A serious housing shortage had existed on campus in the late 1960s due to the rapid and seemingly endless expansion of the University. The problem was aggravated by the falling-through of Taché Hall’s earlier renovation/expansion plans. In search of expert advice, the Board of Governors commissioned a report on the general housing problem.

Residence in the 1970s

The task of advising the University fell to Harry Nolan Associates, an architectural consulting service headed up by an ex-President of the Speechly/Taché Residence complex. The Nolan Report came in during the latter half of the 1969-70 academic year, heavily in favour of building new residences on campus, and with a great deal of support for the then-shelved plan to renovate/expand Taché Hall.

Perhaps one of the most interesting (and curious) sections of the Nolan Report was a list of abiding opinions, perceptions, and attitudes that presumably determined written and unwritten policy on student housing. We might refer to these collectively as the “world view” or “ethos” of the day, i.e., the latter half of the 1960s decade, and were stated as follows:

- Men shall live in quarters separated from women (unless married).
- Students may drink on campus.
- Students can have food delivered to the campus.
- Women are to be protected.
- Televisions should not be found in a study bedroom.
- Students shall become ladies and gentlemen, as well as scholars.
- Students eat dinner between 5:00 – 6:00 pm.
- Students don’t drink wine or beer with their meals.
- Students eat breakfast between 8:00 – 9:00 am.
- Ladies don’t stay out all night (but gentlemen do).
- Students require an overhead ceiling light.
- Students do not have hobbies like woodworking, automobile interests, or art in its many forms.
- The University has a special responsibility for foreign students.
- Graduate students want to live away from undergraduate students.
The best place for students to live is on or near campus.
• Commuting is bad.
• Students have special emotional problems and require special services.
• Students have special eating problems and require special services.
• Students should wait for graduation before marrying.
• Pregnant females should leave University.
• Marijuana should not be legalized.
• Students should live in groups.
• Students from Metro Winnipeg should live at home.
• Students living at home are well housed.
• Students’ rooms are open to inspection at any time.
• Fraternities do not exist.
• Co-operatives cannot build or lease on campus.
• Students should study and not concern themselves with the operations of the University, including those that affect them personally.
• Students all require the same size of room, bed, desk surface, book shelving, light, heat, and ventilation.
• Students do not like to or have time to cook.

These were examples cited in the Nolan Report that were reflected in the written and unwritten policies that surrounded a Residence student. They affected the kinds of rooms and services available in Residence, and the regulations that governed the availability and use of those assets. Some are amusing, others are overgeneralized, and yet others are plain wrong … for example, the notion that students had no hobby interests is contradicted by the existence of Camera and Carpentry clubs in Taché Hall. The flat-out statement that fraternities don’t exist is repeatedly contradicted by the group photographs in the University of Manitoba Brown and Gold yearbooks.

More to the point, Taché had deteriorated to the extent where radiator pipes would burst, and scalding, rusty water would flood the rooms. On those happy occasions when the pipes remained intact, they were known to rattle and bang instead. Some of the original furniture, and much dating to WW II, was still in use. There was no carpeting in the rooms nor in the halls; nothing but bare flooring was to be found anywhere except in the West Lounge.

Who Lived in Residence?

Up until the 1960s, the Residences at the U of M had been planned for Manitoba students of the commonly accepted university age of 18 to 21 years. With the single exception of the immediate post-war years from 1945-48, the general pattern of students was fairly standard: after 12-13 years of primary and secondary schooling, a small number of persons proceeded through four years of post-secondary studies at the university that was closest to home.

Residences were then considered adequate for the needs of individuals who were relatively young and who had not previously lived away from home. The applicant had to be a full-time student in order to be accepted or remain in Residence. At the U of M, a full-time student was one who was taking at least 80 percent of a normal course load as determined by the student’s faculty—normally, at least four courses per term.
In Taché Hall, transgressions between Residents were often dealt with personally, rather than getting the RSAC Disciplinary Board involved. Such public displays of retribution, as shown above, were invariably quite harmless and brief in duration.

No pets allowed ... but this cutie wasn’t breaking the rules. He was a seeing-eye dog, of which there were a fair number living in East Taché over the years.

This was considered important because those students with less than the normal load would have had free time on their hands that would not necessarily be spent studying, but rather could be devoted to non-scholarly (presumably disruptive) activities that would prove detrimental to those carrying a full load.

With the advent of the 1970s, the pattern had changed with the result that the student demographics at the U of M ranged from 18 to 65 years of age. Many persons from other countries and provinces had been added to the population, and the behavioural style of young adults had become rather more sophisticated. The Residences attempted to adjust to these various factors, and, in general, still treated all students as if they were of equal age and maturity. But in fact, there continued to be a wide disparity between the young and the older student, and any dissatisfaction expressed about Residence was more likely to be the result of conflict between the needs of the young person and the opinions of older individuals. The University’s tall foreheads were well aware of this conflict and were resolved to deal with it—with preference to be given to the youngsters; as long as there remained a demand for rooms by young students for which the Residences were originally planned, these individuals should be given first consideration.

And what were the perceived benefits of Residence living that would appeal to the young clients of the early 1970s? For one thing, all Residence rooms were subsidized by the University by as much as 25 percent. Food service cost to Residence students was also subsidized by the University—and by all other students whether they realized it or not. Health services were more readily available to Residents, as were other assets including Dons and tutors, counsellors, and recreational and athletic facilities. In theory, the simplest and most obvious goal of the residence provider was to supply students with a convenient place to live. The location of the Residences within walking distance of classes and maid, caretaker, and food services were all provided for the sake of convenience to the students. Indeed, convenience was the major reason why some students came to Residence and at least part of the reason why any student would do so.

More Than a Convenience

For a certain category of students, “convenience” was not simply a matter of convenience. For those with physical disabilities, being admitted to the Residence could be a determining factor as to whether they could attend university at all.

For several decades, small numbers of students from across Canada had access to a special computer programming course for the blind at the U of M. Former students’ recollections confirm that blind individuals were housed in Taché Hall from the mid-1960s, and it is a matter of record that the program was still ongoing in 1985. The students enrolled in this course were housed in East Taché, and their classroom was located in close proximity to their lodgings. The latter were also situated so that their travels to the classroom and Dining Hall involved a minimum of difficulty. Individuals with seeing-eye dogs were usually assigned a room on the main floor with easy access to the outdoors for the dog. A student with a dog was normally not allocated a roommate who did not have a dog.
There were no elevators available to the students either moving in or moving out of Taché Hall in the 1970s. For some, like those moving into the far end of Fourth Floor, it could be quite a trek.

What a doll! A West sider, most likely, ready and primed for a Rez Hallowe’en or Sadie Hawkins dance. Note the style of furniture.

The capabilities of vision-impaired students were not to be underestimated. Some years later, the minutes of the Student Life Planning Committee noted that an outside organization was interested in donating a special ping-pong table for blind Residents. The RSAC might have to pay for the special paddles to go with the table, but otherwise there were no strings attached. The minutes describe this agenda item as “suspenseful,” perhaps because the committee members had difficulty grasping how blind persons could participate in such an activity as ping-pong. But perhaps this game was an excellent means of therapy for individuals handicapped by defective eyesight. In any event, the matter demonstrated that blind persons shouldn’t be stereotyped as incapable of certain activities that are taken for granted by sighted people.

For others, convenience was not the only goal of Residences. They were also communities, and one challenge was to promote good communities within the Residences. Students in Residence had more than simply a place to live—they also had fellow students to live with. Students’ academic work and emotional development suffered if some of their neighbours were too noisy for them to study or sleep, if the people around them were so asocial that they felt alone in a sea of people, or no recreational outlet was provided for their pent-up energies. An active community worked to prevent these problems and could make a world of difference in the overall quality of two Residences with equal physical facilities.

Also on the downside, there was cross-campus inequality in the standard of rooms, a limitation in places to eat and how much could be eaten, and a shortage for women’s housing. In Taché Hall especially, there was a shortage of single rooms. Noise and invasion of privacy continued to dog the serious student scholar, and there was still abiding dissatisfaction about restrictions on provisions for visitors, parties, hours, and activities.

Nor were human beings the only creatures known to inhabit Taché Hall; a number of people had reported the presence of ants in their room, and various household sprays were brought to bear on the problem. These proved ineffective on the intrusive fauna, and heavier artillery was called in to deal with the problem. Unfortunately the industrial-strength spray left a pungent odour, making it impossible for the human occupants to re-inhabit their rooms for some 12–18 hours after the spraying was done. And silverfish were happily ensconced in the basement rooms of “Rat Alley” in West Taché.

For all that, it was suggested that rural Manitobans, students of Aboriginal descent, and some overseas students found the problems of adjustment to university life less onerous in the special environment of a residence. More mainstream individuals [urban Canadians], however, were becoming disinclined to live in conventional residences, if reasonable alternatives existed.

Alcohol: A New Approach

From the very first day that Taché Hall was opened to students back in the mid-1910s, the use of intoxicating liquors on the premises was forbidden. Indeed, those who were given to the use of profane or obscene language and booze, or who were liable while at the Manitoba Agricultural College to give evidence of possessing these vices, were advised not to apply
to the institution in the first place! But if rules were made to be broken, then over the years this one was breached with monotonous regularity. A major problem was that virtually all regulations concerning liquor in Residence were unwritten, which made them very difficult and, at times, impossible to enforce. If liquor was legalized, such conditions could be set down and made available to all, and problems of enforcement would thereby be minimized.

Historians may well argue that prohibition of alcohol consumption has never worked. By the early 1970s, the Speechly/Taché Residents felt that the time-worn strictures regarding strong drink were obsolete. The legal drinking age was now 18, and the students couldn’t understand why they were not allowed to drink in their “home away from home,” when they were at liberty to do so in their own off-campus (family) homes the way day-students were. They felt that they had proven their capability of responsibly handling liquor, and so the RSAC formed a committee to study the legalization of liquor consumption in the Residence complex.

