Memories of the 1980s

Memories from the Physical Plant Staff (1980)

Here are a few memories shared by the Physical Plant staff who, over the years, were the ones who had to deal with some of the shenanigans that went on in the Residences.

- Before University Centre was built with its many eatery outlets, all the staff on campus bought their coffee at the servery in the Oak Room in Taché Hall. It was quite the sight to see hundreds of staff scurrying across the Quad at their breaks and minutes later, heading back to their offices with a cup of coffee in hand. At times, they looked like a trail of ants all in a row scurrying across the grass.

- As late as the 1950s, the U of M campus had its own fire hall (#54), fire engine, and volunteer firefighters. The fire engine was quite impressive and was eventually sold as an antique. The fire hall was located across the street from the back stairwell of Taché West (this was before Pembina Hall or Mary Speechly Hall). One day, an alarm went off in Taché Hall and the Physical Plant supervisor ran over to investigate. As he was running back down the Taché stairs, he didn’t notice a student coming up the stairwell. The reason, it appeared, was that the supervisor had put the fireman’s hat on backwards with the brim to the front instead of the back (as intended), and because his vision was obstructed by the brim, he promptly hit the student square in the face with his fireman’s hat!

- Over the years, there has been much good-natured feuding between the Aggies and Engineers. Many practical jokes have gone back and forth between the two faculties. One prank that comes to mind is when the Engineers put a cow into one of the elevators in Taché Hall, complete with laying sod on the elevator floor and providing hay for the cow. We’re not sure how they managed to get the critter though!
the hallways without setting off any alarm bells with the Residents, but it sure caught them off guard!

• The Aggies retaliated by waiting until the Christmas break and then bricking up the tunnel from University Centre to the Engineering Building with cinder blocks. They even went so far as painting the wall. After the break, the unsuspecting Engineers walked through University Centre and were halted when they couldn’t continue on to the Engineering Bldg. They stood around all perplexed and scratching their heads. Oh, good times!!

• One day in the early 1980s, before the Christmas break, one of the Physical Plant staff noticed that some of the majestic fir trees near Robson Hall were missing their tops. Upon careful inspection, it was noticed that the tree needles were making a path that pointed towards Speechly/Taché. The grounds keeper followed the trail, and sure enough, it led him right to the dorms and to the exact location of the pilfered trees! Unfortunately, it wasn’t a very Merry Christmas for the culprits once the Administration found out, although the tree in the Mary Speechly Lounge was enjoyed by all that Christmas season.

• Then there was the famed Ride of Lady Godiva in front of Taché Hall and around the Quad. Riding a big horse, Lady Godiva was without a stitch on except for her long flowing hair. Was she a Residence student? Only she knows for sure! ...

• In October of 1984, Queen Elizabeth honoured the U of M with a visit when she turned the sod for the new Transport Institute/ Administrative Studies Building. To protect Her Majesty, the RCMP and her own personal security staff made some preparations with the assistance of the U of M Physical Plant staff, such as sealing shut all the manhole covers and clearing the area behind the Alumni House and Speechly/Taché. Snipers were even stationed on the 4th Floor of Taché East for the Queen’s protection. All went off without a hitch, though, as the crowd greeted the Queen with flowers and well wishes.

Rat Alley (1980)

Here are some of my memories of 1980-81 at Taché Hall. I stayed in Taché Hall in a single room (137W) from September 1980 to May 1981. I didn’t like the location of my room though, as it was in the basement facing the back of the Residence. Nevertheless, I enjoyed the Residence experience at Taché in the final part of the year.

All those in the picture [next page] were Residents of Taché in the West wing, ground level. Actually, I did not know them very well, as I was too immersed in my studies. You know, being in Computer Science was really demanding. The year was a heavy load. However, they were all fun people and were friendly. Before they took this “Rat Alley” picture, they were kind enough to call me in to be part of it.

By the way, for those guys in the picture with hair firmly standing up, what they did was they went up to level 2 and hung themselves down with their legs clutching onto the railing. The picture with the words “Rat Alley” up-side-down was the original photo taken. If I remember correctly, the place we took the picture was a mini basketball hall in West wing.

I am in the “Rat Alley” picture (the one which is supposedly right-side-up) standing on the extreme left (I’m not in a “Rat Alley” T-shirt).
They then published the picture up-side-down, which made them look like they were the ones standing, and we were the ones hanging down. Hope these photos are of interest to Taché Rez memories.

What the students did was they went up to level 2 and hung themselves down with their legs clutching onto the railing. I am standing to the extreme left.

The photo was published up-side-down, which made everyone look like they were the ones standing, and we were the ones hanging down.

