Memories of the 2000s

And The Winner Is ... (2000)

As young people, it’s fair to suggest that we took a more than passing interest in sex. Our enthusiasm expressed itself in numerous ways that became familiar throughout the Residence population.

One shtick was the “Lack of Action Award,” a prestigious pseudo-scholarship presented to an individual who best exemplified the art of abstinence for an extremely long period of time. The recipient was nominated by friends who had decided that this person had put on such an amazing display of never, ever, ever getting any that s/he should be credited with a “scholarship.”

The winner received the rights to the title “Lack of Action Hero” and sometimes a trophy and a Hero outfit. Most cherished of all was an imaginary bursary valued at one condom. The names and photographs of the winners and runners-up were published in the The Perspective.

Sex and the Single Cookie (2002)

During 2002-2003 the Resbians (some of them, anyway) decided to compile a Residence Cookbook. Anyone in Taché, Mauro, Speechly, and the UC Residence was eligible to submit a recipe, and publication was scheduled for January 2003. Copies would be sold at Pembina Hall, Mauro, and UC, with the proceeds going to Winnipeg Harvest.

Two months before the printing deadline, a grand total of two (2) recipes had been submitted, and so an exhortation was printed in Reside to rally the troops. To that end, some thought-provoking questions were posed to the readership, e.g., “What do you guys like to whip up when you come home from a late night at the bar?” and, “What’s the recipe your mom never seems to make you anymore, but that you’d love to eat on a more regular basis?” It was suggested that lads and lasses on the various floors could perhaps get together and pool some recipes.

One of the two submissions that had already been proffered came from University College Residence. The chap called his product “Orgasmic Brownies,” an obvious misnomer because a close scrutiny of the ingredients failed to disclose anything that even remotely resembled an aphrodisiac. But what the heck—sex sells, perception is reality, and some people believe just about everything they read and hear anyway. [Ladies, you decide … the chocolate wins us over every time!]

**Orgasmic Brownies**

- 1 pkg. German chocolate cake mix
- 2/3 cup evaporated milk
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1 cup almonds
- 1 - 300g pkg. chocolate chips
- 6 pkgs. McIntosh Toffee bars
- 1- 13” x 9” cake pan

- Break toffee bars into small pieces; place toffee pieces into bowl; add 1/3 cup evaporated milk; microwave on medium heat for 2 minutes; stir; repeat until smooth liquid.
- Spread all chocolate chips over baked cake.
- Spread toffee mixture over chocolate chips.
- Make the rest of the cake mixture into paddies and place over toffee.
- Bake for 15 minutes at 350°.
- For dessert: allow to cool 15 minutes, scoop into bowls, top with ice cream.
- For brownies: allow to cool 1 hour.

The Amazing Rez Race took off on Saturday, October 25, 2003 and although only two teams showed up, it was a blast! The idea was to get Residents to use the bus more and get to know Winnipeg! Don’s Photo Ltd. was great enough to offer us free disposable cameras and the teams were prepared with an awesome list of tasks to perform!

We all showed up at noon and were off by 12:30 pm. Team Taché decided that they couldn’t go out on an empty stomach, so they stopped to get some food first. However, they had until 4:00 pm to get as many pics and as many points as they could.

There were a few phone calls to Rez with updates on where the teams were. Team Speechly was almost on the radio and wanted to make sure someone was listening, while later they called to say they were stranded just off campus. This was a crucial setback, as Team Taché passed them and left them in their bus fumes in a race to the finish.

However, the victor in the end was Team Speechly with 325 points. They made an excellent effort to get strangers to pose in their photos for extra points, but Team Taché put up a good fight with a variety of imaginative poses that gained them 263 points!

Even though it was a weak turnout, the people who came had a great time. All received prizes and gold stars! It was hoped that the next year a few more teams would come out and join the competition!

Farewell Memories of Taché Hall’s RLCs (2004)

The thing I will miss the most about Rez is Pembina Hall. WHAT!!! you all say. Why Pembina Hall???? Well, I will miss seeing everyone eating together, talking together, and just being together. Over the past years of living in Residence, so many people have frequented Pembina Hall. We all know we didn’t like the food, but for sure we all loved the company.

Pies in the face, Jell-o on the ceiling (some of those were mine ;-), radishes flying through the air. Telling each other about our days—good or bad, eating with our mouths open because we were too excited to swallow our food, belching out loud, laughing so hard that milk came out of our noses. Now those are memories!

I will miss everyone, corny as it sounds, but it is true. We are truly blessed to be living somewhere where you can meet Canada and the World and not have to leave the building. However, I will especially miss my RA team. You guys have been fantastic and truly made West my home.

Residence means more to me than the space allowed for me to tell you about it. Residence has helped me to love the University, my education, and just the ability to get to know and learn more about people. Being away from Residence for two years and then coming back for my last year, really opened my eyes as to how lucky we all are to live in such a great place. We all know the University better than regular non-residence students. This is our own little town, and I am damn proud to say I have been a part of it.
Being on the Housing & Student Life team has been fantastic. Why you ask? Well it is not just a team, but also a family. When you are a part of the team, you all of a sudden have a whole bunch of people who depend on you. They can come to you for help, or you’re there to hang out with them. It is so nice to know that you have a wonderful group of people to be able to help you out in any situation, lend a hand for any event, or just sit down and have lunch with in PHall. It has been wonderful to be a part of such a smart, well-balanced, funny, mature, warm, happy, interesting, and overall fantabulous group.

East Taché RLC

Well, this is finally it for me. I have called the U of M my home for the last six years of my life. I have a few little pieces of advice to pass on to everyone; please take them with a grain of salt, as they are only one man’s opinion. These are some things that I have learned throughout my stint in Residence.

1. Don’t sweat the small stuff: I am sure that you have all heard this one before, but it is so true. When things are not going great for you, just step back and ask yourself how what has happened is going to affect you in a week, a month, a year, and in a decade. The 52% that you got on your Biology exam probably isn’t going to have a drastic impact on you life 10 years down the line. Just be sure to put things into perspective before you get rattled or upset.

2. You don’t have to please everyone: If your goal in life is to keep everyone else happy, you are never going to be happy yourself. Sometimes it is a tough thing to accept that not everyone you meet in life is going to like you, and that is OK. Just go with the flow and keep making yourself happy.

3. Don’t worry if there was a picture taken of you wearing a bra in your first year: It will quit circulating around as a “mastercard” e-mail after about 3 years.

4. Stealing a life-sized Ronald McDonald for the UC car rally is easy: Stay calm, tape the license plate, have one person holding the doors, and run fast. No problem.

5. Learn how to “agree to disagree”: This is crucial. A difference in opinion is often a good thing and arguing can actually be constructive and fun. When feelings start to get hurt, just “agree to disagree” (you will still know that you won).

6. Try and get a summer job that is related to your field: Now I am really kicking myself because I have no experience.

7. [DS] will argue about anything: He is almost never right.

8. Learn how to cultivate relationships and start networking: These skills are crucial.

9. Express your opinion and make yourself heard: Having a mind of your own is a great thing and people will respect you for it. Don’t be afraid to ask questions.

10. Check under stalls for legs: Check under the stalls in the Wise Guys washroom on Thursday night before you start badmouthing me.

OK, that’s it for me. I hope that you will all cherish your memories of Residence as much as I do. Take care and good luck with whatever you do!!!
Food For Thought (2005)

Looking back on my years in Tché Hall and, since then, more than a decade in the workplace, it occurs to me that complaining has to be the single most cherished human tradition the world over for all time. And one set-up that could almost always be counted on as a source of dissatisfaction was the food service at Pembina Hall.