A referendum was held, and an overwhelming majority voted for legalizing liquor and the sale of it at Residence functions. In November of 1970, the University President agreed that Residence students should be permitted to have liquor in their rooms as long as they were over the minimum age limit in accordance with the Statutes of the Province of Manitoba. Control of the use of liquor would be in the first instance under the jurisdiction of the House Committee and, in the event of trouble, the Campus Police. It was suggested that a fine of up to $25 be imposed, and the President was prepared to confirm such fines on the recommendation of the House Committee.

Of course, the new deal brought its own set of regulations. It became the policy of the Department of Residence and Conference Services to allow individual students the opportunity to consume alcoholic beverages within their living environment. This policy was dependent on a philosophy of respect towards others. Possession or consumption of alcohol was to be done with mutual consideration of both occupants of each room. Loud or disruptive conduct, interferences with the maintenance of cleanliness of the Residence halls, or drinking habits injurious to the health or education of an individual or those around him/her resulting from poor drinking attitudes would not be condoned.

More specifically, the students were permitted to carry only unopened liquor to their rooms, and to consume it only in their rooms. This meant that one could not drink a bottle of beer or a glass of spirits in the halls, washrooms, lounges, or other public places.

Pops Retires

The 1971 Colour Night was a special one because the Residence community took the opportunity to bid a fond adieu to the retiring William “Pops” Lush [see Pops in the 1960s Memories Section]. Pops had been the custodian of the women’s dorm back to the days when East Taché still bore that distinction. The annual raid on the women’s digs was technically a misdemeanor, but Pops and his co-workers always managed somehow to go deaf and blind to the distant rumblings on the eve of
the fracas, and the unruly transgression onto the women’s turf proceeded as planned. Besides, what could a senior citizen possibly do to stem the oncoming tide? If the raucous rascals ended up getting fined, well …

**Off to a Bad Start**

In the opinion of one of the Dons, the 1971-72 year got off to a bad start in Rez. He stated in his mid-term report that the spirit and morale had been poor and no one was having much fun. This was unfortunate because young people needed a means of releasing pent-up emotions and tensions that invariably built up.

The Don identified three reasons for the lack of spirit that year. The first was the loss of the Canteen for the first few months of the school year. The Canteen used to be the focal point of Residence Life at night, where students could gather and talk and meet people. Without the Canteen, interaction between the three Houses was almost nil; instead of going to the Canteen, everyone sat around in their rooms. Even after the facility was back up and running, it only enjoyed limited success. Not having it right at the start of school adversely affected Residence Life.

Another reason for a poor start was the fact that the sports program was very late getting under way. Sports were a tremendous mixer and should have been started as soon as the term began. By the time the show was under way, the apathy had already begun to settle in.

And finally, water fights had been banned due to excessive water damage arising therefrom. Water fights had involved the greatest numbers of individuals and provided a significant context for tension release. Replacing water fights with positive alternatives was extremely difficult, and so the students took matters into their own hands by (a) getting drunk, and (b) destroying things—usually in tandem. Upon returning from the local pub they kicked doors, windows, and anything else they could kick. Instead of throwing water, they threw things.

These negatives were offset by other developments, however. In the 1970s, Speechly/Taché explored a new social structure, one in which the students enjoyed, for the first time, effective input in the decision-making process. These were the most glorious days of the RSAC’s history; the Council exercised its authority with a sense of purpose and served the Residents Students’ Association at a time when no one else was willing to do so.

Interestingly, Residence students not only formed their own in-house governing bodies, but RSAC also had representation on equivalent campus-wide committees as well.

**A Peace Treaty**

Aiding the adjacent women’s quarters by the tin-pot infantry from Taché Hall was, of course, a tradition that went back years, but when the 1970s dawned there were no fewer than five student Residences on the U of M campus.

Inevitably, inter-tribal conflict erupted between these entities from time-to-time, and it finally got to the point where enough was enough: on October 13, 1972 representatives of Taché Hall, Mary Speechly Hall, St. Andrew’s College, St. John’s College, and University College, acting on behalf of their respective resident student associations, agreed that the practice of Inter-Residence raids,
sponsored by resident student associations, their executives, Dons, Proctors, or any other officials of the Residences, would cease and desist retroactive to October 1, 1972. It was further agreed that raids upon other Residences by individuals or groups would not be encouraged, supported, or condoned by any of the residence associations.

**Open House**

The Open House arrangements continued to evolve during the 1970s. By 1972, the students were pushing for continuous (seven days a week) 24-hour open house in Taché Hall. In the recent past, 24-hour weekend Open Houses had been instituted, with no “objectionable incidents” having occurred, and the next obvious step was to extend these provisions for the entire week.

The Director of Residences had his reservations about the idea right from the outset. Might there not be a conflict between roommates if one wanted to entertain a girl in the room and the roommate disagreed and would have to relocate elsewhere temporarily? What about washroom facilities for female visitors—were they to go to the public facilities on the lower floors or simply use the men’s washroom on each floor? Had the feelings of those who voted “nay,” or did not vote at all, been considered? Having females in their corridors at all hours of the day and night was not what they had signed up for at the beginning of the term. In the end, the majority of students voted in favour of the 24-hour “full-meal deal,” with the assurance that the Quiet Hours regulation and the escort system would remain in effect.

**Whither Taché Hall?**

The 1970s were also a time for serious reflection about the long term. When the University of Manitoba joined the Manitoba Agricultural College, the Residence building was the major activity centre for the fledgling campus. With two gyms, two swimming pools (plunge baths), a dining room, an auditorium, and lounges, it had formed not only the residential, but also the social, heart of the University; it was intimately involved in all the affairs of the institution. It housed the Dean of Men, and its members contributed much to the social, cultural, recreational, and academic life of the institution.

The central role of the Residence building, and the spirit of pride, belonging, and importance long felt by its patrons, began its decline in the latter half of the 1940s. Once the focus of the sports program on campus, this distinction was surrendered in 1949 to a large hangar relocated
The frequent dances held in the Auditorium made for many dates and relationships, such as this well-dressed, affectionate couple sporting bold Seventies apparel.

The daily wait in the food line was one of the downsides of Residence Life, especially if you had a 1:15 pm class. It was best to be early, if you could.

from a wartime air station and dubbed the East and West Bison Gyms. To this was added an annex that included dining facilities that drew customers away from the Cafeteria (Oak Room) in the Centre Block. The Auditorium, hitherto the only assembly hall on campus, also saw its importance diminish with the construction of newer and better-equipped theatres. The two swimming pools were filled in after WW II, and Canteens were built over top of them.

Thus, the focus of attention and activity gradually shifted away from the Residence building, and rather than being the centre of social and academic activities, the place had, by the beginning of the 1970s, assumed the identity of a dormitory in the limited sense that the word normally implies. At the same time, ongoing challenges faced the running of the Taché Hall enterprise. One of them was the question of room/board rate increases. Very early in the decade, a body known as the “Presidential Advisory Committee on Housing” undertook to study the issue in a time of rapidly rising operating expenses. Following the “user pay” model, it was axiomatic that some or all of these costs would have to be borne by the students living in Residence.

But there was a problem with this line of thinking: an increase in rates without complementary financial assistance could lead to reduced occupancy and hence to a greater deficit. There was also a concern over the quality of the Taché living conditions; many of the Committee members felt that it was the University’s responsibility to ensure that at least minimal standards were maintained. At the time, Taché Hall could be regarded as sub-standard accommodation, particularly in the areas of heating, lighting, and toilet facilities. The occupancy rates suggested that it was no longer attractive to students.

The Committee recommended that there be no increase in weekly room rates for Taché Hall for 1972-73 unless immediate appropriate renovations were made to raise the physical standards of the building to an acceptable level. If the cost of renovation turned out to be prohibitive, or if it was impossible to reduce operating costs to a level that would allow a reasonable room rate to be charged, then the operation of it as a Residence should be phased out! Not only was this proposal radical; it was also prophetic, for nearly four decades later we would indeed see Taché Hall discontinued as a Residence and converted to entirely different purposes.

Pembina Hall

The problems that confronted the RSAC were many and varied: individual behaviour and discipline inside the building proper, the ever-present food quality/quantity issues, and Residence student parking presented myriad ongoing challenges.

The minutes of the Pembina Hall Food Committee occasionally bear witness to some rather intriguing perceptions harboured by certain of its members, not to mention the measures taken to ensure that things ran smoothly in the eatery. For example, there was a notion that microwave ovens in the vending areas might be dangerous because the radiation given off could cause reproductive sterility in males! There was also a concern that the emissions would break
down nutrients in foods. To reassure the anxious parties, the suggestion was made to contact the Public Health Department on the matter. And it was announced that bouncers(!) would (again) be placed in Pembina Hall to prevent people from entering via the back doors and to stop patrons from taking food from the Dining Hall [see Forbidden Fruit in the 1970s Memories Section].

Until 1973, the provision of victuals to the Residence population was entirely an in-house affair. But in August of that year, the “Powers That Be” contracted the administration of the food services to Saga Canadian Management Service Ltd, a humanistic catering company with an impressive reputation at Carleton University, the University of New Brunswick, and at other campuses across the country. Saga was chosen by a Food Services committee that had been set up to find a replacement for Miss Louise Smith, Director of Food Services (hitherto “Residence Dietitian”) who wished to retire. Miss Smith had announced her intention to step down several years previous, but the University was unable to find a suitable replacement for her. The position was advertised and a few applicants interviewed, but none met the required standard. The decision was then taken to look into the possibility of bringing in management consultants from a private food-service company operating in Canada, and the Food Services Selection Committee was put in place.

The 1970s saw further efforts to improve the eating arrangements for Tachéites. Effective the fall term of 1973, Residence students were permitted to use their meal cards not only in Pembina Hall, but alternatively in University Centre as well.

Freshie Week/Month

The RSAC was very active in social programming, an abdication to the students due largely to the disinterest of the contemporary Administration. In return for the RSAC’s assuming responsibility for discipline, the Residence Administration allowed the Council considerable freedom in social matters. A long-standing tradition was (and is) the annual Rez Freshie Week. By 1973, Freshie “Week” was morphing into the rather more ambitious “Freshie Month” and would eventually be so designated.