Concerning the Condo Lounge, when I was there during the late 1970s, it was licensed in that you could get a liquor permit to hold a function and sell liquor and beer from a small bar set-up that was there.

I myself “rented” the Condo Lounge for a Fisher Branch Collegiate Institute (FBCI) 10th Anniversary Reunion, around 1980 after I had left. There had been more than a handful of FBCI graduates living in Taché Hall at roughly that time, and they were therefore all familiar with the space. We were all in agreement that it was the perfect venue for a small reunion with 50 or less people involved, and it went over without a hitch. I don’t recall there ever being booze available in the Condo Lounge outside of a permitted function.

Taché Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (1980)

Here are the group costume winners from the Taché Hall Hallowe’en Social—Taché Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Taché Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles—prize winners for the 1980 Taché Hall Hallowe’en Social.
One of the things that irked me was the bad press we used to get in *The Manitoban*. It seemed as though every time I read an article about Rez I found myself fuming a bit, because it always came out sounding like the sole aim of the Residence Administration was to oppress the students who lived there. Personally, I’d always found Admin to be reasonable and extremely patient.

One source of internal angst was the prospect of West Taché going co-ed. As I understood it, Admin had a couple of pretty good reasons for co-ed’ing West Taché. First of all, over 60 percent of the applicants to the Speechly/Taché complex were female in 1981-82. There seemed to be a need to make more room for women in Taché, especially since a large number of returning female students wanted to live there, rather than in Speechly. Also, Admin was deeply concerned with the amount of vandalism in West House. I think the idea was that women might “settle the place down.” And in fact by December, damages had dropped in Taché by 50 percent from the same time in the year previous.

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**Yearbook Memories (1980)**

*Give a cheer, Give a cheer,*
*For the boys who make the beer,*
*In the cellars of ol’ Taché Hall.*

*It’s a lie, It’s a lie*
*‘Cause we know the guys are making rye,*
*In the cellars of ol’ Taché Hall.*

*Don’t be dumb, Don’t be dumb,*
*‘Cause they’re drinking rum,*
*In the cellars of ol’ Taché Hall.*

*Hit the floor, Hit the floor,*
*Here comes Gord back for more,*
*In the cellars of ol’ Taché Hall.*

*Yeah Taché!*
Another whine was about the suffocating rules and regulations that had been introduced. From my perspective, they were both fair and necessary. The Speechly/Taché complex housed over 700 students and unfortunately not all of them were always considerate of other people. Some of us really wanted an “academic atmosphere” because we were there to work! Most of the people were pretty good-natured about things like Quiet Hours. The common practice was to warn your neighbour first, and then D-Board them if the noise kept up.

I did know that too many people regularly broke the rules, and then were offended and surprised when they were D-Boarded. Well, they knew the rules, and it was their choice to break them. As far as I was concerned, if they did and got caught, they should have been mature enough to take their lumps. Some of the things that went on were pretty incredible, yet students somehow thought that they had a license to be irresponsible when they lived in Rez. Not in my book.

**Real World, Here I Come (1981)**

As a former Resident (Taché Hall) who has long experienced the real working world, I’d have to believe that Rez was absurdly and painfully artificial.

Compared to Residence, how many friendships and close relationships does one make in the outside world? Where else does one have access to various sporting facilities; or where else can one get away with leaving one’s door wide open to an unoccupied room? How often can any non-resident student living in their apartment block go down their hall or to another floor and have a chat and a drink at 3:30 in the morning?

But then again, where else would one have to endure noise at ungodly hours of the day or night, or put up with annoying pranks? Where else would one have to abide by such strange meal hours and rules, and such poor food?

There were laws and tenancy agreements that provided for some control in a privately-owned apartment block: why not Rez? With their Taché years behind them, people found out soon enough about the cold and grasping society that had surrounded them all along.

**Signed, Anonymous (1981)**

Although I had been out of Rez for a couple of years, I had had the chance to follow *The Perspective* magazine after my departure. And one of the potentially divisive controversies that was current in the early 1980s was that over the acceptability or unacceptability of unsigned submissions to the publication. There was a strong editorial opinion that contributors should be prepared to identify themselves, rather than hide behind the cloak of anonymity. Though no longer a Residence student myself, I had an opinion on that and so I wrote to the Editor.

It would certainly have been great if everyone was comfortable in signing their submissions, but I wasn’t all that sure that the very anonymity of an opinion made it invalid and therefore should be rejected. The question had to be asked, what motives would a person have for wishing to remain unknown? Could it be that the writer feared retaliation or repercussions of some sort? Not being part of the “clique” in power nor in the accepted majority made the very risk of ridicule or of being ostracized much more likely; and a close-quarters place like Rez, one seriously limited one’s options in standing up against those who could make one’s life more or less miserable.