I remember one year a bunch of disgruntled students—maybe fifty or so—held a demonstration. They marched from the Pembina Hall Dining Room to the Admin Building with empty trays to protest about the temperature of the food they got served, and its lack of variety.

Not that they didn’t have a case—I personally recall lots and lots of liver and onions, frozen veggies, and burgers and fries that were cold by the time we managed to sit down and eat them. The protesters felt they were paying too much for what they got—“decent food at a decent price” was a popular sentiment.

Some of them were wearing T-shirts that had the letters FU emblazoned on them (a closer look revealed some fine print that altogether spelled out “Food service Unfulfilled,” or something like that). They carried signs that read “We Deserve Better,” and they wanted the University to replace the existing food service provider once the contract with them had expired.

With hundreds of students living in Tché Hall and Mary Speechly, there was a whole range of opinions and expectations about the food. Some thought it was getting better from what it was in years previous. Others weren’t particularly critical of the quality, especially considering the number of people who had to be fed, but they did think it was over-priced.

Being all things to all people was a tough row to hoe.

Hallowe’en: Destination Unknown (2005)

Hallowe’en weekend always had a plethora of socials, parties, and pub nights, but a favourite of Tché Hall was the Destination Unknown.

For this social, Residents would dress up, pile onto the buses, and be taken to an undisclosed location—usually a bar or hall in a nearby rural town. But getting there was an event on its own, where Residents would spend the whole time singing House songs or the ever popular “Chicago Song,” stopping on the side of the road for bathroom breaks for the guys, and for a few brave girls. Not an easy thing, especially in a complicated costume.

RSAC always did a great job keeping the location, as well as the new shocking verses for the Chicago song, under wraps.

I have to confess, the only time I ever was sick in public, was on one of these Destination Unknown bus trips ... we’ll say it was the motion on the bus, not the fact that I may have had one too many beverages!

A Friend In Need (2006)

When I was an SRA for Tché Hall in the mid-2000s, I was the holder of the “Academic” portfolio. As such, I had the responsibility of running a number of extra-curricular support programs that were intended to help students meet their scholastic challenges.
The services included things like Biology and Statistics seminars, résumé-writing and interview skills workshops, and midnight breakfasts (yep, you read it right) during exam times.

We had this thing called the “Study Buddies” program. This gave people the opportunity to meet and get to know others in their building, and the buddies would motivate each other to go to class and to study—in other words, to be good students. During move-in, we had the “Textbook Buy Back Bonanza” that gave upper classmen a means to advertise books they no longer needed and that they wanted to sell. Freshmen could then buy these books and get good deals.

There were five Houses in the Directorate (AVM, MSH, THE, THW, & UC) and of course this set the stage for inter-House competitions of various kinds. During my tenure as the Academic portfolio guy we set up the first “Rez Reach for the Top Trivia Contest.” I guess there was no end to the events we could come up with if we put our minds to it.

Stop It! (2006)

*From a blog by the President of the University of Manitoba Student Food Advisory and Recommendation Association (UMSPAR).*

Alright crowd, let’s get something straight. I’m not sure how effective this is with my, what, eight hits a day, but nonetheless it needs to be said. I’ve been told of a significant and notable increase in the amount of mess, garbage, and food being left in Pembina Hall that’s been happening since UMSPAR first started circulating our petition, and because of the timing of this I feel that it is my responsibility to say something: Stop it! Just grow up and stop it! Stop!

Allow me to elaborate on these points a little further: To all the guilty parties, what you are doing helps absolutely nobody. Not only does it take away from the legitimacy of the cause because of its blatant immaturity, all that leaving mess on tables serves to do is make more work for the servers, which I personally absolutely do not want at all. Like seriously, you probably all know what it’s like to wait tables, or be a clerk, or do something that involves cleaning. The PHall servers do such a kick-ass job day, in and day out that I hold them in high regard—same to all the cooks, busboys, lunch ladies, card-swiping ladies. And what I am striving for in no way implicates them—to anyone who actually attended the protest (around 10% of Rez) I would like to think that I made clear in the speech that I gave.

My ultimate goal is to be able to give the staff and students better food options to work with and consume. But when students, who may be associated with our cause, are doing dumb stuff like this, it makes what we are trying to accomplish as a body turn from level-headed, intelligent concerns to stupid, spoiled-brat whining. Seriously.

The truth is, I’ve spent substantial time myself cleaning tables and floors, serving people drinks, cooking at the club, you name it (13 jobs before even starting university) and for people to be blatantly disregarding who they are affecting when they deliberately leave loads of garbage on the table, it seriously is just completely awful for a server to clean up. Trust me. So seriously, all of you who are thinking with your butts instead of your heads, just stop it. It helps absolutely nobody.

The Editor (2006)

I honestly have to say that my Residence career wasn’t overly colourful, relatively speaking. So in order to send in something interesting/amusing/significant for your book project, I looked over a few issues of the old *Perspective* magazine that was published for many years by RSAC.

My Rez junket played out during the mid-2000s, and the 2006 Editor at the time was a real keener for the magazine. He wrote in one of his editorials that he thought that *The Perspective* would likely be the successor to the Throne of England. One of his editions was supposed to have “ranting” as its featured theme. I guess he thought he’d get no end of submissions since ranting seemed to be something that some Residence students couldn’t get enough of.

Somewhat to his surprise, he didn’t receive much of a response, so he re-oriented the rant issue toward “randomness.” To fill space, he printed pictures of a spoon, an earth satellite, and a seating diagram of the Minneapolis Metrodome.
Actually he did get one rant; it came from a guy who took a dim view of revellers who trashed his room while a party was in progress, and then had the blasted nerve to come back a week later to get the three beers they had left behind! Of course, the beer-seekers were nowhere to be found to help clean up the vomit and the beer boxes made soggy from all the beers with three sips still left in them. “So guess what?” propounded the victim in a subsequent edition of *The Perspective*, “those three beers are in my belly.” End of rant.

What would be a typical Friday night in Taché?

- Noel (1955–56): A bus ride to the MLCC with a classmate who had a liquor permit, along with a list of purchases for other classmates.
- Mike (1977–79): Beer Bash in old Kitchen [Dining Room/Oak Room?], and then on to a social.
- Bryce (2003–05): Would consist of some sort of organized bar night/pub-crawl/drink-the-town-dry/themed social. These nights usually started with “pre-gaming” with friends in the dorm rooms, then the evening festivities, then ending the evening with the same friends in the same room waiting for pitas/pizza to be delivered long after we fell asleep (passed out). If we had run out of money, the night may consist of watching DVDs and making grilled cheese on the George Foreman grill (that had to be secretly stashed because they were not permitted).
- Brock (2005–06): Gather in someone’s room with a bunch of couches for pre-drinks before a social. Hook the door open with the closet door and invite everyone who walks by to join. If no socials on, catch a bus to a bar or pub.

Where would you take a date?

- Noel (1955–56): Down Pembina Highway to The Highwayman night club, or MFA Youth Centre downtown; visiting the Home Ec. Practice House.
- Bryce (2003–05): Earls always had great food and was close to campus. Movie theatres weren’t far either and were cheap on Tuesdays. BDI (Bridge Drive Inn) on Jubilee and the Gelatti shops on Corydon were great when it wasn’t too cold out. Going through the “secret” door on 4th East and up onto the roof to look at the stars.

Where would special events take place?

- Noel (1955–56): Basketball at UMSU; dances in Residence; shooting at the Range; University Fair; winning wheat & oat prizes.