Here is an extract from one of the Freshie Week/Month schedules from the early 1970s that gives an idea of the range of activities that were carried out under the program [Note: for a truly extraordinary Freshie Week event, though not a brain-child of the Residence community but certainly enjoyed by many Resbians, see Operation Freshie in the 1950s Memories Section].

Freshie Week is intended to provide a program of orientation to all first-year students. The Resident Students’ Association of Taché and Mary Speechly Halls provides a special program for their Residents apart from the University of Manitoba Students’ Union program. The following is a list and explanation of events planned by your Residence.

- On September 13 there will be a party in the pool on campus. Activities, games, etc. will be organized from 7 – 9 pm.
- A hootenanny is planned for the 14th with food and beverages available beginning at 9 pm in the Canteen.
- The 15th is a pizza party subsidized by the Residence so it will be cheaper for you—approximately 50¢.
- 16th – at about 2:30 pm, Mary Speechly will be holding her [sic] annual Dean of Women’s Tea. This is a fashion show done by the girls (Floor Reps and Convenors) of Mary Speechly Hall. Afterwards, tea and cookies will be served. At 9 pm a wiener roast will be held on the river bank.
- 17th – there will be a movie marathon in the Aud.
- 18th – a car wash and scavenger hunt are going to be held in the afternoon, to be followed by a dance at University College in the evening.
- 19th – for your benefit in becoming acquainted with Winnipeg, a bus tour of the city will be held in the afternoon.
- 21st – a PJ party is to be held in one of the Taché gyms. Actual PJs and the like are to be worn.

A Tea & Fashion Show during Freshie Week. This silver tea set was still in use for special events around campus in 2011 when Taché Hall closed its doors.
A “reverse-couple” at a function in the Aud, likely Hallowe’en, Sadie Hawkin’s, or a 1950s Greaser Dance. It is, of course, a female wearing the jeans and plaid shirt.

A car wash behind Taché Hall during Freshie Week.

During the campus wide Strike of 1973, Residents helped to cook meals and to staff the servery line.

A Resident staffing the Pembina Hall deep-fryer station during the 1973 support staff strike.

One of the somewhat less-special memories of the 1970s was the campus-wide strike in October 1973 that left the Resbians without food, maid, and cleaning services for three weeks. With the guidance of the RSAC, action plans were devised and put in place to help with cooking and serving in Pembina Hall and in cleaning the Houses.

The students pitched in, and the inconveniences were offset by the feeling of solidarity and sense of community that often comes when a large group finds itself facing a common challenge.

Strike!

For specific times and locations of all events, check notices posted around the Residences.

Freshie Week is organized by the seniors for the frosh. It is done for your benefit. It is your chance to meet and enjoy some of the people you will be living with for an entire year, maybe more. Therefore only you can make your year in Residence a success. Come out and participate, you aren’t alone.

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Let the Shows Begin

In an academic setting, what could sound more mom ’n’ apple pie than the Festival of Life and Learning? How about Peace In Our Time? And that’s exactly what the Taché Hall Residents wanted when said Festival held some of its events in the Residence Auditorium in early 1974.

Unfortunately, there was evidence of unwanted and unwelcome intruders into the domiciles during major events that took place in the Aud that year, notwithstanding that the UMSU Festival Committee was given to understand that they were to exercise a certain level of control over the facility, and that they were to keep unauthorized people out of the dormitory wings. These controls did not materialize, but intrusions and vandalism did. The Director of Residences noted that disturbances of this nature had occurred every year during the Festival, and each time the Residence students protested the invasion of their privacy. Incidents such as these emphasized time and again a basic flaw in the design of the Residence building. Although the Auditorium was physically an integral component of the Residence structure, it was also a University asset and not one set aside for the exclusive use of the Residence students.

Also that year, the band KISS played in the Auditorium on February 8, 1974. As one fan remembers of the event, …

The first time that I had the good fortune to see the mighty rock machine known as KISS play was I believe in 1973 or 1974 at Taché Hall on a cold February night during the annual Festival of Life and Learning as an opening act with Mood Jga Jga as the headliner, for FREE ... go figure ... methinks whoever booked that lineup had a great sense of humor. I was in Grade 10 or 11 at the time and was completely blown away by the wild and crazy rock show these guys brought to the stage ... pyrotechnics, make-up, loud as hell, Gene’s tongue ... as a package it was everything Rock and Roll was meant to be.

Other music groups—local and non-local—performed in the Auditorium, like Uriah Heep, Queen City Kids, and The Guess Who, and even the popular band The Tragically Hip. Nor were these the first performers of note to make an appearance in the Aud; as stated in the 1960s Memories Section, on one occasion in 1967 the renowned Leonard Cohen, accompanying himself on his acoustic guitar, quietly played and sang to an appreciative seventy-five-member audience.

A Humanitarian Project

It’s probably correct to say that the RSA was never “rolling in dough,” but that did not stop it from adopting a resolution in early 1974 that exemplified the outward-looking, socially-responsible side of the organization.

Under Article 15 of the Constitution, it was agreed that the Association would contract with the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada to support a foster child—a ten-year-old boy in India. This included provision of funds required for the child’s support and for any eventualities that arose while the contract was in effect. Communication with the child would be ongoing throughout the year, including during the summer months. The contract was to be in effect until the individual was 18 years of age, whereupon the RSAC would decide to renew the contract with the USC or terminate the agreement. Less than two years later, word was received that the child no longer needed the RSAC support, and it was decided to seek a foster child or suitable alternative charity in Canada to which donations would be made. A foster child was located in Manitoba, and $200 of proceeds from the 1975 Hallowe’en Dance was earmarked for this charitable fund.

More About Water Fights

One issue that never wanted to go away was the water fight. Long outlawed by They Who Would Be (Dis)Obeyed, water fights were still an ongoing matter of concern in February 1974 when the Associate Director, Men’s Residence promulgated an open letter on the subject, specifically, the increasing frequency of such engagements. To the participants, water fights were an excellent means of blowing off steam and instilling camaraderie.
amongst allies and fellow combatants. The Associate Director, however, pointed out that there were three over-riding problems with water fights, to wit, paint and plaster damage to the building, disturbance to those who rightfully sought not to participate, and extra janitorial work.

The cost of damage repairs was felt directly by the following year’s Residents whose fees were determined partially by the previous year’s revenue-versus-cost picture. Besides the damage, water fights caused a considerable nuisance to the many students who did not take part in the fights and could not study or sleep in their own rooms while the clashes were going on. The Landlord and Tenant Act of Manitoba decreed that no tenant shall be a nuisance and disturbance to other tenants in a building. Failure to abide by this restriction could legally result in eviction on five days notice, or a $25 to $100 fine for a first conviction and a $50 to $200 fine for a second conviction.

And finally, the caretakers had to mop up the day following the water fight, pulling them away from their normal duties and hence a loss of their services to the Residents-at-large.

The Condo Lounge

The W.J. Condo Residence Lounge (named for Willard J. Condo, Comptroller and for many years, the central Administration’s overseer of the Residence) was another project of the RSAC, conceived and undertaken by the students themselves. The lounge occupied 2,800 square feet in a former Canteen in the basement of the Centre Block, and was well used by Residents of Taché and Mary Speechly Halls. It had facilities for pool, snooker, air hockey, and ping-pong. Food and refreshments could be purchased from a concession, and Residents and their guests could relax in front of a large-screen TV.

The Condo Lounge was officially opened in a ceremony held on September 4, 1974. Mr. Rob Kenyon, President of the Resident Students’ Association, presided at the opening. Mr. Jim Hale, Past-President of the Association, reviewed the background leading up to the opening of the lounge and thanked the many people associated with the planning and building of it, including the Residents themselves who were “the problem that created this solution.”

The Lounge was officially opened by President Sirluck. Before cutting the ribbon, Dr. Sirluck said that he was pleased that the Residents finally had a handsome and serviceable lounge. In his remarks, he expressed pleasure “at the happy and appropriate thought to name it after Bill Condo who is just about to finish a period of distinguished service to the University, and I cannot think of a better way to end this association.” Mr. Condo recalled that when he joined the University 22 years previous, “the space was a Cafeteria with green walls and pillars—not very attractive. In those days, men and women only got together for the Christmas tea.” He told the Residents that it was a great privilege to be honoured by the students in this way.

A bronze plaque was mounted in the lounge, indicating that it has been dedicated to “W.J. Condo, Vice-President (Administration) from 1952 to 1974. A good man who did a great job for our residence and the university.”

Mr. Condo retired on December 31, 1974. The Lounge, meanwhile, has survived to this day.
through the determination of the various student councils until Taché Hall ceased to function as a Residence. Though the funding was arranged by the Administration, the project was sustained by the Residence students themselves.

**Karsh Photo Contest**

Similarly, the Karsh Photo Contest is a lasting monument to the enterprise of a 1970s student. In the 1940s, internationally acclaimed photographer Yousuf Karsh’s work attracted the attention of varied celebrities, but on December 30, 1941 his place in history was sealed when he photographed Winston Churchill, after Churchill gave a speech to the Canadian House of Commons in Ottawa. This image of Churchill brought Karsh international prominence and is claimed to be the most reproduced photographic portrait in history.

The story is often told of how Karsh created his famous portrait of Churchill during the early years of World War II. Churchill, the British Prime Minister, had just addressed the Canadian Parliament and Karsh was there to record one of the Century’s great leaders. “He was in no mood for portraiture and two minutes were all that he would allow me as he passed from the House of Commons chamber to an anteroom,” Karsh wrote in *Faces of Our Time*. “Two niggardly minutes in which I must try to put on film a man who had already written or inspired a library of books, baffled all his biographers, filled the world with his fame, and me, on this occasion, with dread.”

Churchill marched into the room scowling, “regarding my camera as he might regard the German enemy.” His expression suited Karsh perfectly, but the cigar stuck between his teeth seemed incompatible with such a solemn and formal occasion. “Instinctively, I removed the cigar. At this the Churchillian scowl deepened, the head was thrust forward belligerently, and the hand placed on the hip in an attitude of anger.”