I was amused that writers who accepted the popular opinion *did* sign their names. Surely everyone would have agreed that it was no big thing to defend the accepted point of view or the dominant party line. Soviet newspapers printed thousands of signed letters written in support of the System, yet were acutely lacking in criticisms of it. In Canadian or British history, secret balloting was rejected for many years on much the same
grounds—anyone unwilling to let the public know how one stood did not
deserve the franchise. But, as we all know, it would have been near folly
to vote as one thought if one faced family or peer pressure, or punishment
from one’s employer, or supporters of the other candidates, or, as was
common in many countries of the present day, from the government and
its “security forces.”

If responsibility and being approachable extended only to those who
identifiably agreed with one’s own principles, there was failure.

上升至惊异！（1981）

当住在Rez时，周末回家并不总是个好主意。周日晚上回到你的房间
应该是一件例行公事，但不一定。有时候，如果你的住处只是装满
了报纸，你就会轻松过关。

有一个家伙有一次回来时发现自己是35元抽奖的头奖得主，
一只真正的山羊（Capra aegagrus hircus）。这是由Aggies安排的，
他们卖票给中奖者提供一个机会，向他想中的任何人送一只山羊—
正如“有人的山羊”一样。奖品山羊是一只相当能干的三岁奶山羊，
她的接受者是一名2年级Aggie（我们称他为Kevin）。当然，后者
不在家时，山羊马上就安家了。这导致了一个小问题，举行了一次
投票，决定谁将留在房间里—Kevin还是山羊？结果很接近，但Kevin（
因为他才是付钱的顾客）获得了留下的机会。山羊不得不另找新家。

A benefactor whose name, appropriately enough, was “Billy the Kid”
took the homeless nanny out to the family farm where she presumably
originated—unless she had been pilfered from among the livestock in the
University’s Agriculture complex (less likely). The Great Goat Saga thusly
drew to a close, to the satisfaction of the lads on 4th West in general and
Kevin in particular: after all, the prize could have been geese!

啤酒运送（1981）

在1981年的某个周末，一辆装有大约40箱啤酒的皮卡车停在Taché
前面。Taché的空箱在被运出来，而满箱则被运进来。这正在发生
的是你的常规啤酒运送，按照每箱10%的费用。

这是一个宁静的场景，但有并发症：啤酒运送不仅例行公事，
也违反了Manitoba Liquor Control Commission (MLCC)的规则。

投诉正在被发送到校友协会办公室和高级管理层。The Acting Director of Residence and Conference Services
以他特有的方式警告RSAC，任何进一步的此类违规行为都将危及
到组织所赢得的尊重和支持。

Legally, Taché Hall was a wet residence … but not THAT wet.

A pickup truck in front of Taché Hall holding 40 cases of beer. A profitable beer run.

It was a tranquil scene, but there were complications: beer runs were not
only routine, but also forbidden under the rules and regulations of the
Manitoba Liquor Control Commission (MLCC).

Complaints were being received from the Alumni Association office
and from senior Administration. The Acting Director of Residence and Conference Services went out of his way to caution the RSAC that any
further infractions of this nature would jeopardize the hard-won respect
and support hitherto enjoyed by the organization.

Legally, Taché Hall was a wet residence … but not THAT wet.
The Raid and How to Survive It (1981)

Once again, it was that time of the year for the women of Mary Speechly Hall—going to bed fully-clothed and not being able to sleep. Lying awake in wide-eyed apprehension, and jumping out of your skin at the sound of a pin dropping. Because some night soon, most likely when you least expected it, someone would be making a 4 am trip to the washroom and suddenly noticing something peculiar. The doors to all the corners were shut, the furniture was piled up into one corner, the carpet had been rolled up, and both bathtubs were full. Perhaps it was the gal next door who’d spotted the anomalies. There was something strange in the neighbourhood, and there was no point in calling the ghostbusters. You woke to the sound of a floormate hammering on your door, while a hundred male footsteps pounded the stairs below. Suddenly, you were filled with a sense of impending doom.

Yes folks, we’re talking about that salient part of the Speechly girl’s existence, fearfully whispered about at countless floor meetings and hen parties, as “THE RAID.” The old Taché tradition had been the subject of much controversy over the years (not everyone appreciated a cold early-morning bath). Nonetheless, in the fall of 1981 word had it that the raid was destined to make still another annual appearance in the very near future. Therefore, in order to dispel some of the myths and fears surrounding this mystical occasion, we published a “manual” in The Perspective titled “EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE RAID AND HOW TO SURVIVE IT.”