Four Fisher family members, over three generations, from rural Manitoba have slept, eaten, and studied within the walls of Taché Hall. The Department of Housing & Student Life had the unique opportunity to get in touch with this family in order to get a first-hand perspective on how Taché Hall and the University of Manitoba have changed throughout the years. A bit about the four Residents:

- Mike (1977–79): Agriculture Diploma program; 2 years in Taché Hall, 1977-78 1st West; 1978-79 4th West, Double room with a homemade loft.
• Mike (1977–79): In the Auditorium, in the old Kitchen [Oak Room], certain hallways.
• Bryce (2003–05): Second Floor Lounges, Wise Guys, MPR in University Centre, Club Condo between East and West wings 1st Floor, socials in the Oak Room 2nd floor between East and West wings, the Canad Inn bars were always fun.
• Brock (2005–06): The first social of the year was at the courtyard behind Taché. Most other socials were at University Centre. Lots of the Rez socials had funny themes to encourage people to dress up. Had Destination Unknown bus trips where we’d travel outside the city to a small-town bar.

Any pranks or events stand out in your mind that occurred during your time in Taché?

• Noel (1955–56): Some water fights, some snowball fights; living in the basement meant clean-ups. While castrating sheep, a classmate kept a pair of testicles and once back to supper when his roommate wasn’t looking, he put them in his roommate’s soup. While the rest of the table watched, the roommate licked out his bowl. A student threw up at the table, another at the door, and two more downstairs. The student and his roommate never left the table. Returning from a basketball game about 20 students came upon a car warming up in front of the building. We bounced the car up the big steps through two sets of doors, turning it crossways at the stairs. We left it still running. I don’t remember how it was removed.

• Mike (1977–79): Water fights; brickling closed doors; basketball games in the Gym; recreational hockey; food fights; floor parties; Colour Night; putting a wallet on the basement floor and when someone bent over to pick it up, we’d dump a garbage barrel of water on them.
• Bryce (2003–05): Lots of stories about what past generations had done and gotten away with. The punishments were far too great to do anything too stupid nowadays. We’ve turned the shower rooms into saunas and had swimsuit parties in there while the one single bathtub would be full of ice water and beer. I had good friends kicked out of Rez for testing out fire extinguishers or throwing water balloons out of windows. It was common to tape people to their beds after they had passed out. After an Axe Body Spray promotion, we would tape the trigger of the spray can down and throw the bottles into people’s rooms when they left their doors open. By the time they got the tape off, their room was filled with the spray and would smell for hours. An even better alternative to this was putting the taped Axe bottles in people’s dresser drawers where they wouldn’t find them for hours/days, only to find their clothes wet with the fragrance. The old fill-a-garbage-can-with-water-then-lean-it-up-against-someone’s-door happened from time to time. As the doors opened into the room, whenever they decided to open their door, the garbage can would tip over dumping 10 L of water into their entrance way. Lots of rooms were filled with crumpled newspaper when the Resident was away. Some guys played “hide the meat” in each other’s rooms. The better it was hidden the longer the other guy’s room stunk.
• Brock (2005–06): When you couldn’t find someone after the bar, people were known to kick in someone’s door to look for them. Chicken finger day at Pembina Hall was a popular event I remember. I also remember when some people organized a rally to complain about the quality of food served at Pembina Hall. The Pembina Hall workers knew about this demonstration and locked the door at the top of the stairs going into Pembina Hall. Then someone found out the other door was unlocked and everyone ran up and stole all the orange serving trays from Pembina Hall. We all walked to the entrance of the Administration Building and threw all these trays on the outside steps. There were T-shirts made for the event and even the media came. I always really liked Pembina Hall food and was there mostly for fun.
Where did you take your meals (was it served or buffet)?

- Noel (1955–56): In the big Dining Room [Oak Room] at a buffet; we had meal tickets; extras 2¢ for a pat of butter, 5¢ for an extra cookie. We learned to eat liver because we were so hungry.
- Bryce (2003–05): Buffet style served in Pembina Hall. The once-a-month chicken finger nights were hugely popular so that you would take extra meals of chicken fingers back to your room to be microwaved for future late night snacks. The three gals who worked the lunchtime sub line were great characters as well. The novelty of PHall buffets ran out after one week and while there was always plenty of variety, nothing ever seemed to compare to home cooking. The opportunity to eat off-campus or even in University Centre was never turned down. Hardly anyone ever ate breakfast so you always invited friends over at the end of the term to help use up your leftover meal credits.
- Brock (2005–06): We always walked down Broadway to eat at Pembina Hall. It was mostly buffet except for holidays and stuff when the staff would serve roasts, ham, or turkey—whatever meal fit the holiday season.

What was the punishment for breaking the rules?

- Noel (1955–56): Mrs. Unwin was the hall warden. She was very fair and had no problem finding out who did what.
- Bryce (2003–05): There were some warnings given out and possibly fines (my memory is rusty and I never got caught so never had to see Joe Danis). There was always a handful of people getting kicked out each year for different offences such as testing the fire extinguishers, throwing water balloons out the window, urinating out the windows, and causing too much trouble after frequent intoxication.
- Brock (2005–06): Mostly fines, or get kicked out of Rez if it was pretty bad.

How did you communicate with friends and family back home?

- Noel (1955–56): Telephone 10¢ local calls, long distance took more. Letters, four hours on the Greyhound hit every town on Hwy. #2 to Wawanesa. An odd ride with another student—we had 10-12 foot banks of snow on each side when we went home from Graduation. It stormed for three days at the end of March blocking Hwy. #2 for almost a week.
- Mike (1977–79): Phone only.
- Bryce (2003–05): Everyone had a landline phone and cell phones were only starting to become commonplace. You could not assume everyone had a cell phone at that time. Lots of emails were exchanged with home as well. Another lifeline was msn messenger.

Do you still keep in touch with anyone from your Taché days?

- Noel (1955–56): Yes, mostly on telephone—some in Binscarth, Brandon, Oak Lake, Gimli, Gladstone. Last I heard, 13 of my classmates had passed away.
• Mike (1977–79): Most of my close friends today are still from my days at Taché.
• Bryce (2003–05): Yes, but it is much easier today in the Facebook and txt message era. It is lots of fun to run into long lost Resbians and catch up.
• Brock (2005–06): Lots of people. Most of my better friends come from Taché and my first year in University. Run into people from Rez all over the place, too.

What was the worst part about living in Taché Hall?
• Noel (1955–56): Lack of transportation; only two classmates had cars; the cold walk up Agriculture Row.
• Mike (1977–79): Food and dry air.
• Bryce (2003–05): Thin walls ... enough said. And Pembina Hall gets old pretty quickly. The constant construction/road maintenance/snow-clearing that started way too early and made too much noise to sleep. Having to go up/down stairs to find a washroom. Often sneaking into the women’s washroom was much easier than going up a floor. Trying to do laundry with too few machines. People would always take your clothes out of the dryer only to be replaced with theirs—on your dollar! Or just throwing your wet clothes in a pile for you to find later.
• Brock (2005–06): My room was in the coldest part of the building, right on the West side. Pretty sure snow drifted around the windows when the wind blew. There were also rules about drinking in the hallways and in the elevators that I did not like. It was also so dry in my room; it dried out the wood of my acoustic guitar, making it unplayable.