The image captured Churchill and the Britain of the time perfectly—defiant and unconquerable. Churchill later said to him, “You can even make a roaring lion stand still to be photographed.” In response to that remark, Karsh titled the photograph, *The Roaring Lion*.

In 1974, Tony Mah, President of the Residence Photo Club, took the bold step of inviting Yousuf Karsh to judge the Residence Photo Competition. Not only did Karsh accept the invitation, but he also donated to the Residence one of only four prints of his famous photograph of Winston Churchill. These are special memories of a special time.

**Admissions Policy**

At this time, a matter being considered by the Presidential Committee on Housing was the Residence Admissions Policy. Foreign students had long been a visible minority on Canadian campuses, and the population of Taché Hall was no exception. Like all other facets of running a large university, periodic reviews were undertaken to ensure that the institution was keeping up with the times. The outcome of this one is interesting because it speaks to the preferred demographics of the Taché population.

To begin, all Residents had to be full-time students. First priority would be given to disabled individuals judged by the Student Health Service

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**From 1974 to the last year in 2011, Residents frequently gathered in Condo Lounge, later known as Club Condo, for various events or just to relax and unwind. Here the gathered are enjoying a movie night.**

**Tony Mah, showing the 1974 Colour Night crowd the signed Yousuf Karsh photo of Winston Churchill, donated by Karsh to the Residence Photography Club.**
The demographics of the 550+ Residents in Taché Hall in 1974 (number of students in brackets).

- Canada (434)
- Hong Kong (80)
- Malaysia (9)
- Indonesia (8)
- USA (6)
- India (3)
- West Indies (3)
- Brunei (2)
- Egypt (2)
- Germany (2)
- Greece (2)
- Guyana (2)
- Thailand (2)
- Australia (1)
- France (1)
- Ghana (1)
- Iran (1)
- Japan (1)
- Kenya (1)
- Mexico (1)
- Nigeria (1)
- Philippines (1)
- Sudan (1)
- Turkey (1)
- Vietnam (1)

and the Director of Residences to be sufficiently independent for Residence Life. The second priority went to members of the Residence student government. Then, whenever possible, 20% of the available spaces would be reserved for overseas students. Of these, one-third would go to persons from one geographical area. Another 20% of available spaces would be reserved for non-Manitoban Canadians, and the remaining 60% would be set aside for Manitobans.

A second layer of criteria was based on students’ positions in their programs of study. That is, 50% of the total available spaces would be reserved for freshmen. Then, 40% would be reserved for senior students who had previously lived in the same Residence for which they were applying. The remaining 10% of the spaces would be reserved for senior students who had not previously lived in the Residence for which they were applying.

A final layer of priorities was based on age and place of origin: first priority went to non-Winnipeg students under 30 years of age. Second in line were Winnipeg students under 30, and lowest in priority were students over 30 years of age.

Given that universities are known to be gathering places for people from all over the world, it is to be expected that residences will reflect that diversity. [See sidebar]

Parking Problems

Vandalism had become a problem for students who parked their cars on campus overnight 24/7. Jockeying with the Administration for permanent, consolidated parking spaces close to the Residences in the interests of vehicle security was seen as a priority for the RSAC representative on the University of Manitoba Parking Committee. Installation of floodlights in the Residence parking lot had been approved back in December of 1963. The night watchman had not been able to include the parking lot in his rounds at the time, but the addition of another watchman was in the works, and with his arrival, the parking lot would be added to his tour of duty. Nonetheless, the problems continued on into the 1970s.

Property Insurance

If a Resident’s personal property was stolen, broken, or had mysteriously disappeared, the University assumed no responsibility for same. With one limited exception covered by a fire insurance policy, the University did not carry insurance against losses of students’ personal property. The fire insurance policy provided for losses, to a maximum of $500, due to fire or the normal extended coverages provided by a fire policy, but excluded riot, vandalism, or malicious acts. Accordingly, the student body was advised to refer to their own, or their parents’, property floater or homeowner’s policy to ascertain what coverage was extended to items of personal property located on the Residence premises.

Before leaving the general topic of pillage and plunder, it must be acknowledged that Residents were not the only culprits. The University campus was situated cheek-by-jowl near a suburban neighbourhood, and local brats also took their hand from time-to-time at rifling vending machines in the Residence complex and stealing personal property. It was always a good idea to lock one’s door when not occupying one’s room.
RSAC Committees

The shortcomings of committee work, in general, have been summed up in the old adage, “A camel is a horse designed by a committee.” That worrisome stereotype didn’t diminish the determination of the RSAC, which had many committees. Reference to committees has been frequent in the foregoing pages and will continue to appear in those that follow. It’s worth summarizing them here, because their existence demonstrates the substance and complexities of student government in a university sub-institution the size of the Speechly/Taché Residence complex in the mid-1970s.

All work and no play makes Jack/Jill a dull boy/girl, and so due provision had to be made for entertainment and recreational diversions within the Residence community. A number of standing committees existed to provide a range of activities suitable to a mixed population of young people. The programming of all Residence dances, booking of orchestras, and arranging for dance attendants (“gate-keepers”) were the key functions of the Dance and Social Committee.

If dancing wasn’t your game, perhaps the Sunday night movie was. The Film Selection Committee was responsible for deciding which movies would be shown, and for budgeting the rental of same.

The Facilities Committee then took over, receiving and attending to the shipping of the rented films. This group also lined up not only the movie projectionists, but the necessary stage hands and technicians for all Residence productions. The upkeep and repair of audio and visual equipments was likewise a Facilities responsibility. The Publicity Committee took in hand the advertisement of all RSAC functions and the publicizing of all Residence activities.

In a population approaching 800 individuals, talent abounded; and to provide a context for the performing arts, one committee in particular—Drama & Stage—did the honours. This group was responsible for all stage productions of the RSAC, including organizing and staging dramatic plays if sufficient participatory interest was shown. More firmly established were the annual Variety Night talent shows, of which two were produced each year in concert (no pun intended) with the Facilities contingent.

Freshie Month had its own committee, comprising the Presidents of each House as chairpersons, the Dance and Social Committee Vice-President, and the Secretaries of the three Houses. The various mandates of the Freshie Month Committee included production of the Freshie Handbook and the Residence Directory with the cooperation of the House Secretaries and the Yearbook Committee Chairperson. Beyond that, the Freshie Month Committee undertook to organize and execute all activities during Residence Freshie Month.

Speaking of the Yearbook Committee, a two-fold task was involved here: the actual production of the publication itself, and solicitation of funds from advertisers to cover the printing costs. The other major publication of the RSAC was The Perspective which also had its own committee. The aim was to publish at least six issues per year consisting of current Residence events and articles of interest to members of the Residence community. The newsletter was funded, in part, by Council;
as with the yearbook, revenues were also to be sought from prospective advertisers.

With two in-house gymnasia available and a roofed skating arena right next door, there was ample opportunity for the RSAC to set up and coordinate sports programs. To make them come about, the Sports Committee yearly organized an athletic program within the Residence complex, arranged events outside of the Residences proper, provided officials/referees and arranged for the payment of their fees, and purchased and maintained all in-house equipment and facilities.

When not exercising their bodies, the student athletes (and all the other members of the Association) could nurture their minds by attending the library in Taché Hall that had been put in place back in the late 1960s. This asset was financed and maintained by the Library Committee with the assistance of the head of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library.

Not all the RSAC committees were oriented toward the sorts of elective-type activities and diversions, and the resources to sustain them, as just described. To ensure that all members of the Resident Students’ Association were well fed and healthy, a Foods Committee was set up. Its functions were to gather suggestions and complaints concerning food and the presentation of same to the Food Services Manager. This could be accomplished through referenda, and also by posting sheets on which persons could list their views. In addition to the standard fare, various occasions and functions (Colour Night, for example) called for special meals, and these were organized by the Foods Committee. The chairperson or his/her delegate was responsible for representing the RSAC on the University Foods Committee.

In order for individuals to sit on any of the above committees, there had to be provisions for them to apply and have their applications duly considered before selections could be made. Ergo, the existence of an Applications Committee! Add to all this the three House Committees, and truly, the Resident Students’ Association of the University of Manitoba was awash with committees. And it must have worked, because nary a camel was anywhere to be seen within the precincts of the Speechly/Taché/Pembina Hall complex of our alma mater.

The Residence Handbook

A familiar publication for many years had been the Residence Handbook. This introduction to Residence living, addressed principally to freshmen, provides an interesting overview of Residence culture and expectations made of the individual occupant of Taché Hall. The partial text of one of these handbooks, undated but apparently produced in about 1975, is transcribed below:

RSAC RESIDENCE HANDBOOK

Welcome to Mary Speechly–Taché Hall Res Complex. This booklet is designed to acquaint everyone entering Res with our activities and various aspects of res life.

This is your home for eight months so please treat it as such. I hope your stay here is pleasant and enjoyable. You are the one who will make life in res the way you want it.

Thank you.
Terry Hayward, RSA Pres
Student Government in Residence
The students in this Residence are in charge of their own discipline, their social program, and athletic program. In all of these, we are encouraged by the University Administration, as long as we show a reasonable amount of responsibility. This responsibility lies with all members of Residence.
An explanation of the structure of student government within the Residence might help you to understand its mode of operation. The person who will affect you mostly on a day to day basis is your Floor Rep. His or her main duty is to keep reasonable quiet and order on his floor, though his requests are valid anywhere. Each Floor Rep is a member of his or her respective House Committee, the three houses being Mary Speechly Hall, Taché Hall West, and Taché Hall East.
There is on each of these House Committees an elected President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer who appoint the Floor Reps from a number of applicants. The House Committees concern themselves with social functions, disciplinary problems, and other matters pertaining to the individual Houses.
Coordinating the activities and representing the Residence Complex as a whole in external matters is the Resident Students’ Association Committee’s (RSAC) concern. This has four elected members: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary who are the executive. Also on this committee are the Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and Secretary Treasurers of each of the three Houses, and appointed members: (1) Sports Chairman, (2) Drama and Stage Director, (3) Dance and Social Chairman, (4) Publicity Director, (5) Food Chairman, (6) Yearbook Editor, (7) Newsletter Editor, (8) Photography Chairman, and (9) Librarian.