The information therein provided noted that the raid took place in the first term, usually around the end of October or early November. Preparing for the intrusion meant going to bed with conservative clothing on, getting plenty of rest, and keeping counter-attack weapons handy (water, shaving cream, etc.). Preparations for the raid began in September, when RAs compiled a list of Xs—that is, those people who, for medical or personal reasons (STRONG reasons), didn’t wish to participate. This list was then turned in to the West House President, the head coordinator and director of the event who decided when it was going to be held.

On the night/morning of the event, a few select seniors would be sent over from West to make the necessary preparations (filling bath tubs, moving furniture, etc.). Upon their return to Taché, the rest of the men were awakened and assembled. Then, they attacked!

As mentioned before, some night owl in Speechly usually noticed in the meantime that something was up. The trick was not to just stand there, but to let the water out of the tubs and immediately wake up the girls on her floor. If she had friends on other floors, she should call them and sound the alarm. However, it was inadvisable to unintentionally alert the guys by running past the elevators or by turning on any room lights.

A potential attackee could get herself ready by leaving her door open a crack, as this would give herself sufficient light from the hallway to allow her to get herself and her room ready. She should put on some clothes that she didn’t mind getting wet. If she was planning to retaliate, she should gather her ammunition. Girls in the Phone and Shower corners had an excellent view of West and Pembina from their windows, and could keep a lookout from behind their curtains. By now there were a few girls frantically running around, trying to determine ways out of this mess and wondering why they hadn’t had their rooms X’ed in the first place.

Stories were known from other years of how girls were able to escape the raid altogether. Unfortunately, most of the guys had heard these stories too, so unless the pests were really “dumb frosh,” history was unlikely to repeat itself in the women’s favour: trying to hide under their desks, in their closets, on the 10th Floor, in the laundry room, or in Pembina Hall were more than likely to end in failure because these were usually the first places the guys looked.

Realistically, once their ammunition had run out, the best thing the girls could do was to accept the fact that they would probably get wet and then try to soak the guys before they got tubbed themselves. Once they’d

This poor lass has been caught ... a tubbing and shaving cream. Revenge is waiting ...
laid their hands on the girls, though, it was entirely the ladies’ prerogative to kick, scream, struggle, fuss, and generally throw a tantrum while en route to the heads. When they finally hit the water, the only course of action then was to splash it up to make sure that the fiends got just as wet as their victims. When the girls finally managed to swim back to their rooms, it was recommended that they lock their doors and stay put until clean-up operations started (the guys’ duty), just in case they decided to go for seconds. All that was left was to dry oneself off, hang up one’s clothes, collapse into bed, and congratulate oneself for having survived another raid.

Our “handbook” also had a few words for our anticipated “gentlemen callers.” We assured them that if they didn’t let enthusiasm get in the way of common sense and courtesy, they’d do fine. If for example, a lady was wearing jewelry or shoes, it was good raid etiquette to allow her to remove them before she took the plunge. For best results, a gal should be deposited GENTLY into the hard enamel tub—girls could bruise. If a girl were stumbled upon who was not properly attired, she should be given time to throw on something suitable. And if a lady was with a visitor whose agenda didn’t include water sports, it wasn’t in good taste to haul her out anyway. Quietly leaving them alone (Oops, sorry!) was the recommended course of action.

We reminded the girls that although it may have been a nuisance, the raid was really nothing to be afraid of; after all, it was only water. If the guys got a thrill out of seeing us tubbed in our PJs, big deal, right? If the guys could have fun on the raid, we should be able to as well!

The Wild Life Preserve (1981)

When I came back from Christmas holidays in January 1981, I was inspired to refer to Taché Hall as “our wild life preserve” wherein some medium-game “hunters” had bagged five windows in one week. Said windows were worth $35 each in 1981 dollars.

During the first week back, a water fountain on 1st East was brutally choked with sand, while several toilets had to have their systems purged to get rid of more sand. This sand had been intended for use on icy steps so that students did not slip and kill themselves getting in and out of the building. A ping pong table had to be put down because of four broken legs (they shoot ping pong tables, don’t they?), and a table was also burned to death in the West Lounge.

The “game wardens” of this wildlife preserve had been patient, but time was running out. So far, individuals found guilty of vandalism (or who had admitted that they had broken something) had only been charged for the cost of replacement or repair, but not the restorative labour. Fines were rumoured to be added in the near future.