What was the best part about living in Taché Hall?
• Noel (1955–56): Learning to live with other people. I was one of the younger students. A great roommate from Poplarfield—talked to him twice in 55 years since. I curled in a University Bonspiel with a classmate, won second event. The Lunch Room in the Basement at nights. The 500 card games all weekend, the Gym, the Common Room with the TV there. The Home Ec. girls in Practice House. Dr. Savage in Vet classes. Prof Stother in Nutrition called me Freddie all year and wondered why I never answered. I was amazed I passed my exam. The projects at Engineering. The welding. We used to go to 3-4 movies on a Saturday. The only time I smoked a pipe, only tried Copenhagen twice—it gave me the hic-ups. Sorry I missed our 50th in 2006 … already had a trip planned to B.C. I will try harder for the 60th.
• Mike (1977–79): Friendships forever; parties; close to class; family tradition; central to campus; close to libraries. Living in Taché is one of the most memorable parts of my life. The memories are priceless, the life experiences are golden. Rez life will change forever when Taché is gone and I do not feel it will be for the better.
• Bryce (2003–05): The girls. Constantly being surrounded with friends. Turning high school sporting enemies into best friends. Mass homework sharing/tutoring amongst classmates. Waking up five minutes before class and still making it on time. Having the luxury of multiple mid-day naps. Not having to do dishes ... ever.
• Brock (2005–06): Meeting different people from other places. Moving in, you don’t really know many people, so it was fun to meet everyone. My new friends were mostly from small towns and just out of high school. So we all had that in common and were in the same boat moving into Rez. Being with friends and socializing was the routine, which made Taché great.

Special thanks go to the Fisher family for allowing us to provide this information so we could get a glimpse of Residence Life during their time in Taché Hall.
Toga Socials (2006)

The Annual Toga Party is a staple at any university. Bed sheets, trips to Fabricland, towels, garbage bags—anything goes. Some of the girls would take great care in making their Togas, while the boys would use whatever they could get, even sometimes using their Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles sheets.

History in the Making (2007)

Being a second-year Resident of Taché Hall in 2007, I often wondered about all the people who have lived in this building, or even just in this very room.

I had read about a guy who went to this school in the Fifties when East and West were still separate girls’ and boys’ dormitories, and you wouldn’t dare cross over. My Grandpa told me he stayed here when Taché served as an army barracks during the Second World War. Speechly was originally an all-girls dormitory, and wasn’t built until 1964, finally accompanying Taché Hall.

University College Residence was another addition to the campus in 1964, and the building was created to integrate classrooms that hosted smaller classes to prevent the growing University from being too impersonal. Rather, the feeling would be more like that of a college, hence the name. The Residence was connected to the rest of the building and created housing for 220 more students. In 1998, it became part of the Housing & Student Life Department.

The latest addition to the HSL Residence family was the very recent construction of Arthur V. Mauro Residence in August of 2003. So we have Arthur Mauro with a whole four years, Speechly and University College both 43 years old, and Taché on the brink of a Century as it celebrates its 95th year.

A teacher of mine who stayed in Taché in the early 1990s told me that at the time the bathrooms were co-ed (finally an explanation for the urinals), and another man once told me they had flooded the Alley (1st West) so you could skate on ice in the hallways! Hearing these stories both amused and astonished me (I also knew that there were some awesome, yet disturbing, ghost stories about the buildings and the rooms), but nonetheless made me proud to call Residence my home because despite how much it can change over time, it’s always without a doubt an unforgettable experience for everyone!
As I recall, vacating Taché Hall for the summer wasn’t a simple matter of opening a door, walking through it, and closing it behind you. There was a whole litany of rituals to be attended to in the flight to freedom, more or less depending, in part, on your chosen lifestyle during the year just ended.

You had to make sure that you’d paid all your Rez fees before you left, including outstanding fines. And that didn’t amount to just a gentle reminder from one of the ladies in the Office and ignoring it, followed by an extended period of quietude over the next couple of months until you found it convenient to own up. It meant your student privileges were promptly placed on hold and you wouldn’t get your final marks until you’d rendered unto Caesar. Spending the summer wondering what your final grades were didn’t make for a stress-free vacation.

A few days before you left you had to defrost and wash out your fridge (if you had one), and to return it according to the fridge-return schedule. Simply passing the thing on to another student wasn’t an option. You had to cancel your IT/communications services and give them your summer billing address, and turn in a change-of-address form to the Office so that mail could be forwarded. If you had $5 or more left on your laundry card, you could go to the Office to get a cash refund.

Then there were all the little mundane chores: cleaning out your bureau and desk drawers, shelves and cubby holes; taking all the garbage out of your room to the nearest garbage/recycling receptacle; closing your blinds/curtains; and locking your door.

And then, last but not least, there were your keys: they all had to be handed in, ditto your laundry card, to the Office. If you moved out after hours, the keys and laundry card had to be put into an envelope with your name and the date on it and dropped into a slot beside the mailboxes. Simply dropping loose keys into the slot was frowned upon by the folks on the other side of the wall.

And with that closing gesture, the most recent episode of life in Taché Hall—for some of us, never to be repeated—passed into history.


I found this photo of the first time the girls used body-paint. This was for the Homecoming Football Game in 2008 … it was a blast and it’s a great picture!

The first time girls used body-paint was for a Homecoming Football Game in 2008. Ramona Garbald Photography.
Well, with all the talk about drinking in Rez, it isn’t a surprise that I have a story to share about the aftermath of too much bending the elbow ... yes, you guessed it ... the barfing, blowing chunks, hugging the porcelain queen, liquid laughing, puking, ralphing, or tossing your cookies! Whatever you want to call it, this dreaded event usually happened after the caretakers had finished for the day, so it fell to our Residence Life team or the on-duty Security to clean up the mess.

On this particular January night, I was called after 1:00 am by the RAs in 1st East Taché. Someone had puked up the whole hallway. I quickly called my RLC co-worker to come and help with the clean up. When we arrived on the scene, the Security Supervisor was there gagging with his shirt covering his face. All of the students from the floor had gathered in the RA’s room because it didn’t smell as bad in there as in their own rooms.

The smell was awful! The fella had been sick all over the rug, in a somewhat Z-shaped pattern. I asked one of the RAs for a scarf to cover my mouth and nose and we got down to business. We spread the “vomit comet” over the mess—this product aids in the gelling of the vomit so it can be shovelled up into plastic bags. I had the scarf over my face and still the smell was just awful.

But the Security and Residence Life team sure were glad that we had the stomachs to clean up for them that night. And another chapter in the life of an RLC with Housing & Student Life!

One of the many duties of the RLCs was to clean up any messes left by Residents who were sick from too much drinking.
Marketing the Event

To build anticipation and create excitement leading up to the event, we unveiled parts of the event layer-by-layer over the course of two months, incorporating the use of a giant counter, counting down to a specific date and time. We registered a website that people could keep coming back to each week, to get more clues about our event.

To keep people coming back to our website, we enlisted the help of several Winnipeg icons and celebrities, including David Asper, Chicago Bears Israel Idonije, and folk singer/songwriter Sheena Grobb. We asked these individuals to shoot promotional video vignettes on how they came alive. We also used two current students to complement the aforementioned alumni.

In the days leading up to 09.09.09, we went one step further by getting break-dancers and staged graffiti artists to go around campus to promote Come Alive. The theme behind all the marketing was to employ non-conventional ideas associated with promoting post-secondary leadership and service learning programs.

The Event

The event took place in the Manitoba Room in University Centre. The left and right sides of the room were flanked with two large video screens. For the first 45 minutes, a silent slideshow played on the video screens while a DJ spun live music in the background.

The counter finally stopped at the end of the silent slideshow, at which point the DJ went silent and a 15-minute video showcasing all our Student Life programs began to play. After the event was over, the Come Alive website pointed to the U of M Student Life website, complete with all the information on how to become involved with the programs.

Second Semester Insights (2009)

I would like to share a list of things that you start to realize in your second semester in Residence.