Dons: “The Beautiful People”
Who are your Residence Dons? They are people who have been active in past Residence activities and know what is going on in Res. So if you have any problems or queries, don’t hesitate to ask your Don. [Editor’s note: It appears that this 1975 edition of the Handbook is an adaptation of an earlier one, since by the mid-1970s the Dons had been replaced by Proctors in the Speechly/Taché complex.]

Discipline and Residence Rules
The most important liberty we possess in Residence is that of disciplining ourselves. We believe that as university students we possess enough self-discipline to ensure reasonable behaviour within the Residence. Any rules that are enforced in Residence are designed to protect the rights of the individual and are for the most part along the lines of common sense and decency.

Open House Hours
These are the hours in which escorted guys are allowed in girls’ rooms and girls in the guys’ rooms. Mary Speechly employs the escort system which means that every guy must have an escort during open house hours to be allowed on any floor other than the main floor. This system is also in effect for all Open Houses during weekdays in Taché.

Mary Speechly Hall
Monday to Thursday No Open House hours
Friday 5 pm to 3 am
Saturday 12 noon to 3 am
Sunday 1 pm to 10 pm

Taché Hall
Monday to Thursday 1 pm to 11 pm
Friday 1 pm to Sunday midnight (i.e., 24 hours open house on the weekend)

These hours were on a trial period last year and although the results were favourable it is really up to the students to make it work.

Quiet Hours is self-explanatory and the same for all three Houses.
Sunday to Thursday 7 pm to 11 pm and after 12
Friday to Saturday After 1 am

Liquor Regulations
Open liquor is not allowed anywhere but in the rooms.

Miscellaneous Rules
• Reasonable quiet is expected during Quiet Hours, study hours, and sleeping hours.
• Throwing water, milk and any objects down stairwells, in halls, out of windows, or into rooms is not allowed.
• Spitting down stairwells and out of windows is not allowed.
• Throwing cigarettes in the lounges or TV rooms is not allowed.
• Fighting is forbidden.
Members of the opposite sex are not allowed in Residence rooms except during Open Houses.

Continual harassment of an individual will be dealt with, especially if a complaint is made.

Stealing and vandalism of any sort will result in fines or possible expulsion.

Running shoes, socks, or barefeet are the only kinds of footwear allowed in the West Gym.

Equipment borrowed from the Equipment Room must be returned within 24 hours.

Board tickets must be presented at all meals. Use of another person's board ticket will bring fines of $5 to both persons involved.

No pets allowed.

No cooking in rooms allowed.

Willful damage of private or University property will result in fines proportionate to replacement cost of that property.

Infringement of rules will result in disciplinary action. A fine system is our primary disciplinary device, with respect to the fines varying in amount with the severity of the offence.

**Telephone Intercom**

There are intercoms in both TH and MSH. During the hours it is open (hours to be posted), the telephone monitor uses a buzzer to contact the room. The person whose name first appears in the alphabet has one buzz and the other roommate has two buzzes. Three buzzes indicate that there is a caller at the Equipment Room. Be sure to buzz the monitor back using your buzzer beside your door. Telephones are located at the end of each hallway.

In the MSH lobby there is a desk with a telephone. The telephone monitor calls girls to inform them of phone calls or callers. The girls reply by pushing the button on the speaker in the wall of their room.

**Maid [Service]**

Once a week your bed linens and rooms are cleaned.

**Meals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Hot Breakfast</th>
<th>Cold Breakfast</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Dinner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday through Friday</td>
<td>7:30 to 8:30 am</td>
<td>8:30 to 9:00 am</td>
<td>11:30 to 1:45 pm</td>
<td>5:00 to 6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Saturday

- Hot Breakfast: 8:15 to 9:00 am
- Cold Breakfast: 9:00 to 10:00 am
- Lunch: 11:30 to 1:15 pm
- Dinner: 5:00 to 6:00 pm

Sundays and Holidays

- Breakfast: 8:15 to 9:00 am
- Lunch: 12:00 to 1:15 pm
- Dinner: 5:00 to 6:00 pm

Any dress is allowed at meals except shorts and no [sic] barefeet.

**Sports**

Res sports include many areas of athletic activity such as hockey, badminton, basketball, volleyball, and table tennis. Res teams also compete in the University intramural league in hockey, basketball, and volleyball. Individual and team awards are presented annually at Colour Night.

**Dance and Social**

The Dance and Social Committee arranges for dances during the year, and for special events such as Hallowe'en and Christmas. It also arranges for a movie every Sunday night.

**Newsletter and Yearbook**

Besides keeping Residents informed of events and issues and providing some permanent record of the year, the newsletter and yearbook provide excellent opportunities for many to participate.

**Photography Club**


Other activities include two Variety Nights during the year and a Glee Club and Drama Club if enough interest is shown.

It is hoped that all Res students will participate in as many activities as possible. It's up to you to make this the best year yet.
The M.A. Kains Award

The M.A. Kains Residential Scholarship fund was instituted in 1976 by the Residence students of Taché and Mary Speechly Halls in conjunction with the University of Manitoba Food Service Saga Foods. It honoured Mr. M.A. Kains, who served as Director of Residences from 1964 until 1976. The scholarship consisted of an annual monetary award to one member of the Resident Students’ Association who, in an unselfish and willing manner and in any way, contributed most to Residence Life without receiving compensation. Nominees for the award, application guidelines, qualifications for receipt of the award, and the dollar amount were to be determined by a duly-appointed M.A. Kains Scholarship Selection Committee, with specifics being outlined and published annually for all Residence students.

East Taché Goes Co-Ed

The Residents played a significant role in the introduction of a co-educational option to Taché Hall, an idea that had initially surfaced at least as far back as 1972. Because the number of rooms for women campus-wide was fewer than those reserved for men, and because many more women than could be accommodated were applying to Residence, consideration had to be given to having part of Taché Hall set aside for women as had been the case before 1964. Only this time there was a difference: in the 1976-77 academic year, East Taché became the first co-ed House in the complex—2nd and 4th East became women’s floors, and 1st and 3rd were men’s floors. This arrangement was amended the following year, so that instead of floor-by-floor separation there was a vertical split, i.e., half a floor/wing was for men and the other half was for women.

During the second term of 1976-77, an opinion poll on co-ed Residence was taken. The results showed that both East and West Taché were highly in favour of it in all three Houses. Mary Speechly Hall was split on the issue of itself going co-ed, indicating a preference for the co-ed arrangement to continue in East Taché only. Most persons who commented felt that the co-ed Residence was a more natural and realistic situation and was beneficial to both genders as an important part of the maturing process and in developing attitudes towards persons of the opposite sex.

Nonetheless, some individuals (particularly in West Taché) felt that a portion of the building should be kept exclusively for males. Loss of privacy was an issue, as was the view among some that co-ed status would infringe on their freedom; it would require that they be less “rowdy” and that they would need to watch their language. Co-ed Residence, they feared, would result in a loss of spirit and inter-House rivalry, and that Taché Hall might turn into an apathetic mass of people “like University College”!

Thus, perhaps contrary to what one might expect, not all Resbians were in a headlong rush to go co-ed. However, there were practical matters to be taken into account as well. The significantly less living space set aside on campus for women compared to that available for men, and the increasing demand for female accommodation,
augured well for eventual co-ed expansion into West Taché. As of early 1977, meanwhile, West House was all-male, East House was co-ed, and Mary Speechly Hall was all-female.

**Summer Programming**

Unless one is careful, the year-in, year-out goings-on in Taché Hall might focus solely on the regular session that spanned the fall, winter, and early spring. However, the University was a year-round operation that also saw course programs and other activities taking place in the inter-session and summer months (May through late August), and many of the participating students stayed in Residence.

Recognizing the potential revenue possible through the use of the University’s extensive facilities during the summer, the position of Conference Coordinator was created to promote and coordinate the use of these assets campus-wide by conferring groups. There were three “rate groups,” the lowest being for conferences sponsored entirely within and for the U of M community. A middle rate was available for academic conventions with a campus sponsor, and the highest rate went to groups with no campus sponsor. The University was open to conferences between May 1 and August 31.

In 1976, the role of Conference Coordinator was assumed by the Associate Director of Residence as part of her job. On offer were accommodation in either Mary Speechly Hall, University College Residence, or Taché Hall (the two private college residences could also be booked if space was available); three meal tickets per day; and the use of the University’s sports facilities. Taché Hall was usually filled last, presumably because it was the oldest of the dormitory buildings, and student and youth groups were regularly booked into Taché at a lower rate.

But one has to ask: was there something about Taché Hall that turned some rule-followers into rule-breakers—like the participants in a Church Conference, for example? One would think that angelic behaviour would have been the hallmark of such an august flock … but not always, it would seem. Sometimes they behaved like … well … Residence students. In July of 1977 the Associate Director of Residence requested that the Conference Coordinator have a word with the supervisors of the group, asking that their members not be allowed to detonate explosives (firecrackers) in the Residence, throw water on people from the third floor over the West Main Entrance, play sports (e.g., football, soccer) on the premises that would be more appropriate as outdoor activities, or create unnecessary messes by dumping large amounts of paper towelling over the stairwell railing into the basement floor.

Of course, not all the summertime patrons of Taché Hall were young church-goers. More and more conferences were being held on campus, and participants were housed in Taché Hall. Some conventions were academic in nature and, as such, were well-suited to a campus setting. Using the University facilities was a lot cheaper than holding the same gatherings downtown, and hosting conference participants meant that it cost less for students during the subsequent regular academic session. For example, conference bookings for the summer of 1977 reduced the cost of each student’s room by $65 for the 1977-78 school year. It was estimated that, with the number of
days booked for the 1978 summer, a student would avoid an $80 increase in room and board rates that varied between $1,350 and $1,600 per school year. In the summer of 1977, Taché Hall netted $28,003 in “room sales.”

