. They started at 11 p.m. I am sending you a photo of the exact type of switchboard that we worked at. Each person had a switchboard just like this one. This is one from the Baraga County Museum where I and my husband volunteer during the summer months.



I started at 50 cents an hour and in my senior year we got 90 cents an hour. Wow! I asked Vince if he remembered taking us girls to the back room to show us how to make free phone calls to our parents by flipping a few switches? He said, "Did I do that?" And then he laughed. He asked me if he had taught me how to smoke? I said no. "Well," he said, "I taught one girl how and told her to inhale and then swallow it! She did." He laughed and said, "Boy, she was sick for 2 hours after that. She never smoked after that experience." Then he told me about doing phone repairs in the dorms. He had to be escorted down the hall and to the room by the house mother. The girls would yell, "Man on floor....man on floor!" He

said, "Oh, those were the days." Northern treated him well. He was there for 6 and 1/2 years. His daughter Jackie also worked the switchboard when she went to NMU.

BZ, (Mary Alice) Bowerman, now MacNeil, worked with me. My mind is blank as to who the other girls were.

—*Barbara Johnson Hanshaw*
'63 BS, '71 MAE



Nellie Gaball '67 BS, '68 MA called the Horizons office to say that there's something missing from the article—there's no mention of the Job Corps that was in the building.

The Job Corp Center for Women was created at NMU in June 1966, after the university received a large grant to operate this new federal program that would assist disadvantaged, poor women by providing

education and vocational training in a healthy atmosphere. It was the only center on a college campus. Gaball worked with the women in the program for a few years. She recalls that it was generally a good group, but trouble was often caused when young men from nearby K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base would come to visit. She also remembers a protest that nearly turned into a riot over race at the Hedgcock Fieldhouse about an incident with a visiting basketball team.

More than 1,000 young women came to campus for the program, with more than a third graduating before the center was closed in 1969, due to federal budget cuts. Most participants lived in Carey Hall, adjoining Lee Hall. Around 100 staff and student workers were employed by the center. Many students, faculty and staff fought to keep it open, to no avail.



Upwards of 400 students gathered in front of the University Center in protest of the Federal Government's announcement of the closing down of the Job Corps Center.