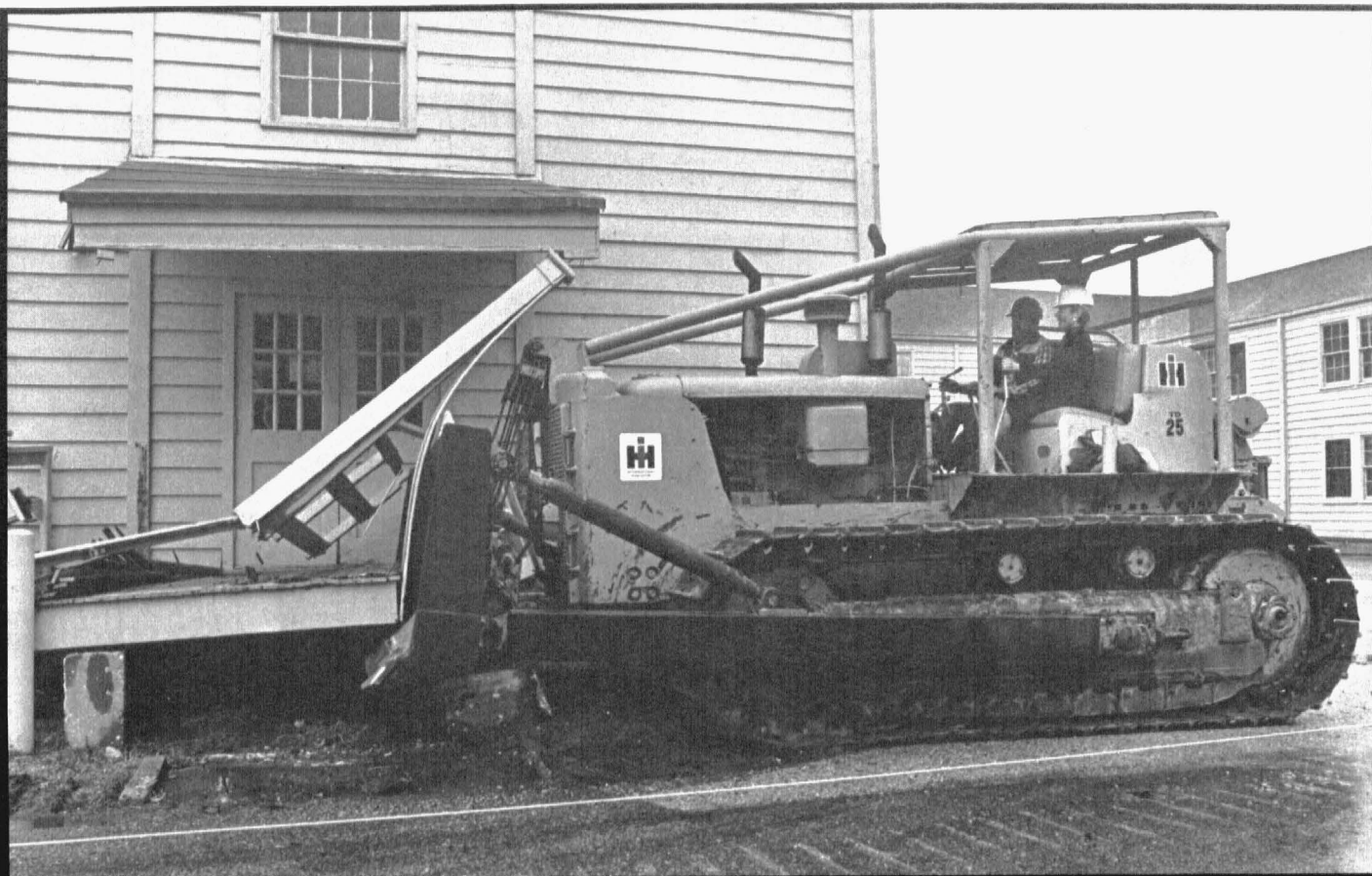




# FAREWELL, GI CITY



The last of GI City's TDs come down as Chancellor Barbara Uehling and heavy equipment operator Richard Adams bulldoze off the south porch of TD-3. The aerial view, taken about 1950, shows a campus covered with 'temporary' dorms, classrooms and trailers. Dozens of World War II barracks from Fort Leonard Wood eventually gave way to the present health sciences complex.



By ROBIN KENNEDY

**GI CITY.** Fort M.U. Blue Campus. Dairy-lawn. Pneumonia Gulch. Fairway Village. The Barracks.

No matter which nickname rings a bell for you, the image is the same. Barracks, Quonset huts, trailers. A campus crowded with male students — older than traditional Missouri men — with war stories to tell and a lot of catching up to do.