People were doing things in Taché that they wouldn’t do in their own homes. But wait ... for eight months of the year, this was their home. Pranks were all right, but they could get out of hand and only cause hardship. The “toilet seat removals” of the previous September had started off as a prank, but it got carried away to the extent of $416 which had to be ponied up to replace the seats correctly. Another prank was penning people in their rooms. Alas, a new lock mechanism cost $110, labour not included; doors ranged from $60 for an unfinished wooden one to $100 for steel ones. When they got sprung, it took money to have them replaced or repaired. The double-paned windows in the Lounges cost $54 each to replace. And speaking of glass, many people went to shower or to the washrooms in bare feet or slippers, yet there were broken beer bottles and fragments of glass scattered throughout the hallways.

One of the reasons Taché Hall was getting such a negative image off-campus was that firemen, policemen, and whoever else responded to false alarms saw liquor in the halls and heard noisy parties in progress. This news had spread to the outside, and Taché had now possessed the dubious distinction of having the worst reputation on campus.
One of Manitoba’s most enduring social institutions is the garage sale, in which people sell their unwanted goods, usually from their garages, on the weekends. Attending garage sales has become a summer Saturday activity for many Winnipeggers.

On October 24, 1983, the University held the “World’s Largest Garage Sale” in Taché Hall, as every campus unit cleaned out its closets and donated surplus material destined for recycling throughout the community. The mountain of goods filled two floors (the Oak Room and the Aud) with everything from old books to old computers to old agriculture implements.

By the time the doors opened at 1:00 pm on the day of the well-publicized sale, a huge crowd had assembled outside the building. People purchased everything in sight, including 6,000 old library books, for $15,144. I remember obtaining a complete 12-volume set (somewhat out-of-date) of the Encyclopedia Canadiana for the bargain price of $5, and proudly staggering through the hordes of shoppers to my car (parked miles away) with my haul. Estimates of attendance at the sale were in excess of 15,000 people!

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We Lost a Good One (1981)

March 18, 1981 marked a sad day for many Residence students in Speechly/Taché. That was the day when Ms Joan Morrison, known as “mother” to a large number of students, had passed on ... to become head accountant in the Bookstore.

She had worked in Residence as a cashier since September 1977, having started out on this campus in a similar role in the Comptrollers Office from 1955-65. She took 12 years off, so to speak, and returned as our cashier in 1977.

If there was ever anyone a frosh needed to run into, it was Joan. She always had something to say to you, or always had time to talk to you. In fact, Joan knew my name before I knew hers (I hadn’t known that my cheques had that much clout)!!

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Floor Hockey and the Male Ego (1984)

During the spring term of 1984, I was a participant in a Taché floor hockey tournament. It was during one of those games that I realized that half of the guys weren’t there to have a good time or...
to simply play some competitive floor hockey for fun, but they were trying to prove who was the definitive male specimen.

I couldn’t help but wonder why those airhead super-jocks had to try to show how tough they were while the rest of us were just trying to have a little relief from the grind of studying. Maybe these gentlemen were relieving their stress by playing in this manner, but did they have to bruise, hack, and cut up every guy in Rez in the process? If so, maybe we should have arranged for a boxing ring so that the palookas who felt like pounding the stuffing out of someone could pound the stuffing out of someone with the same attitude. This way, those of us who enjoyed maintaining a healthy body could have done so, instead of acquiring scars as proof of what kind of morons we had playing intramural sports at Taché.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about the whole issue was the fact that the majority of these “killers” were really nice guys when they were outside of the West Gym—but put them in the Gym, and we had a handful of maniacs. Couldn’t they see that intramural sports existed to provide fun for the students, not a place where professional scouts could come looking for aspiring young athletes?

I think that pretty well all of the men could have probably learned a lot by watching the women play. Many guys thought that the girls were boring to watch when they were playing sports, but anyone talking to the women would have found that 99 percent of them were having a good time and very few were getting hurt. Nowadays, how many brawls, punch-outs, and bleeding noses do you see in women’s Olympic hockey?

Rezorama Cancelled (1985)

Rezorama was a large group of cultural pavilions/displays set up at various locations each year in the Speechly/Taché complex. It was patterned after Winnipeg’s Folklorama. People would buy “passports” and this would give them the opportunity to partake of the various culinary delights of each pavilion while taking in the cultural diversity represented by the displays.

But there was no Rezorama in 1985. The basic reasons behind the decision to can Rezorama were time and attitude. Time (or lack of it) was a reason for the program’s not being organized far enough in advance. It took an enormous amount of organization and participation, and if these demands weren’t fulfilled far enough in advance, it could end up becoming a last-minute, sloppy affair that wasn’t what it was designed to be.