### Summer Hostelling

In the summer of 1977, East Taché's first and second floors housed the Canadian Hostelling Association. A high rate of youth unemployment was quite likely the major reason for the upsurge in hostel use across the country. Supported by the Secretary of State, the Hostelling Association created hostels across Canada for traveling students (and students of travel), and the Winnipeg hostel was sited in Taché Hall.

Only rooms were available to the hostellers; meals could be had in the Cafeteria in University Centre. Trespassers and building security were always a matter of concern for Residents, and in the warm summer months when more people were out and about, care had be taken to deal with them. The Campus Police were called upon to conduct intermittent patrols through the Speechly/Taché complex, and were directed to approach and assist persons who looked lost or out of place. Summer Residents were also requested to keep an eye out for individuals who did not appear to belong in the building. The best security was the presence of students: if a stranger was found loitering, he could be asked if he needed help. If he was up to no good, he was most likely to leave upon being approached.

### Alcohol: BYOB

By the later 1970s, in addition to consumption of alcohol in individuals’ rooms, Residents were now allowed to “bring your own booze” (BYOB) and imbibe in designated party rooms (e.g., the Condo Lounge [in effect by 1977], the West and East House Lounges). These rooms were regarded as extensions of domiciles, a practice used in off-campus apartment buildings where party rooms could be rented by the tenants. Parties held in these rooms were to be registered with, and receive approval from, the Proctor of one’s particular House at least 24-hours in advance.

And there was a standard form (Use of Facilities Form) for this procedure. The intent was to ensure that when alcohol was being consumed, someone—as was required under the Liquor Control Act—had taken responsibility. When someone drank in John Doe’s room, John Doe was considered to have taken responsibility for the safety and behaviour of the visitor.

Through the Dance and Social Convenor, a license could be obtained for the running of large events in the Auditorium, the Luncheonette, the Condo Lounge, and the Taché Gyms. This allowed for the sale of beer and liquor under the guidelines developed by the Manitoba Liquor Commission and required the availability of food and appropriate security.

Discipline would be left up to the three House committees which would have the right to call in the Campus Police, who could in turn contact the Fort Garry Police should the need for such action arise. Fines and penalties for violations of the regulations were devised. And so, well before

![A “Beer Boat Race” during the West House Stag. Two teams of four compete by first drinking one beer each, going up the line to the “anchor” who consumes two, and then back down the line with each consuming their second. First to finish wins. During the race, all cups had to be turned upside down on your head to show you had indeed finished the whole beer, before the next player could drink.](image)

![For events involving outside guests, liquor laws required that a security guard had to be hired. Many, likely, were amazed at the type of activities they were keeping secure.](image)
the 1970s drew to a close, legalized consumption of alcoholic beverages was a part of the Residence way of life for those who chose to indulge.

The Quick and the Dead

Among the plethora of rules that bore repeating was that governing pets. The Director of Residences reminded one and all at the beginning of the 1977-78 academic year that, quote, “no live pets of any kind may be brought into or kept in the Residence” [underline added]. The wording of this bon mot is ambiguous, is it not: may we assume that dead pets, but not live ones, were more than welcome at any time? That seems to be what’s implied by this directive.

Disciplinary Action

Vandalism to the structure and furnishings of Taché Hall by Residents themselves and their visitors, and the inevitable personality conflicts and confrontation that developed on occasion between Residents, as well a whole host of other no-no’s, gave rise to the establishment of the Local Disciplinary Unit, or LDU. By way of the Resident Student Handbook, all and sundry were notified of common infractions that would be acted upon—tampering with fire-fighting equipment, disobeying a Proctor, violating Quiet Hours, transporting liquor in open containers in a public area, willfully damaging University property, to name a few. Individuals could also be brought to book for failure to exercise common sense, which covered a multitude of sins. For example, making excessive noise outside of Quiet Hours but close to exam time was frowned upon, as was the unsanitary habit of laundering one’s socks and underwear in the washroom sinks. Laying a streak of lighter fluid across the floor of a fellow-Resident’s room and setting it afire was not listed in the Handbook, but was nonetheless judged an affront and not good common sense when it happened.

In keeping with the principle that all disputes should be handled at the lowest possible level, the LDU was composed of RSAC officials and representatives of the three Houses. The unit functioned as an advisory body to the Director of Residences, who received reports and complaints of infractions. Anyone could lodge a complaint, preferably to his hall Proctor who then took it to a hearing panel made up of members of the LDU. The latter, through their enquiries and deliberations, made recommendations to the Director concerning the disposition of the case. The Director took their advice into consideration when he interviewed the defendant, and then disposed of the matter as he saw fit. He had the authority to sustain, waive, decrease, or increase the recommended penalty.

Fines, withdrawal of Residence privileges, withholding grades and transcripts by the University Administration and, in extreme cases, expulsion from Residence were among the punishments that could be meted out to those found guilty of misdemeanors. The fines were actually intended to act less as punishment and more as deterrence against further breach of regulations. Repeated malefactions resulted in increased fines and more severe punishments.

The following are examples of infractions and the attendant fines:

- This cute little pet critter living in Residence was eventually found out and evicted.
- Pranks like this tilted water-filled garbage bin were frequent and caused damage to rooms and hallways.
• assault, $36
• breaking Quiet Hours and disobeying a Proctor, $40
• drinking alcohol in Pembina Hall, $30
• missing Proctor duty, $25
• if a male, being present unescorted in Mary Speechly Hall, $50

If that wasn’t bad enough, it became a matter of routine that a miscreant’s name, his offence, and resulting fine, addressed to “the resident body,” were posted on a bulletin board for all to see. And if one was expelled, that wasn’t necessarily the end of it: if destruction of University property had been involved, a Notice of Intent to Bill could be sent to the offender—all the way to his home address, if necessary.

With advice from a lawyer, it was agreed later in the decade that the moniker “Local Disciplinary Unit” was old and outdated, and that it should be replaced with “Residence Disciplinary Board” (RDB). The latter was formally entered into the Constitution under By-Law 16, and henceforth anyone caught perpetrating infringement of the rules could be “D-Boarded.” As an advisory group to the Director of Residences, the RDB consisted of Residence students whose mandate was to mediate disputes between individuals and groups and to recommend to the Director any sanctions or conditions to be imposed on those breaking the rules. Again, the final decisions on fines or other disciplinary action were the purview of the Director.

Some indication of the annual workings of the local justice system is to be found in the 1977-78 regular-session RDB report. Over the year, a total of eight (8) cases were handled by the Board involving thirteen (13) Residence students. Total fines levied, aside from reimbursement for property damage, came to $400. Three arose from complaints of open liquor in the hallways, and the four individuals involved were fined a total of $80. Two actions were in response to vandalism: one for damage to Residence property (Luncheonette tables) and the other for throwing snowballs in Residence. The perp in the table incident repaired the tables himself, but was also fined an additional $25 for committing the transgression in the first place. The snowball thrower was tartly reprimanded for his actions.

Sports in the hallway (e.g., dribbling a basketball!) netted a $5 fine; but one must not downplay the seriousness of such activity in the corridors. Back in 1966 one student was playing broomball when he fell against a glass partition. The result was a visit to the hospital and twelve stitches in his arm. An instance of creating a disturbance (fisticuffs) lightened one pugilist’s wallet to the tune of $50. The same individual was ordered to make restitution in the amount of $15 for damage to two T-shirts that were rent asunder in the encounter, and to pay for the replacement of a broken window. Finally, a case involving five pranksters resulted in fines totalling $240 for harassment of other Residents by telephone.

Proctors

It can be truly said that the RSAC came into its own in the 1970s. It was self-governing and self-disciplining. “Proctors,” successors to the Dons and predecessors of the Resident Assistants [see later], were hired by the Residence Administration but were responsible to the RSAC.
During his tenure as University President (1954-1970), Dr. Hugh Saunderson had introduced the Don system in the Residences. His decision was based on suggestions made to him that it would be helpful if there were some students within the Residences who could act as counsellors for new-entry (first-year) students and returnees. The Proctor system had replaced the Dons during the 1972-73 academic year. One of the primary functions of the Proctor was that of social animator. The proportion of students per Proctor (35) was greatly decreased vis-à-vis students per Don (70 or more). With Proctors receiving half the salary of the Residence Don (45% vs full room and board), there was also a saving to the University.

Novelist Bernard Knight, in his book “A Plague of Heretics,” defines for us the early medieval forerunner of the latter-day Proctor as “a senior priest or monk responsible for discipline in an abbey or cathedral. He had lay servants or bailiffs to carry out his orders, who policed the ecclesiastical enclaves.” Although there was nothing priestly or monkish about Taché Hall’s Proctors, nor (to say the least) could Taché Hall itself be considered an abbey, a cathedral, or an ecclesiastical enclave of any sort, Knight’s definition does place the modern nature of the position in historical perspective.

Interestingly enough, even though a Taché Hall Proctor did not enjoy the back-up of a “lay servant” or a “bailiff” to help maintain discipline, in due course the position of Assistant Proctor was introduced into the Residence student governmental structure at the U of M.

Generally speaking, Proctors were concerned with the welfare of all of the students of the Residence complex, but in particular with the well-being and community spirit of the individuals who resided within the corridor in their respective jurisdictions. Proctors were an extension of the campus Counselling Service and had to be knowledgeable of the campus support/counselling facilities available to the Residents, if help were needed. They were expected to take on a committee chairmanship, or at least sit on a committee. They were responsible for maintaining discipline and were obligated to report infractions to the Residence disciplinary body.

Each Proctor had a passkey, the purpose of which was to allow a student who misplaced or lost his own room key access to his lodgings. No other use of the passkey, such as extracting people from their rooms for “Freshman Orientation,” was authorized. Understandably, their disposition was of serious concern to the authorities. Such instruments gave access to every student room in Taché Hall, including those of some 95 women housed in the East House following co-ed integration. They also gave the holders access to valuable cameras, sound systems, and other University-owned and personal property. And indeed, at the end of the 1977-78 academic year, it had been determined that a number of thefts had been committed in which a master key had been used.