The time was post-World War II, when veterans made up 71 percent of UMC's enrollment. The swell of returning soldiers changed the face of Columbia and threw both town and gown into an unsettled period for several years.

When school began in September 1945, there were 2,800 students enrolled. In January 1946, veterans, wives and babies suddenly swooped down upon Columbia, all eager to attend the University or take up residence while the veteran member became collegiate.

That winter semester the enrollment burgeoned to 5,800 and suddenly every-

thing was full — houses, cafes, movies and sidewalks — full of students that the 1946 *Savitar* described as having the "seriousness of mind that was typical of the fighting man."

Enrollment continued to soar. By the fall of 1946 a deluge of 10,585 students had poured into the Campus. The freshman class of just one school equaled the University's total prewar enrollment.

"Temporary" building after building went up. At the same time the first khaki-colored trailers arrived from Decatur, Ill., leased on a yearly basis from the U.S. Army. Classes were delayed that fall so that plumbing fixtures could be installed in the 63 emergency dormitories erected south of Crowder Drill Field, where the College of Agriculture had harvested crops in prior years from its experimental fields.

**COOPERATION** was the watchword as three local construction firms, the John Epple Co., the B.D. Simon Co. and the J.E.

By the end of 1946, TDs were a Campus fixture—127 former barracks housing 60 single women, 2,232 single men and 199 families.

Hathman Co., joined together to form ESH Inc., contracting with the Federal Public Housing Authority to bring more than five dozen single-story barracks from Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

The barracks were erected immediately after unloading — no lost time due to stacking them on the ground.

Three temporary dormitories, TDs 8, 9 and 10, were put up northeast of the women's gym, housing 60 coeds. These three were part of 21 WPA structures bought outright by the University, 13 of which were used for temporary classrooms.

Three barracks that had housed wartime shipyard workers in Sturgeon Bay, Wis., were erected for single men. The Army's Cornhuskers Ordnance Plant in Grand Island, Neb., donated a pair of two-story, H-shaped barracks. These, TD-3 and TD-4, were destined to be among the most longlived of UMC's "temporary" buildings.

**FOR VETERANS** with families there were eventually 298 trailers, with 58 temporary dormitories housing 199 additional families. Even the married veteran athlete was provided for: five Quonset huts, each with four apartments, were lined up on Rollins Field.

Crowder Hall became a frantic place. An emergency cafeteria capable of feeding 2,000 students at once was set up on the first floor, replacing the garage and other rooms. For a while it even doubled as an evening study hall for the 2,016 vets from the barracks.

Dwyer Dundon, UMC associate professor of occupational therapy, remembers Crowder Hall, but not as a cafeteria. He and his wife, Gloria, and their young son, Michael, were early trailer residents at Fairway Village. Mizzou's trailers were primitive by today's mobile home standards, so Dundon and his family had to trek across the street to use the shower and toilet facilities at Crowder for several months in early 1946 until the University could build a shower house at Fairway Village.

The old observatory near the football stadium was converted into a nursery school for veterans' children, and the Dundon's son began his education there while his mother worked in the office of the vice president.

In spite of the crowding and the general air of urgency, the education and social life of the University went on. But

the atmosphere was definitely changed.

"We didn't go along much with the 'Joe College' life," recalls Tom Maxwell, a retired Navy commander now living in rural Saline County, Mo. Maxwell arrived at Mizzou a year earlier than most of the other vets, since he was still on active duty with the Navy's V-12 NROTC program in the fall of 1945.

**"WE CAME ON THE TRAIN,"** he says, "a hundred of us from the Pacific Fleet and another hundred raw recruits. We woke up on a Sunday morning in the Wabash station, and marched over to Defoe Hall."

Dundon, too, recollects the differences in attitudes between the vets and the younger students. "Most of us knew exactly why we were there, and exactly what degree we wanted." Dundon knew: an AB in '50 with an MA added in 1955.

Some of those younger single male students were housed in the barracks along with the vets. *Missouri Alumnus* editor Steve Shinn was one. "My roommate was 29 years old and had spent five years in the Marines island-hopping in the south Pacific," he says. "He wasn't about to follow any rules he thought were stupid. Hot plates were illegal, but we had one."

Gale Holsman, now a Columbia dentist, has never forgotten that Crowder Hall food. "A 17-year-old country boy from Dallas Center, Iowa," he says his 1947-48 meal ticket entitled him to stand in "block-long" lines.