1. Your standards have lowered dramatically. You do laundry less, sleep more, drink excessively, and do way, way less homework.
2. Your New Year’s resolution to lose those pounds, drink less, save your money, and not be such an idiot will be down the drain by the end of the first Rez night.
3. You finally start to miss home, after a whole semester of telling yourself how much you love Rez. Christmas break with your friends at home will do that.
4. You start rethinking the organization of your room, but living in Speechly you are faced with the realization that your bed will not fit into another formation, even if you tried. Those living in Taché will realize that elevating your bed on top of your dresser and window sill is not a great idea after a few drinks.
5. No matter how many times you tell yourself that you won’t end up at your 8:30 or 10:00 am class with the pasties and a bad case of nausea, you will still find yourself at Wise Guys at least twice a week.
6. Walks of Shame will get far more interesting. Spandex and grad dresses aren’t exactly subtle.
7. Your whole “keeping organized and starting this semester of school with a fresh start” kick will end about as quickly as it started. Don’t kid yourself ... you are still a Residence student.
8. You will begin to “freshen up” for class less and less. Slippers and your high school sweats will become your school uniform, and the shower rooms will become crowded at 4:30 pm ... not 7:30 am. And yes, the “Winnipeg” kids will judge you.
9. The first time you walk into your room after getting back from break, the subtle stench that now inhabits your room tells you that your filth has finally caught up with you.

10. That hot foreign exchange student you wanted to get to know has now moved out.

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**Mattress Slide (2009-10)**

This article, originally written by me and published in *Reside*, shows that you can still have fun in Residence during the spring Reading Week. That’s right. My friends and I were jealous of everyone going to hot places for the week, so we decided to have some adventures of our own to brag about when our itinerant colleagues all got back from far-away places.

“**Why You Should NEVER Leave Rez for Reading Week**”

I don’t know if you know, but so much fun stuff goes down during Reading Week here at Rez. Fun and adventures lie behind every corner. If you went home, YOU MISSED OUT! Heck, even if you went some place hot, with a complementary bar and babes in bikinis everywhere, YOU STILL MISSED OUT!

1. You don’t need to go to some place exotic to get a hot tan. We got our bronze-on right here!
2. PHall definitely served chicken fingers!
3. The U of M provided sweet hot tubs for our playing pleasure.
4. The President of the World gave us each a cheque for a hundred dollars!
5. *Metallica* gave a personal concert in the Aud. It was awesome.
7. Lastly, we had super-intense mattress races in Taché!

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**Memories in Rez (2009-10)**

Well everyone, 2009-10 was an amazing year with a lot of fond memories. Not only did everyone make great friends, but also everyone had experiences that will last a lifetime.

- Frosh Week: the definition of Frosh Week at the U of M is Socials and Meet and Greets every night; Orientation and classes every day; meeting new friends; getting your room set up; realizing every class
you take sucks ... or ROCKS!; and for some of us looking the most haggard we have been all year. All in all, Frosh Week was amazing—great concerts, great socials, great friends!

- Courtyard Social – The first social for Speechly/Taché—at least 100 bottles of mosquito repellent were used and although everyone stayed inside until 11 pm, the night took off after that!
- Get Lei’d Social at the OC.
- The Boat Cruise presented by UMSU.
- Boy’s Night – with poker, pizza, video games, amps, guitars. What else could you want!
- Girls Gone Wild (Girlz Nite) – with yoga, movies, snacks, hemp bracelets, ice cream, mocktails, manicures, pedicures, and MALE STRIPPERS. Things got rowdy when four sexy RSAC members came out to strut their stuff to the ladies in an interesting medley of song and dance. Water was involved, clothes were taken off, and girls were excited. Girlz Nite 2010 was a historic event.
- Club Crawl – Stereo was the group’s first stop, after a long party bus ride from campus. Our second stop was TYC after what felt like an hour on the party bus, which was OK seeing how the buses had poles to dance on and music pumping.
- Graffiti Social – So you bought a T-shirt, you cut it up and made it look awesome, you took a permanent marker with you, you pre-partied, and the graffiti-ing began. Not only did your shirt get covered, but also all visible flesh was fair game—maybe some on your face, definitely on your sheets and pillows the next morning, and a guaranteed entertaining breakfast in PHall the next morning.
- RSAC Auction for Charity – Buy any RSAC member for a date or make them your slave for the day. Some of the RSAC members decided to raise the bids by taking their clothes off. Overall $250 was raised!
- Hallowe’en at the Cambridge and at the Nob. It was supposed to be destination unknown, but for most of us, our brains were already on vacation. Miss Hooters 1978 was the hottest girl in the whole place!
- Retro 2010 – Dress from any decade, and try and look as ridiculous as possible.
- Glow in the Dark Social – Another great night at the OC. This time everything was glowing.
- Colour Night 2010 – One special night in Rez where you can dress to impress, eat edible food in PHall, and drink wine. As the dinner progressed, Pembina Hall got louder, wine was scarce, and people were ready to go dance the rest of the night away. Goodbye balloon arch … hello crazy night that ended in a 3 am fire alarm that had all of Taché on the sidewalks in the middle of the night. All in all, Colour Night = SUCCESS!

It’s been fun, and you’ll never have another chance to live like this again.
Advice from a Taché Hall Co-Prez (2010)

In my two years in Rez, I came across some great pearls of wisdom and now I want to pass them on to you ... LISTEN CAREFULLY!!!

1. Meet new people! Even if you have a good bunch of friends from home to hang out with here, branch out and meet new people.
2. There are four groups of people you need to be nice to ... all for different reasons. (a) RAs: They plan awesome events and make your year an awesome time. (b) The Cleaning Staff: They make sure your common areas stay clean and put up with way more stuff than they deserve. (c) Rez Security: If you make friends with them they will be much nicer to you if you cause problems later on in the year. (d) RSAC: Most important of all ... We plan all of the sweet socials you get to come out to and get drunk at.

3. Secrets spread like wild fire in Rez ... If you don't want anyone to hear about it, DON’T TELL ANYONE!!!
4. For those living in Speechly your walls are paper thin ... pretend you’re living next to your parents ... would you want them to hear what you’re doing? ... your neighbours don’t either!
5. Walks of Shame suck ... especially from other buildings ... in the middle of winter ... in a Hallowe’en costume.
6. Hooking up with people on your floor is not a good idea ... (Only exception is Taché and if they are in the opposite wing).

7. Branch out to other Residences, even if you love the people in your building. There are beauties in all of the other ones, too, just looking to have fun like you.
8. Contrary to popular belief, both those living in AVM and your RAs all know how to party. You just gotta catch them at the right time.
9. People who say they will never drink again ... are liars!
10. Get involved … with everything and anything … except your neighbour ... But seriously, there are lots of awesome things you can get involved with in Rez, so do it!

Well enough of that ... I am pumped to make this year one to remember and it is Taché's last year as a Residence, so let’s show it a good time!

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From an IT Perspective (2010)

The day that I heard we were losing Taché Hall brought about mixed feelings for me. At the beginning, I have to admit I was elated. From an IT standpoint, it really wasn’t a great building. It cost our Department a lot of time and money. So with that thinking in mind, I thought to myself, “Right on, now it’s time to embrace the new!”

As time went on, however, I began to backtrack a bit. It took me awhile to realize the history, memories, and importance of Taché Hall as a building. So I started to look past its IT-related flaws and to remember the building as a whole. Ever since then, I’ve really appreciated how it’s contributed to the Residence community. I’ll never forget staying in there myself as a Residence student and what it meant to our University community.

LAN Parties in the Oak Room

We had two LAN parties in the Taché Hall Oak Room; one on October 15, 2010 and the other on January 22, 2011. I’d say that the first one got about 30 people and the second one was closer to 40 people.

For these first LAN parties, I really don’t remember seeing any girls there, so the event just attracted the males. At the second party, I remember being
surprised to see a few girls come in at 2 am. However, I soon discovered that they were intoxicated and just stopped by on the way home from the bar to see what the noise was all about! When I realized they weren’t there to game, I was disappointed, but the night continued on anyway.