Room Decoration

A relaxation of the rules regarding the modification of one’s room was manifested in the do-it-yourself Rez Renovations Contest put on in January 1979.

1. Had students been making the best use of their living spaces?
2. Had the furniture been utilized ingeniously, or had artful additions been made to the rooms?
3. Had anyone turned his/her room into the best greenhouse on campus?
If so, the innovators and visionaries were invited to join the Rez Ren Contest. Judges included distinguished professors from the Faculty of Architecture, and the prizes were in the form of money.

The prizes were awarded for:
• best Room in each of the three Houses
• most Inventive Use of “Junk”
• best Designed and Constructed Loft

There were, of course, limits to what could be done: walls, ceilings, and furniture were not to be painted; light fixtures could not be removed; furniture normally supplied (i.e., desks, chairs, book cases) were to be used; and general-issue bed frames could be put in storage if lofts or other bed structures were built (by the way, the University furniture had to be incorporated so that wealthier students who might have wanted to re-furnish their rooms would not have an unfair advantage!); no nails were to be used in painted or plastered surfaces; and scotch tape was ruled out. Speaking of lofts, these had to be dismantled and removed at the end of the school year. If they weren’t, building staff did the honours and the negligent student was levied a fine.

More New Staff Positions

In the latter half of the 1970s, the position of House Manager was created to give to one individual the responsibility for the extensive Physical Plant and furnishings that comprised the Speechly/Taché complex. Also the position of Coordinator of Admissions and Student Life Programs was established. To the holder of this position went the task of simplifying and making more efficient the admissions process and ensuring that the Residences were fully occupied. S/he assisted students in organizing and initiating new programs and events. It was a difficult position, requiring myriad complex skills and sensitivities—the placing of students in rooms or halls in which they would be happy was not always easy. Developing advisory skills and encouraging and assisting students and student governments in their work was a challenging responsibility. To assist in this work, three Senior Tutors were appointed—one each for East Taché, West Taché, and Mary Speechly. All those appointed were graduate students whose mandate was to assist individuals in pursuing their academic, social, and cultural development.

To further improve communication, the roles and responsibilities of the twenty-two Proctors—engaged by the Department to assist students—were clarified. An informal reporting channel with the Dean of Students was set up, and students and Proctors were encouraged to make better use of the campus Counselling Services that provided assistance to students with personal difficulties of all kinds.

The Proctor was obliged to report needed building repairs to the Senior Tutor, and assist all members of his House in emergency situations (fire, water main breaks, etc.) and report them directly to the University Emergency Centre.

The campus police re-established their evening patrols through the Residence complex, and
developed a good working relationship with the student government and students generally.

Senior Tutors

As previously mentioned, in August 1979 yet another facilitator category was instituted in the Speechly/Taché Residence governmental structure to make a good thing better, this being the "Senior Tutor." The commitment of an individual to live on campus brought home the realization that the University had to initiate programming and leadership that would assist Residence students in their academic careers. Accordingly, the Residence Department created the position of Senior Tutor. Working together, and reporting to the Director of Residences and Conference Services, the Senior Tutors would assist the student government in developing an environment supportive of the academic and cultural objectives of the University and the educational, social, and personal goals of the individual.

The Senior Tutors together would also play a role in the selection and training of Proctors, and assisting in the coordination of the Proctors’ activities and work. In this regard, the Senior Tutor would be a sort of “uber-Proctor” or Proctor supervisor. Being human, the Proctors themselves were subject to shortcomings of their own, and when one of them fell among thieves, they were now answerable to a Senior Tutor who would then report the subject infringements of Residence or University rules to the office of the Director of Residences.

Senior Tutors were not expected to be counsellors, but they were expected to develop skills in perceiving and referring serious personal problems to the University Counselling Service. They would have to be familiar with admission procedures and requirements of the University and its various faculties and departments and, when appropriate, refer students to faculty advisors. Familiar with the social and cultural amenities of the University and the city, Senior Tutors would be expected to develop communication avenues and disseminate that information to their constituents.

Not just anyone could be a Senior Tutor. A bachelor’s degree with a minimum 3.0 grade point average comprised the basic qualifications, and studying, part-time or sessional teaching, or conducting research at the U of M were expected. For his/her efforts, the Senior Tutor would receive room and board, a $200/month assistantship, and up to $1,000 in expenses toward developing student contacts and programs. Minutes of RSAC meetings during the 1980s show that the Senior Tutor did become established along the lines described above.

Objectionable Conduct

According to the traditional folk song (with apologies to Woody Guthrie),

*This train don’t carry no gamblers, this train …
This train don’t carry no gamblers, this train …
This train don’t carry no gamblers, no crap-shooters, no midnight ramblers,
This train don’t carry no gamblers, this train.*

And if the University of Manitoba Administration had had its way, Taché Hall wouldn’t have had no gamblers either. This rule,
which harkened back to the earliest days of the Manitoba Agricultural College, was still in effect in the 1970s.

Gambling does not quite qualify as a prank, but tricks of all shapes and sizes abounded in the minds of Taché Hallers. One escapade of some notoriety was “shafting”—the practice of male (Taché) students strapping one of their number [condition unspecified] to a chair, putting him thusly bound and seated into the Speechly elevator, and sending him up to be ridiculed by the girls. This custom was frowned upon by the officialdom in Mary Speechly Hall. The stated reason for their disapproval was the damage that could be sustained by the elevator … damage to the victims’ egos and self-esteem does not seem to have been a matter of concern.

**Departmental Logo**

Another innovation was an official logo developed by the Department of Residence and Conference Services. It comprised a square with one pointed and three rounded corners, along with a single large sphere in each of the rounded corners. The three spheres presumably represent the three Houses of the Speechly/Taché complex, but it’s unclear just what the pointed corner means.

**Renovation of Taché Hall**

If the RSAC of the 1970s is to be remembered for one achievement above all others, that has to be its contribution to the renovation of Taché Hall.

Because Residence accommodations were classed as an “ancillary service” of the University, they had to be self-sustaining. As far as possible, the Residences, with the exception of Taché Hall, were expected to balance their budgets. Why was Taché Hall let off the hook in this regard? Because its age, disrepair, and lack of single rooms lessened the demand for accommodation there, and this was reflected in its occupancy rate. Even if room and board fees were maintained at a level sufficiently attractive to ensure full occupancy, it would still not be possible to balance its budget—only so much could be charged to boarders for a run-down facility. However, with suitable

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**A Taché Hall East House President ready to be put into the Speechly elevator. This was called “shafting.”**

**The new Residence and Conference Services logo.**

**Harry Nolan oversaw the renovations to Taché Hall.**

**The renovations had begun under Harry’s guidance.**
renovations, it was deemed possible that Táché Hall would have less difficulty attracting students and thus operating with a balanced budget. Even with good accommodation and reasonable rates, there was still the possibility of many room vacancies because of dissatisfaction with the residence lifestyle. The Residences had to change to reflect the liberalizing changes taking place within society-at-large.

In any event, pressure from the RSAC and the Residence Administration resulted in a $5.4 million commitment from government (the renovations cost almost seven times as much as the original building). If the renovations were not undertaken, Táché Hall would have been demolished. With students returning to the Residence at a rate of only 20%, with repairs to the building devouring an increasingly large portion of the operating budget, and with the prevalent vandalism, the old hall had become more trouble than it was worth. But with the needed funding now a reality, building codes and fire regulations would be met, windows and furniture replaced, floors redone, and heating, lighting, electrical wiring, and plumbing systems would be repaired or replaced. A completely renovated Táché Hall would attract revenue to the University through summer conferences and conventions. The renewed building could be expected to attract a greater number of occupants during the regular academic year. The renovations would mean that East House would be impacted during the summer of 1979, and half of the West House would be closed during the first semester of 1979-80, and the other half would be closed during the second. The West Gym would have to be shut down throughout the year.

Chaos is the best word to describe Speechly/Táché in the autumn of 1979 during construction. Although the students were quite comfortable in Mary Speechly Hall, those who had been assigned to Táché were less fortunate. West House was sparsely inhabited for much of the first term and seemed lonely and imposing. Students found it necessary to adapt to myriad circumstances such as overcrowding due to lack of space for accommodation; lack of washrooms, showers, and laundry facilities; lack of space for study; and excessive noise and dust created by construction. Is it any wonder that they wanted at least some of their money back? Regrettably, numbers of them took out their frustrations with excessive drinking and vandalism, with broken glass, furniture thrown down stairwells, and disturbance to students not involved in the parties. Others requested to be relocated to quieter premises in other sections of the building.

Unable to move into their rooms in September due to the on-going renovations, Táché Hall

Chaos in the Gym. The renos lasted for a year.

Workmen were everywhere!

Students couldn’t move into their rooms in September 1979 due to renovations still incomplete.
Residents found accommodations elsewhere. Some made the Montcalm Hotel on Pembina Hwy their home (or even more of a home than it had been already). Back in Táché, double rooms housed as many as six individuals. Also during that time, the Residence Office was being moved from the Churchill Room in West Táché to 110 Pembina Hall, and this added to the commotion. Nor was that all: other operations in the Residence complex were adversely affected as well. Despite cutbacks in services, Pembina Hall was operating at a deficit due to the shortage of paying customers. Neither the food service operation nor the Residence was destined to break even during that fiscal year.

Here follows a letter from the RSAC President, Mr. Gord Grant, to Mr. Harry Nolan, Director of Residences, requesting a rent rebate due to the Táché Hall construction inconveniences.

**THE RESIDENCE STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION (December 3, 1979)**

**Introduction:**

The Residents of Táché Hall-Mary Speechly have undergone a very unique and difficult year. Students housed in Táché Hall have had a particularly difficult first semester, being subjected to a lingering renovations project. These can be viewed at first glance and become increasingly disturbing to students living in a construction site. Then there are the intangibles; problems created by the renovations project either directly or indirectly. In negotiating a rent rebate, how does one put a dollar value on affected health or grades, or emotional stress? These intangibles are very real and have surfaced numerous times in various ways (i.e., two students have been treated in hospital and one was hospitalized overnight. These incidents are at least indirectly attributable to the project). The specific problems with the physical plant and the service provided in Táché Hall will be listed later in an itemized month-to-month report.