The next question must be—why was it not organized? This question enters into the second reason why Rezorama ran out of gas, and that being attitude (or once again, lack of it). There seemed to be a definite lack of participation the previous year; not as many people were in the pavilions, there were not as many pavilions, and the pavilions were not as big as they could have been. Attendance dropped significantly, as did passport sales. It just didn’t go over in a big way. It became more of a job to the people organizing it rather than a pleasure, and it was exactly the same people who organized everything else. So, the real reason why there was no Rezorama that year lay not with the organizers, but rather on the reasons why it was not organized.

The general Plan B of the Student Life Planning Committee was to give Rezorama a rest in 1985 and to try to inject new life into it the next year. Smaller-scale events such as Perogie Pinching and Polka Practice being run along with the Ukrainian Dance fest were slated to partially satisfy those with cultural/ethnic interests. If Rezorama was once again going to grace the halls of Speechly/Taché, it would be up to the returning students to discard the growing apathy and to breathe new life into what had been a wonderful event.
I Wish I Had Known (1986)

Before I came to University and lived in Rez, I wish I had known...

• that it didn’t matter how late I scheduled my first class, I’d still sleep through it.
• that I would change so much and barely realize it.
• that you can love a lot of different people in a lot of different ways.
• that university kids throw paper airplanes, too.
• that if you wear a skirt everyone asks you why you’re so dressed up.
• that every clock on campus shows a different time.
• that you were smart in high school, so what!
• that I’d go to a party the night before a final.
• that Chem labs require more time than all of my other 18 credits combined.
• that change is a very positive experience and shouldn’t be avoided.
• that you can know everything and fail a test.
• that you can know nothing and pass a test.
• that I could get used to almost anything I found out about my roommate.
• that home would be a great place to visit.
• that most of my education would be obtained outside my classes.
• that friendship is more than just getting stoned together.
• what I was getting into.
• that I would become one of those people my parents warned me about.
• that free food served at 10:00 is gone by 9:59.
• that Sunday is a figment of the world’s imagination.
• that it is a good idea to go places alone and not always rely on a group for support.
• that it’s possible to be lonely even when you are surrounded by friends.
• that friendships are what makes this place worthwhile.

Fish-Batter Pancakes (1986)

On November 10, 1986, Winnipeg dug out from beneath 35.8 cm of snow left by a monster 32-hour storm that dumped 30 to 50 cm of the white stuff and created 2 m drifts in southern Manitoba and northwestern Ontario. In Winnipeg, officials pulled buses and snowplows off the roads and closed the airport. People used snowmobiles to navigate main arteries. The storm was major news, and it was even mentioned in the November 11, 1986 New York Times.

I lived in Rez that year and the snow storm was so bad, that the food service workers could not make it into work. The Department recruited RAs and RSAC members to help out in the Pembina Hall Kitchen that morning for breakfast.

Somebody spotted a big container of batter and they decided to make pancakes. It turned out that it was NOT pancake batter after all, but fish batter! Many jokes were made about the “fish-batter pancakes” the rest of the year.

Looking back, Winnipeg was freaking cold, but the people there had big warm hearts. Best years of my life!

Several students playing in the snow behind Taché Hall as the storm rages around them.

Residents were recruited to help out in the Pembina Hall Kitchen and mistakenly made pancakes out of fish batter.

The Yuppie Eighties 1980 – 1989
Of Lumber and the Raft Race (1986)

There were times when the Residence leadership left something to be desired. A case in point arose during the construction of the new Drake Centre just next door to Tché Hall.

At a forum during the first term, members of the RSAC and the Administration were questioned about the involvement of some Head Residents, Resident Assistants, and RSAC members in the use of building materials from the adjacent construction site for building rafts.

At the time, members of the Residence Administration agreed to inform members of the Resident Students’ Association as to the disciplinary action taken against any Head Resident(s) or Resident Assistant(s) involved in that action. Each Head Resident or Resident Assistant that was involved was fined $150 dollars from which the RSAC was to be reimbursed for its expenditure in paying the construction company for the absconded materials.

As ye sow, so shall ye reap.