A funny situation happened to us on one of the nights. While everybody was in the middle of their own game, suddenly I heard people talking and moving around. I walked over to discover that a section of the room had completely lost power. So we traced the issue back to the circuit and attempted to reset the breaker switch. The only problem was that, for whatever reason, the breaker switch didn’t want to work. So we had a real problem on our hands!

After discussing it, we decided to run really long extension cables from the far side of the room. So after 15 minutes of scrambling over each other, and running a spaghetti-style mess of wires all over the place, we finally managed to get everyone back up and running.

Sure enough, a few hours later the same thing happened again. We applied the same strategy, except we tried to spread out the power load even more. We really crossed our fingers that time, since we couldn’t reset any breakers, and this was the last circuit we were using. If it went down, we wouldn’t have power for the rest of the night. Fortunately, we didn’t have to worry about that and the power stayed on the whole time!

**Setting up a Computer Lab**

In 2010, we set up a computer lab on the 4th floor Taché East common area. It was a ton of work to set up, but we knew that the Residence students there needed something. We set up several desktop computers, a lounge area with networking, and a public printer. We ended up making most of the cabling ourselves and running in through and behind walls. There was actually a point where my boss’ boss wanted to pull the plug and not put any more time into it. However, we convinced him to move forward with it, and that we did! After it was all finished, I was really glad to walk by there from time-to-time to see students using it for what we had intended.

**Room Checks**

One of the most interesting things that I was assigned to do in Taché Hall was the year-end room checks for the IT equipment. You really had no idea what you were going to find in each room. Even though the Residents had already moved out, you’d often find things that were left behind. These items ranged anywhere from weird/creepy to actually useful/valuable. Some weird examples are knitting supplies and ant farms. Some examples of valuable items are Netbooks and TVs.

I remember, on one particular occasion, letting myself into a room that I knew had already been emptied out. Upon walking in, I looked up only to be startled by what was in front of me. There in the middle of the room was this lone doll sitting there and staring at me. It was both comical and frightening at the same time. On the one hand, the doll looked all cute and innocent, and yet on the other hand, it looked like the doll from Chuckie. Anyway, he is now an integral part of our IT team. We thought that the name “ChuckIT” was very fitting.

These room checks also occurred in summer, so needless to say, it got quite warm in Taché Hall with no air conditioning. I have very “fond” memories of sweat dripping off my face and onto the IT equipment that I was supposed to be making sure worked. I hope my sweat never affected the speed or reliability!

**Providing Internet in Taché Hall**

It was always a challenge for us to provide stable and reasonably fast Internet in Taché Hall. The infrastructure in the building was very old and quite limited as to what it could handle. I’ve had my fair share of groans upon discovering some of the problems in the building. They were literally the craziest problems you’ve ever had, and it was the solutions grounded in science and logic that DID NOT work. Instead, the solutions that really shouldn’t have worked somehow did work. We definitely had a few jokes going on whenever we ran into an Internet problem in Taché. We usually just blamed the Internet gremlins!
What's interesting about Taché is that it was the only Residence building in which we didn't have access to the voice data room! We found this quite frustrating and perplexing, at times, not to have access to a room we felt that we should have. It always made for some interesting times when we knew there was probably an issue in that room, but had to call somebody else to fix it.

**IT Discipline**

Occasionally, we would have to discipline a student in Taché if they had a copyright or a bandwidth violation. These violations happened if students downloaded or shared material that they are not legally allowed to, or if they downloaded too much content over and above the allotted amount in Residence. When we did have to discipline someone, we sent them an email, as well as dropped off a memo under their door. I have hilarious memories of walking up to some of the doors of these folks and just praying that they wouldn’t open their door, just as I was slipping the discipline letter under it.

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**Fun with Water: Waterpalooza (2010)**

The first year we did Waterpalooza in 2008, there were four of us who started it, all RAs—both from East and West Houses. It wasn’t a Spirit Cup event, it was just something we organized to get all the Houses out together. First we had a huge water fight, then we had the slip ‘n’ slide. The Department sponsored it. And it was the four of us who did all the work.

The 2nd year (2009), I organized it again and asked for assistance from anyone willing to help. In 2010, I believe it was all the returning RAs who were in charge of putting it on.

[Editor’s note: This event was probably a way to replace all the pranks involving pails of water in the Residences … it seemed that now the Residents do “water” events in a much more controlled environment.]
Haunted House (2010)

Do you like to be really scared at Hallowe’en? Well, some of the RAs in East Taché decided to organize an event with a Haunted House that would scare even the bravest of the brave.

The event was held in the Aud, which was divided into four sections or stations and each area had its own theme. Black garbage bags and chain link fencing separated the areas. All the lights were turned off and eerie Hallowe’en music was played throughout the Aud.

The guests came into the first station and were greeted by two bumble bees (the two RLCs) who recited the rules of the Haunted House, before the guests could continue. Safety rules such as (1) no touching the actors; (2) stay in single file along the route; and (3) if the guests were too scared, they could be escorted out by the “medics.”

In the first few years, the East RAs did all the set ups, put on the make-up and costumes, and acted in the skits. Later, the Council members saw how much fun the RAs were having and offered to help.

In the first few years, only the Residence students attended, but by the last year in 2010, former ResLife staff would return for the fun and some would bring their volunteer groups to see the Haunted House. One year a woman from the community heard about the Haunted House and brought some young children, but it was suggested that the event was probably too scary for the kids.

The event became so popular, that the line-ups outside the Aud doors would reach down...
the outside steps and far down on the sidewalk. There was no admission fee, but guests were asked to bring in a food item for Winnipeg Harvest or some other charity.

The RAs and Council members worked on the Aud for at least two weeks prior to the event, after class or ResLife meetings, sometimes until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning. The actors would leave class early on the day of the Haunted House, as some costumes took 3-4 hours of make-up prep.

It was truly frightening, but the students just loved it!

Contest: Why I Love Rez (2011)

In March 2011, Housing & Student Life ran a contest for all Residents with the tag line of “Why I Love Residence.” The rules were as follows:

1. Only students currently living in Residence and fans of the official U of M Residence Life Facebook page (facebook.com/umrezlife) were eligible for the contest.
2. Only posts on the official RezLife Facebook page would be considered.
3. All posts had to be a maximum of 140 words or less.
4. Posts had to be online by 12 am on March 24, 2011.
5. A selection committee would select the three best posts and re-post them on the RezLife Facebook page. From there the post with the most Facebook “likes” by 12 am on April 1, 2011 would win the contest and an MTS Blackberry.

Here is a sampling of the posts that were submitted.

Why do I love Residence? The community is just absolutely fantastic! Coming from BC where I knew absolutely no-one plus being an incredibly shy guy in high school (and to some degree still am), I found it hard to talk to new people and make new friends. Residence completely changed me within a week of being here. All the icebreakers the RAs tried out really worked for me as well as the fun socials that were put on by Council. These two things, combined with going to the Lounges and Condo every day, really helped me break out of my shell and make some of the best friends I’ve ever had. All the friends I’ve ever made at the U of M have lived in Residence at some point in their lives so this is why I now call Residence home and I couldn’t be happier!

I love Residence because it’s somewhere that everyone can try on new identities. Students are allowed to try on different roles and find who they are as an individual. We are encouraged by our communities to reach our highest potential, but also supported when we fail. Residence is a place to call home and find welcoming arms, in a school of 30,000. I love Residence because you meet many diverse people. This allows us to have new experiences and to become more accepting. What we once thought was different or weird is now exciting and fascinating. You make life-long friendships and networks from these people. Living in Residence is a unique and fantastic experience that you cannot get anywhere else.
Why do I love Residence? I’ll take you on a day in the life of a Rez student...