**The Decision to Open**

During the summer [of 1979], in my role as RSAC President, I was involved in the decision to open Táché Hall Residence.

- I was concerned about preserving the community atmosphere of Táché Hall as well as providing accommodation to returning students.
- I felt the RSAC and the University had an obligation to house Freshman students whose applications to Residence would have been rejected.
- Based on the information and opinions of “reliable” sources at the time, the decision to open appeared logical.

**Students’ Contributions to the Project**

- On Sept. 4, 5 and 6, Proctors, the RSAC, and senior students vacuumed rooms, dusted and swept out corridors. They also helped distribute cots and other temporary furnishings.
- Proctors have kept a running account of furnishings, linen, etc., throughout the first two and a half months of the school year.
- Proctors have aided in room assignments, checking keys and doors, etc.
- Students have helped unload furniture from delivery trucks and have moved the furniture into student rooms.

**The Original Settlement**

A settlement of a $16,000 rebate to the students for the month of September was agreed upon.

- The original settlement was reached in mid-September for the month of September.
- Assurances were given that conditions would greatly improve, and that October would be a normal month.

**The Conditions Existing During October**

- Noise from construction
- No lounges or study halls
- For approximately 300 students:
  - 200 desks to arrive Oct. 3
  - 65 wardrobes to arrive Oct. 9
  - 200 bookcases … after all other items
  - 50 beds to arrive Oct. 17
  - 200 storage units to arrive Oct. 17
  - 100 desks to arrive Oct. 17

This was the updated promised delivery schedule, not necessarily the actual delivery dates.

- No fire alarm system
- No laundry facilities (four washers in MSH had to service over 500 students)
- No blinds until third week of October
- No locks or doors in toilet stalls or shower stalls
- Glue and paint fumes are abundant
- Dust levels are high
- People living in doubles designated as singles, and triples designated as doubles
- Washroom facilities were spartan and unsanitary
• Lack of adequate staff to keep pace with the mess of construction in occupied (as well as unoccupied) areas of the building, let alone adequately service the students
• Constant disruptions with hot water and pressure
• No phone jacks in many student rooms
• Poor and dangerous security for many doors to student rooms
• Workers having frequent and easy access to student rooms

East House was able to settle more or less into permanent rooms on the weekend of October 28.

Conditions Which Existed During November

Taché Hall East:
• No laundry facilities until second week, and only then on a temporary hook-up
• Construction noise
• Work still going on in washrooms and workers frequently in the washrooms during awkward hours
• Inconsistent, or no heat in washrooms
• No bookcases or chairs in some rooms
• No ancillary rooms or club rooms
• Inadequate locks on metal doors, and locks generally malfunctioning
• People still in lounges (4E) until third weekend in November
• Lighting fixtures and carpet finally installed
• No lounge furniture
• Lack of sanitary washrooms
• Caretakers overworked and unable to properly serve students
• No fire alarm system until third week

Taché Hall West:
• No heat some weekends
• Improper lighting in corridors and stairwells
• Tools and equipment left in awkward and unsafe locations
• Elevator shaft left open/or insecure often
• High dust and dirt levels
• No water often
• Noise at odd hours
• Passkeying rooms without prior notification
• Unsanitary washrooms
• Poor venting (cold air was blown into washrooms instead of out)
• Mismatched locks and keys
• Leaking windows due to improper insulation
• Lack of furniture in many rooms
• No shower curtains
• Poor communication between the Administration, students, and construction company over repair work that causes inconveniences

Proposal

That students be reimbursed as follows in percentages of their room rates:
September 100%
October 100%
November 75%
December 50%

This proposal made its way right up to the Vice-President (Admin), D.O. Wells, and he agreed, on advice from Mr. Nolan and Dr. Wall, that the students would be compensated for their inconvenience with the following rebates—100% for September and 25% for October, November, and December. He further mentioned that students were charged the twin-room rate when they arrived in September and adjustments were not made when students moved into single rooms. Therefore, with the above reductions and amendments, the students would see an average monthly rate of $45 per person for the period September through December.

Without a doubt, the students’ living quarters had been substantially upgraded by the renovations project. Nor did the improvements end there: within the next few years, the washroom floors were retiled, new shower heads and hand basins were installed, and the students’ rooms were equipped with smoke alarms.

The Centre Block

But what of the Centre Block? Had it seen any improvements? Indeed it had: the electrical power to the Auditorium stage area had been significantly increased, so that if efforts went ahead to improve lighting, the essentials were now in situ. For the first time, elevator service was available. Smoke detectors, emergency lighting, and alarms had been installed, as required by code. The side entrances of the Aud were “double-doored” to improve security, and the acoustic separation between the Auditorium and the residential portions of the building was in place. The roof was insulated and repaired, and in the following several years, the Auditorium and adjoining stage floors were sanded and varnished.
All of that notwithstanding, the internal architecture of the Auditorium remained untouched. The paint was described as “peachy” (but not “peachy keen”), tiles were missing, and woodwork was covered in paint. By and large, the room was unacceptable as a rehearsal/performing showcase for academic or social space on the campus. And yet it was the only traditional stage/auditorium facility on the grounds of the U of M. As history unfolded, it would be the scene of some fear and loathing in the decade ahead, as we shall see.

“Taché College”

In the meantime, what should follow the renovation of the dormitory blocks of Taché Hall? Should it remain a domicile only, or something more than that? And what was to become of the Oak Room and the Auditorium? In Harry Nolan’s view, the students in the Speechly/Taché complex had developed an insularity over the years. They had never *formally* participated in the annual Festival of Life and Learning, for example, and, until 1979, rarely if ever organized events and invited the wider University community to join in. Harry had commented more than once that some students walked into their Residence at suppertime and might as well have left the campus right afterwards, having as they did scant inclination toward involvement in the cultural, athletic, or social programs available to them simply by walking down the street or across campus.

But Harry Nolan was a visionary and an ideas man; and in 1979 he wrote a proposal that was absolutely unique and of which few are nowadays aware. With the renovations a *fait accompli*, perhaps something should be done to ensure that the Residence complex could regain some of the prominence it enjoyed in the inter-war years.

To reinforce and accelerate the process through which Taché and Mary Speechly Halls could make a more significant contribution to the social, academic, and cultural life of the University, Harry floated the idea of creating a new college for the U of M. “Taché College” would be a non-credit institute that, because of its facilities, would place an emphasis on the performing and visual arts and, given its history, would re-establish its commitment to and involvement with the affairs of the University-at-large.

The Centre Block could be refurbished to accommodate the School of Music, the School of Art, the Dance Program and Community Recreation program of the School of Physical Education, the Faculty of Architecture, and the Theatre Program of the Faculty of Arts. There was a need to ensure and encourage the long association with the Faculty of Agriculture and through it to the people of rural Manitoba, acknowledging their support down through the years of the Residence program on campus.

The Centre Block assets could serve as rehearsal, performance, and exhibition space to the mutual benefit of the faculty/school programs and to the Residence students. Taché College would replace the existing Department of Residence and Conference Services, and East and West Taché would be renamed (Harry suggested “Riel” and “Dumont”) to reflect the era when Monseigneur Taché, the building’s namesake, was making his mark on history.

Taché College would be governed by a council made up of faculty and student representatives from Agriculture, Phys. Ed., Architecture, Music, and Fine Arts; from Mary Speechly Hall, Riel and Dumont Halls; and from the Office of the Head of the College. The College would report primarily through academic lines of the University with support from Administrative personnel. As a non-credit college, it would be directed to operate on a break-even basis, and private and public funds would be sought to improve and equip the Gyms, the Auditorium, and the dining/exhibition areas. Finally, a club would be established in an expanded Condo Lounge that would be open to college members and their guests.
In any event, the college, as Harry envisaged it in the late 1970s, did not materialize, although something akin to it came to be in 2011 following the closure of Taché Hall as a Residence and the repurposing of it as the home of the Faculty of Music and the School of Art.

The Raft Race

Freshie Month at the beginning of the 1979-80 academic session featured the first-ever Great U of M Raft Race. In earlier years, the school year kicked off with a downtown Freshie Parade made up of floats built by the various schools, faculties, colleges, and campus organizations. This extravaganza had since become defunct, and one purpose of the Raft Race was to restore some of the fun and frolic of days gone by. Another reason for the race was to help draw the University and the community-at-large closer to one another.

Raft propulsion had to be provided by wind and human effort—no mechanical means such as outboard motors or rocket engines were permitted. The one-mile course ran down the Red River from Mary Speechly Hall to University College. Raft design and decoration were at the discretion of the participants, and prizes were awarded for design originality, sailing prowess, etc. Inter-staff, inter-faculty, staff/student, or student/student rivalries would hopefully be created. Expenses were accrued for mailing stamps, advertisements in The Manitoban, posters, rental of a starter gun and megaphone, and purchase of T-shirts for the contestants. However, the expenses were offset somewhat by entry fees. Agriculture, Education, Engineering, Nursing, and the RSAC entered the contest that year for a total of 26 rafts.

And what became of all those rafts after the race had been won? They fuelled a bonfire the day after—at least after one edition of the event. Some of the participating sailors possessed colourful sea-dog monikers straight out of Moby Dick … names like Chet, Muffy, Kitty, and Biff.

UMSU Representation

One important initiative at the end of the 1970s decade was the bid by the RSAC to gain voting membership on the UMSU Council. Since Residence students were on campus 24-hours a day, seven days a week, the decisions of UMSU tended to affect them more than any other student body.

The RSA regarded itself as an integral part of the campus, and yet it was isolated from the UMSU decision-making process. The RSAC did not feel that their views were completely represented by faculty reps who were generally unaware of the specific viewpoints and problems of Residence students. As a unique community that could make positive input into UMSU, the RSA felt that by gaining voting representation, both UMSU and the Resident Students’ Association would benefit. By the end of the first quarter of 1980, the RSA had become a full-fledged voting member of UMSU Council.