Remember ... (1986)

- The Slurpee runs.
- Late night pizza.
- The fish-batter pancakes.
- When a guy from Speechly CHEWED a LIVE goldfish.
- The bomb scare.
- The Pre-parties.
- The Apres-parties.
- Condo runs.
- $3 Tuesdays.
- Doing anything else to avoid studying.
- Centurians.
- When 3rd West actually wrote something nice about Speechly girls.
- The Bunny Hop at Scandals.
- The Speechly flood that set off the fire alarms.
- The cover of the Manitoban that got so much “attention.”
- When the drink tickets at the Poverty social were sold out by 20 to 10:00.
- The only party ever to be shut down by the White House.
- The Frosh that did the Quad crawl 3 times.
- The Saturday night socials.
- The Sunday morning hangovers.
- The all-nighters the night before an exam.
- The Epoxy Jell-o.
- Leaners, sh*t showers, tubbings, stubbles, etc. ...
- The Beer Bashes.
- The days you ACTUALLY went to ALL your classes.
- The $2,000 raft race.
- The early morning fire alarms.
- The “What goes on?” lady at the sub line.
- Hall slides.
Pre-Parties (1987)

When I lived in Taché Hall in the last half of the 1980s we had “pre-parties.” A pre-party was a get-together before a Saturday night social. We would usually arrange to meet with another floor and mingle for about an hour or so before heading to the Aud for the social.

This was a good way to get to know new people, especially at the beginning of the year. I mostly lived on all-male floors (3rd West) so, most often, we would gather with an all-female floor over in Mary Speechly Hall. Usually we would meet in the Speechly floor’s lounge area. Every once in a while, we would organize multiple floors and use a larger space, like the West or East Lounge in Taché Hall.

A Safe Watering Hole (1988)

Most of our ranks in Taché Hall were frosh, and for most of them it was their first experience away from home. As could be expected, they acted accordingly. Before we could take responsibility for our actions, we had to learn both responsibility and maturity, which was what Rez life was all about.

Speaking of maturity, I had a few thoughts of my own on alcoholism and maturity. Alcohol consumption was part of the overall lifestyle, and everyone got hammered at least once during their life in Rez. Taché was a safe place to learn self-control of alcohol because you could get drunk and not have to worry about having to find a ride home, or driving and risking an impaired-driving charge, or, even worse—a tragic accident.

I had to wonder how many inebriated students had to walk from a bar on Pembina Highway because the buses had stopped running and they didn’t have enough money left for a taxi. You were never too far away from home when drinking in Rez.

Also, a dry Rez just wouldn’t have worked because history had proven that prohibition didn’t work, not to mention that in the late 1980s it would probably have been a violation of personal rights.

And There Were My Eyebrows … Gone (1988)

Leading the pack were two complaints in particular among Taché Hall Residents: the food and ill-maintained washrooms. Conveniently forgotten in the spate of angst were those pizza boxes and used condoms thrown down stairwells, and broken beer bottles on the basement floor. Or how about the Jell-o smeared along the walls beside profanity written for the hell of it? Perhaps the washroom and showers were dirty, but the cleaning crews were too busy elsewhere picking up the garbage that Residence students dished out.

And how about the practice of shaving someone’s eyebrow(s) if he passed out from over-drinking? Some may have laughed, but this was just another horror story that added to the bad reputation that Rez already had with non-residence students. I felt that to do this to someone who didn’t live in Residence, or to a person you didn’t even know, showed how this behaviour had gone too far.

Pity the Poor Frosh (1988)

In theory, it was commendable; in practice, not so much. In my experience there had been disagreement within Residence towards the effectiveness of the two-day Frosh Orientation. On that subject I had had a friendly argument with some second- and third-year Residents. Being a frosh myself, I had argued that the orientation worked by raising the confidence of first-

This fellow was spared having his eyebrows shaved, but he did suffer some felt pen scribbles and a canful of foam.
year people so that it made handling the onslaught and intimidation of the all-knowing senior students more bearable.

Over much thought and argument, we had determined that what really happened was that Frosh Orientation actually became “Frosh Segregation.” It had been all too easy for frosh to hang with frosh after having spent the two days together. We could stay in the security of that group. The problem was, the seniors who already knew all of their fellow returnees had no compelling reason to make an effort to get to know the new people.

By October, we had only started to become one group. This was too bad for both the vets and the rookies, because instead of learning about real life in Rez such as junk food runs, tunnel systems, RA appreciation, and Pembina “Hell,” we had only our orientation on health in Residence, visiting the Bookstore, and other trivial stuff that could have been done by seniors anyway.

Overall, I was concerned that the orientation hadn’t accomplished what it was meant to. Instead of teaching us something about life in Residence, it had caused a few cliques to form, creating some bitter feelings which is not what Rez was about at all.

Wednesday's note:

The Iron Fist (1988)

If I learned anything practical while living in Taché Hall, it was that there were two sides to every story. And a memorable case in point was the conduct of the Residence Administration. Some students were in support of the measures used by the authorities to keep things in order. Others, myself included, felt that they were being heavy-handed and had a smothering effect on life in the Residence complex.