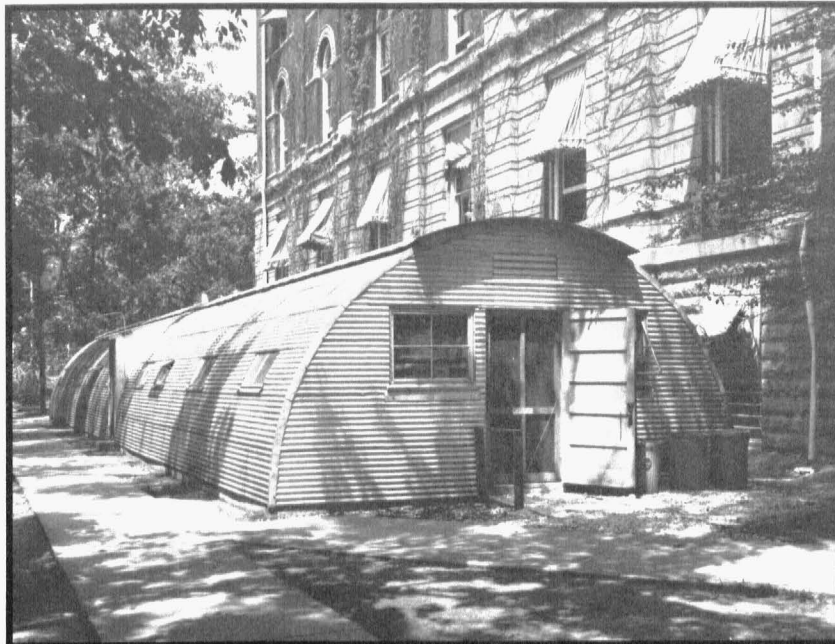
Some of the GIs may have been taken aback when their collegiate dorms turned out to look just like the Army barracks they had left. But Shinn remembers many of the vets saying it still was better than the Army.

Dundon agrees. Drafted in 1941, he landed on Omaha Beach and saw action in the Battle of the Bulge. "After being in the Army," he says, "it didn't seem crowded on Campus to me."

**ONE PLACE** that Maxwell does remember as being very crowded was the University Book Store, then in the basement of Jesse Hall. "There were two lines, one long one for GIs and a shorter one for the civilian types."

The changes in Campus life extended even to Mizzou tradition. In a singular break with that tradition, the 1948 *Savitar* named as its queen a married woman — veteran's wife Mrs. Madill Gartiser.

Campus clothing styles reflected the



Snuggled against the west side of Jesse Hall where sweetgum trees now stand, T-19 served UMC for more than a decade.



T-2 and T-3 stood on the 'back lawn' of Jesse Hall, later a parking area and most recently the scenic South Quad park.



Fairway Village's trailers were home to married vets while construction of the GI City barracks neared completion at left.

changed student body. "We wore our war experiences on our shoulders with pride," recalls Maxwell. Khakis could be seen all over Campus.

**LOCAL CAFE** business boomed, as not everyone savored Crowder's war-surplus-based food. Maxwell worked at Gaebler's, the legendary cafe on Conley Street. "You worked for two hours a day, seven days a week, and you got all your meals free."

Maxwell remembers beer at The Shack for 11 cents a glass. He laughs as he tells about downing three quick glasses of water at Gaebler's to fill him up before an afternoon date at The Shack so he wouldn't have to spend so much on beer. "The only eats I remember at The Shack was the big hunk of braunschweiger on whole wheat bread — they handed it to you on a piece of waxed paper and you put on the mustard."

Ol'Mizzou adjusted to all the changes, survived the veterans who survived The Barracks, and eventually dismantled the emergency housing, piece by piece. It was, after all, only supposed to be "temporary." The February 1947 issue of *Missouri Alumnus* magazine stated that "The entire group of buildings must come down with the end of the housing emergency. This is stipulated by the government in the contracts."

"Temporary" is a relative word, though, and in UMC's case temporary turned out to mean 36 years. The barracks on A through K streets have been replaced by the University Hospital and Clinics and Schools of Medicine and Nursing. This spring the last two TDs are coming down to make way for the School of Medicine's new Health Sciences Library.

**THE DEMOLITION** of TD-3 and TD-4, those barracks from Nebraska, began on April 13 with a media event. Since 1962 the two structures had been used by the School of Medicine for offices. "We have to say goodbye to these old friends," said Dean Charles C. Lobeck. Chancellor Barbara S. Uehling then bulldozed off a TD-3 porch.

Standing by with Lobeck for the demolition were Missouri Gov. Kit Bond and UM President James Olson, plus a large crowd of cheering faculty, staff and students.

Holsman remembers TD-3 and TD-4 as "the jock dorms" from his football and track days. "I really hated to see them go," he says. □