Wake up ... uh oh, missed the alarm; going to be late for class ... book it out the door ... meet 5 different friends on the way, have 5 good times and still make it to class on time ... Break between classes; go eat your face off at PHall ... More good times before and after class with randos in the halls ... RA event that afternoon; meet new friends (a cute girl too) ... Council social that night (hilarious theme); meet more friends, more unforgettable times ... Sleep (finally!) ... Wake up ... hit up the book to see it lit up with friend and event requests ... uh oh, going to be late for class; book it out the door ... do it all over again.

What’s not to love?

Why do I love Residence? First off, it’s extremely convenient. You can stay up late studying or hanging out with friends, get your four hours of shut-eye, wake up 15 minutes before class and stumble in with 5 minutes to spare. The campus becomes your home. Also there are so many amazing people to meet. Where else can you live with 1,200+ people who are around the same age as you? I found myself making new life-long friends all the time. Finally, there is so much diversity in Rez that you learn to respect and understand the cultural, spiritual, and sexual differences between you, your neighbours, and many people around the world.

From the all-night study seshes, to the programs and events put on for us by the hard-working RAs and Student Councils. I LOVE RESIDENCE LIFE!

Why do I love Rez? Honestly, it’s impossible to think why not!

The reason that I love Residence is because for most people, especially the ones who move here just after graduating [from high school], it is your first chance to live in a community setting. There are many people around you that you can spend quality time with—laughing, playing games, and occasionally having a few parties with :) It is a chance for you to express yourself in ways you didn’t think were possible; to be able to make your own decisions and become more responsible, while making friendships that will last a lifetime. It’s a time to grow up, but at the same time to be a kid, and we all know that is why Residence is a great place to live. This is why I love Residence!

Family Feud in the Aud (2011)

Family Feud was done by the portfolio Thrive, and I think supported by RSAC. We interviewed around 100 people in Rez about multiple topics and then did it family-feud style. We got a team from every House involved and the winners received $50 each for the St. Vital Mall.

Family Feud was an event with a team from every House involved, and the winners received $50 each for the St. Vital Mall.
Jell-o Wrestling (2011)

The first year we did Jell-o Wrestling in the Aud, it was four of the female East RAs who organized it, along with one of the male SRAs on 2nd East. Years before, Jell-o Wrestling had been an event in the Great Hall of University College, but it was rather cold walking back to Taché Hall covered in wet Jell-o, so we decided to have our own event.

As for making the Jell-o, we used about 400 boxes of the product. Pembina Hall Kitchen let us use their big refrigerators and also let us use big buckets (we needed about 20). It was the RAs who made the Jell-o, but I think an RSAC member may have helped one year.

The fights were as follows:
- SRA 2nd East vs. RSAC Finance
- East girls vs. an RSAC member in charge of events
- Taché RLC vs. RSAC Taché Prez

Afterwards anyone could fight. This event was sponsored by both the Department and RSAC. We also took admission as a fundraiser. The RAs did all the prep work; RSAC fought and gave money.

The 2nd year we did it, I was in charge. We were on a budget freeze, so RSAC paid for all the Jell-o ... we already had all the other supplies. And this time anyone could wrestle.

The Jell-o boxes and big buckets.

The Jell-o is starting to set-up.

The Jell-o in the wrestling ring.

JT getting ready for her match with Jeff.

The East RAs having a grand time.

The poster announcing the big match.

The pink-gloved organizers victorious!

The crowd goes wild, as JT steps in the ring.

The Jell-o is starting to set-up.
Last Taché Visit: An Open House  (2011)

David Blanchard is the great grandson of Samuel Hooper, the architect for Taché Hall and the Administration Building, among others. He is accompanied by his wife Jacqui Blanchard as they toured Taché Hall in May 2011. It really meant a lot to both Dave and Jacqui to see Taché Hall one last time as a Residence.

Lyric for Taché Hall  (2011)

Wow! It was great of you and the staff to set up this Open House. It was like swimming in a sea of memories. And I got to see my old room as well.

Funny how a building can jog the mind. And beside the yearbook tables, the editor of the Alumni Journal took some pictures.

I’m a Winnipeg poet and former Taché Hall party animal. I was moved to write this lyric after the Open House on Friday.

I think a lot of people might enjoy the emotion of what I wrote, so I’m forwarding it to you.

A Lyric for Taché Hall

Coming up the worn stairs was that her face I saw whose arms I slept a year in whose walls I once embraced, footstep upon footstep her daughter’s yes I sought on promising nights where the moon turned her heel and the river understood some soft springs are meant to linger.

by Ron Romanowski, Taché Hall 1974-1975

Open House Memory Card Comments  (2011)

Memories of the Dining Room:
• Echoes of the movie “The Student Prince”!
• The best banana cake ever.

Memories of the Auditorium:
• Providing sound for concerts through UMSU Radio.

Collective Memories:
• He lived in Taché in 1930, and then again after WW II when he met his wife. He’s the only person I’ve spoken to who actually remembered using the swimming pool in the basement.
• I was a Science undergraduate in 1945, but some of my older friends were returning veterans who resided in Taché Hall. Some of them smuggled girlfriends into the dorm via the rear entrance; but that is another story.
• It happened early on a Saturday morning, March 17, 1951. We all in the Men’s Residence awoke suddenly to trumpets, drums, trombones, etc. All in the most decibels possible.

• I have no memory of any plunge pools in my years of 1954-58 at the Manitoba Union Building. Good luck with your research.

• The very good friends I associated with both in Engineering and Agriculture, some of them whom I still have contact with (1955-59).

• I should have received a second degree because I lasted four years with the food, particularly the evening meal.

• Curling for quarters in the old two sheet curling rink.

• One memory I have is of the boiler breaking. It cranked the heat up to an ungodly level and for days we were left to sweat it out until they could fix it. We coped by leaving all the windows open, and by sleeping naked on the floor.

• I am so glad that we could come to the Open House. I love that my daughter was able to come here and see where her mother lived. It was wonderful to spend some time reflecting, and to take a trip down memory lane with her. It was good to see the place one final time and I appreciate the opportunity to walk through it again.

• In the 1960s, food was not allowed in the rooms which of course meant there was lots of hidden food. I used to buy sardines by the case and heat them up on the radiator in my room. I ate them with crackers stolen from the Cafeteria. Luckily I was a Don and had a private room.

• In the 1960s, all new students got initiated by being placed in ice water baths.

• My memory was a person, Mary Speechly of Mary Speechly Hall. She used to bake hermit cookies for me and her son Bill Speechly. Bill and my family were cottage neighbours up at “Gull Harbour” at the North End of Hecla Island on Lake Winnipeg. Throughout the sixties she would bake hermits for us every 3 to 4 weeks.

• When I was in my teens, I wrote a Western Board Harmony exam in the Auditorium of Taché Hall. Because the exam involved auditory skills as well as theory, there was a constant cacophonous hum. The invigilator would call for silence, only to have it resume at about 20-minute intervals during the exam. (My neighbour never hummed the interval I needed!)

• I remember the water fights in East Taché. People “skating” down the main hallway on two or more inches of water and close to six inches on the lowest floor. I also remember leading the Intercultural Committee in 1969-70. We had a major cultural display by the steps below the Dining Room in March 1969. I also remember getting my finger stuck in a pop machine that stole my money.

• When I wrote exams in the basement of Taché, it was poorly lit. At one exam, a student brought a candle and put it in a (glass) Coca Cola bottle and lit it so that he could have more light on his exam booklet.

• Pigs in bottom hallway meant to have been an Aggie.