House workers’ parties and beer fridge parties, for example, were established ways of blowing off steam, but in 1988, rumour had it that events like these would be declared forbidden. I felt that if ever a policy had to be nipped in the bud, this was it. Holding these types of parties outside of Residence and off-campus would have foreseeably increased the risk of drinking and driving, and it would probably have taken a tragedy before something was done about it.

Residents were safe having their beer fridge parties in Residence, but in 1988 it was rumoured that Admin wanted to forbid such events.

Iron-fisted tactics were squeezing the life out of Speechly/Taché. Babysitting students was becoming the order of the day, and I felt that the only way people could grow and mature was through the age-old method of trial and error.

Another fear was their turning Speechly/Taché into a dry Residence, so that we couldn’t even drink in our rooms. That would have been entirely acceptable to some, but for them there were other places they could live if they didn’t like the atmosphere in Taché. Freedom of choice, clean and comfortable surroundings, a pleasant social atmosphere—these things weren’t too much to ask for. But the overlords wouldn’t listen to us; they turned a deaf ear to RSAC, and their insistence that RAs enforce unreasonable rules had turned friend upon friend.

For all that, I believed that Residence was still the best place to live. It offered affordable accommodation, but more than that, the peer support, the academic support, and the opportunities to grow and mature simply couldn’t be found elsewhere. I was proud to be a part of Speechly/Taché. What worried me at the time was that these opportunities would be lost in the future.

Wednesday's note: 
Yahoos Ruled? (1988)

Perhaps it’s in the nature of human beings to complain. There was plenty complaining in Taché during the late 1980s. Poorly maintained washrooms, rooms without furniture or with broken furniture, and stringent rules of conduct all directly resulted, at least in the minds of some, in a high turnover rate. There was much weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

The cause of the dissatisfaction and complaints was laid at the feet of Garth Wannan, the Director of Housing & Student Life, on whose account the housing was deficient and Student Life was a drag, or so the critics claimed. He had been hired a few years earlier to bring order out of chaos, so to speak, and his efforts to that end didn’t sit too well with many of the jolly good fellows.

For my own part, I lacked sympathy for the downtrodden and oppressed, mainly because I regarded them as the authors of their own misery. Granted, the turnover/empty rooms situation was hard to understand; I was one of the lucky ones who had managed to get on the list early enough. My ex-roommate would have loved to have had a single, but had been too far down the list to have a prayer.

Poorly maintained washrooms were easily blamed on our $12-an-hour janitors, but to me it seemed like appropriate danger pay for having to confront the spilled beer and stomach contents on Monday morning’s carpets. I’d have bet dollars to doughnuts that no janitor or the Director had pulled down the curtain rod in my local communal washroom.

Rooms with broken or missing furniture? Just who broke or stole that stuff? Were the Director or the janitors selling the good pieces out of the back of a truck? Really, gimme a break!

Given the level of alcohol abuse and vandalism, what was the Administration or anyone else in that position to advocate: leaving everything wide open, or attempting to improve the quality of life through judicious curbing of the worst abuses? No inventory of beer cans in Residence rooms could have been used to support the contention that Speechly/Taché was turning into a “dry” Residence. And if a tragic instance of drunk driving had occurred, who would really have been responsible—Administration, or the drunk driver involved, or the “friends” who had allowed him/her to take the wheel?

Only if we had taken collective responsibility for curbing our more extreme behaviour could we have expected to be left to formulate our own rules. The “trial and error” method had led to a “yahoos rule” scenario and to an atmosphere where I, frankly, could see nobody growing and maturing.

It could have been predicted that the University would attempt to put an end to the troublesome status quo of Residence, and in hiring certain managerial personnel, that’s exactly what they did. Only through the exercise of responsible communal power could we have possibly intervened on issues that could have really improved our daily existence. Monopoly food supply—the wondrous mutual back-scratching system that was in place between Versa Foods and the University—would have been a worthwhile first target. Abolishing compulsory meal tickets and allowing multiple suppliers would have resulted in better food, better hours, greater variety, and more licensed establishments. It was this kind of vision that the RSAC and UMSU should have been trying to promote, instead of whining about rules that were the misguided, but inevitable, result of student-created problems.

Here’s a “shafting” in which the victim was tied to a chair, covered in shaving cream and other stuff, and then put into the elevator at Speechly with all the buttons pressed. When it opened on each floor, the girls (and some of the guys) would be waiting with buckets of cold water to throw on the poor guy. Needless to say, we kept the elevator repair guys busy ... It was mostly guys from Taché who got shafted and they were pretty good sports about it.
A view of the Administration Building and the Quadrangle from the balcony of the Centre Block of Taché Hall.