• I was a Speechly Resident for four years (1970-74), one of the best times of my life. Best part was making life-long friends. A home away from home; a place to feel safe and “chill” after long days in classes. Taché was on the shortcut to Tier. I also remember volleyball games in the Gym, dances, skits, etc. GOOD TIMES! Great to get one last look at the place.

• Panty raids in Mary Speechly were a popular (and expensive) pastime.

• By the way, did anybody’s stories ever mention the swastikas on the tile floor of Taché? In 1911, they were some sort of good luck symbol.

• I never did discover the steam tunnels. It was such a short distance from Taché West to the Engineering Building that we never worried about a “warm” route to classes.

• Good luck and thanks for keeping the memory of Taché Hall/ Speechly Residence Life alive—they sure were good years for a whole lot of people.

• Good luck and thanks for keeping the memory of Taché Hall/ Speechly Residence Life alive—they sure were good years for a whole lot of people.
Penny (2011)

I was just looking for something on my email at home, and came upon a link to an interview with Penny Bylholt, the former Building Manager for Housing & Student Life. Penny worked for Residences for over 30 years and started as a linen keeper in Taché Hall. She was the lady who mended the sheets and pillow cases in the 1970s and beyond, then moved on to caretaker, and then to building manager for all the Residence buildings within the Department.

We loved Penny and she was very supportive of most things that we did. She was hard on the outside, but very mushy on the inside—always trying to help us out, but at the same time, getting on our cases about most things! She wasn't afraid to yell at us and tell us to smarten up! One of her pet peeves was guys who wore their pants down low with their undershorts exposed. She'd always be nattering at them ... “Pull up your pants!!”

Another loveable quirk was how Penny said the word architecture ... “artch-teacher.” We would just wait for it, and sure enough, there, she’d say it again, giving everyone a good silent chuckle. But we would never have laughed out loud, ‘cause everyone loved her too much.

During move-in, Penny could be seen whizzing around campus between all four of the Residences on her “gator.” Some of the staff and students were brave enough to ride with her, but not me ... she was a rambo driver on that thing!

As one student wrote: “I don’t have a cute story to tell, but all I can say is when I met Penny, I was intimidated by her at first. By the time I finished my life in Taché Hall, I could not imagine a person who loved the place more than she did. She is an amazing human being who put her heart and soul into Taché.”

When Taché Hall closed its doors at the end of April 2011, Penny also ended a long and wonderful career at the University of Manitoba with her well-deserved retirement. She will be remembered by many thousands of students who lived in the Residences over her 30 plus years of taking care of business. Her memory book is full of many untold tales ... nothing shocked Penny, as she had seen it all!

And from his assistant Linda, the last word goes to Leo ...

The Agony and the Ecstasy (2011)

For some people, sad to say, their sojourn at university is not recalled with fondness. Rather, it is remembered as a necessary evil that had to be borne to ensure a reasonably decent lifestyle and career afterwards. Although youthful good times were to be had, it was also an unavoidable rite of passage plagued with quizzes, tests, exams, term papers, stress, worry, anxiety, and profs that couldn’t deliver an inspiring lecture in a wheelbarrow. After graduation came freedom, joy, rapture, happiness, self-fulfillment, fame, fortune, a great-looking spouse, and 2.5 beautiful kids. Too bad we had to get there by sacrificing some of the very best years of our lives on the altar of academia.

Looking back on it now, I realize that I’m one of the lucky ones in the sense that I very much enjoyed my years at the University of Manitoba. I knew full well that I was there for intellectual stimulus and self-improvement, and to prepare myself for a productive, meaningful future, etc., etc. At the same time, I didn’t just regard those years as nothing more than a laborious means to an end. Nor, of course, did I see it as an end in itself; but it was certainly the apogee of my existence up to and during that relatively brief span of time. Between the years of 18 and 22, my life wasn’t on hold—it was my life.
Why do I recall my university years at the U of M with pleasure and satisfaction? Certainly I suffered my share of the miseries listed previously. Nor can I say that my campus years were “fun;” I wasn’t a party animal, having never had the means nor the inclination to routinely whoop it up, chase skirts to exhaustion, or trip the light fantastic. Furthermore, I had no serious time for organized sports or the plethora of clubs, organizations, fraternities, committees, sodalities, or societies that abounded on campus.

Was I, perhaps, an egghead genius in the rough? Not likely, because a major part of my problem lay in the fact that I wasn’t overly bright: I had to work long and hard for the unflattering marks I did get. On rare occasions, I produced a term paper that impressed my professors but, generally speaking, my output was firmly wedged in the bosom of mediocrity. One would be charitable to describe the overall quality of my undergraduate performance as “inconsistent.” Me? BA Summa Cum Laude? Like the moon is made of Swiss cheese.

If the foregoing doesn’t much sound like the stuff of pleasant retrospection, what is it that leaves me all warm and fuzzy thinking about those far-off times? Well, there was one over-riding “plus” that trumped the all-too-familiar hardship and woe—when I got my start in the early 1960s, the massive expansion of the universities hadn’t yet begun, and my generation of students was still somewhat of an elite. Coming from a rather humble social background, I thought that being a university student was a REALLY BIG DEAL! Even though I wasn’t by any stretch a doyen among the blossoming literati, I was tremendously proud to be participating in a grand, historic tradition in an institution of almost 10,000 students. I took to the U of M like a fish to water, and I couldn’t possibly imagine any other place I’d have rather been. During the summers, I was a paid crew member on University field expeditions that provided data for my graduate thesis as well as money that funded my ongoing studies. The whole thing was a perfect fit.

For as long as I attended the U of M, I lived on campus. In addition to the much-appreciated convenience it offered, this arrangement made me feel that I was a direct, well-integrated part of something noble and important. Taché Hall wasn’t in quite the same league as the Palace of Versailles, but at least it looked like a castle, and that was good enough for me. It was certainly more of a home than the temporary military housing I grew up in and was, in my view, a vital, indispensable part of my overall university experience.

A photographer friend of mine who was a day-student throughout his university career attended the closing-out events at Taché Hall in 2011. After hearing all the rollicking stories from former Resbians, he said he was going to go to the University Administration and ask for his money back because the Residence guys had all the fun! While life in Rez wasn’t a steady stream of wine, women, and song for me, I was very content and comfortable in Taché.

But this happy tale doesn’t end there by any means. In my final year, I made a truly astonishing discovery—the most exquisite young lady on the planet was a student there at the same time. Imagine that! The world’s most beautiful woman ... right here at the U of M!! Since we were both patrons of the Taché/Speechly/Pembina Hall complex, I eventually got the opportunity to meet her. Of course, the fondest dream of every young man is to marry the world’s most beautiful woman, so naturally I proposed to her before someone else beat me to it. To my everlasting gratitude, she accepted.

So now I’m 68 going on 90, and what do I have to show for it all? Well, I can truly say I can look back on a satisfying professional career for which a university education was a sine qua non. This former Taché Resident is pleased to report that I’m still happily married to the Pride of Mary Speechly Hall. I devote an inordinate amount of time nowadays recalling and chuckling out loud at the many amusing incidents and characters I met with on campus and in Residence ... and laughter is the best medicine, is it not? Along with the many blessings I enjoy in retirement, peace of mind is among the most cherished, thanks in very large measure to the only alma that maters. Considering that I’m not a native Manitoban, I am ever conscious that this province has granted me a home, an education, a career, and a wonderful life companion.

In 2011-12, at long last, I published the final results of my career-long research pertaining to Manitoba. Hopefully before my time is done I will have, through contributions such as these, in some measure repaid this generous place for all that it has given me.
Before classes ended in April 2011, the Residents of Tché Hall gathered one last time for this memorable group photo.

Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending.

- Maria Robinson