

The Magazine of the Mizzou Alumni Association

MIZZOU

The Adventures of Mark Twain

Mark Twain reopens after \$21.7 million in renovations.



Today, campus and community members were invited inside Mark Twain Residence Hall to view the \$21.7 million renovation.

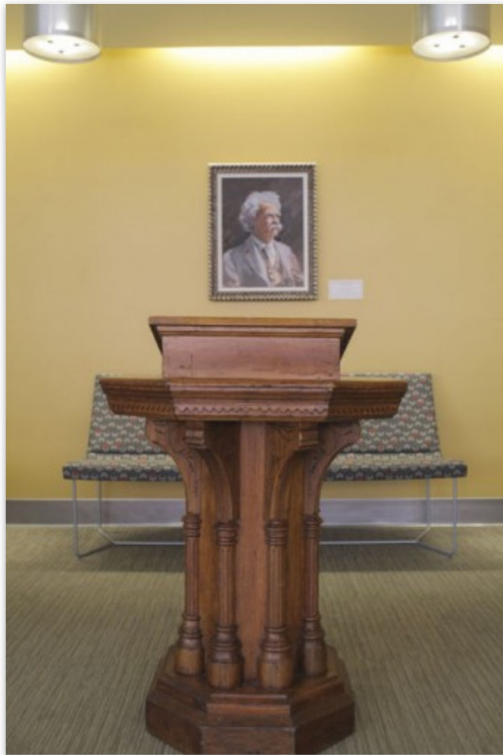
Story by Kelsey Allen

Photos by Nicholas Benner

Published Aug. 7, 2013

After undergoing \$21.7 million in renovations, Mark Twain residence hall held its grand opening Aug. 7 just in time for the fall 2013 semester.

Mark Twain was built in 1963 by the private Chicago-based University Dormitory Development Inc. and opened in 1964 to 408 students. Bought by Mizzou in 1986 for \$2.7 million, Mark Twain housed 395 students until it closed for renovations in 2011.



Samuel Clemens, better known by his pen name Mark Twain, once spoke at this lectern more than a century ago. Behind it is a painting of Clemens. After the open house, the lectern returned to its home in the Chancellor's Residence.

When the residence hall opens for students on Aug. 11, it will be home to about 380 residents. The decrease in the number of residents allowed for an increase in the community space available, including two study rooms and a lounge on each of the seven floors.

One of the biggest interior modifications included moving the sinks and medicine cabinets, which had been located in the student rooms, to a suite-style restroom space that includes a double-basined sink and enclosed shower and toilet space.

Perhaps the most noticeable change, however, is the absence of Mark Twain's outdoor pool, which was demolished to make room for more seating for The MARK on 5th Street dining facility. Before renovations, the former Mark Twain Market had a capacity of 200 diners. The rebranded The MARK on 5th Street can accommodate 250 students. As before, the dining hall will offer a variety of options, including an expanded deli with freshly baked bread and made-to-order sandwiches.

In keeping with Mizzou's commitment to sustainability, finish materials and furnishing containing recycled content were used wherever possible, building materials were purchased within a 500-mile radius if possible, and there are recycling receptacles on each floor.



A mural on the first floor of the hall shows a timeline of Mark Twain's life.

To pay homage to the building's eponym, and to replace the riverboat mosaic once located in the lobby, a mural installation provides a timeline of the life of Mark Twain, from his birth in Florida, Mo., in 1835 to his last visit to Missouri in 1902 to accept an honorary degree from the university to his death in 1910.

English Professor and pre-eminent Mark Twain scholar Tom Quirk spoke at the open house.



Junior journalism student and Mark Twain Hall Peer Adviser Elise Moser gives visitors a tour of the new facility.

“When I was asked to speak on Mark Twain for seven minutes, that posed a problem,” said Quirk, who retires Sept. 1 after 34 years at MU. “I could speak on Mark Twain for two or three hours without any trouble whatsoever.”

Quirk described Twain as a natural-born student with an insatiable curiosity. He quoted Twain, “Education consists mainly of what we have unlearned,” adding that Twain had to “unlearn” his attitudes toward race, women and politics.

“He had the good sense and good conscience to reform opinions according to logic and evidence,” Quirk said. “Being the uneducated fellow he was, he came out alright in the end.”

The renovation budget was shared by Residential Life and Campus Dining Services. As auxiliary operations — they don’t receive general operating funds from the state or university — the money for construction and operations comes from their own revenue. Student fees account for just more than 90 percent of Residential Life’s budget. Residence hall rates at Mark Twain for the 2013–14 academic year are \$6,820 each for a double and \$8,310 for a single.



The MARK on 5th Street, a dining hall inside of Mark Twain Residence Hall, can accommodate 250 students.

Hundreds of students, faculty and staff, and members of the community flocked to today's open house. Residential Life Director Frankie Minor cautioned the visitors to keep the hall clean.

“It has to be ready for students in four days,” he said.



Topics: [Academics](#), [Community](#), [History](#), [News](#), [Web Exclusives](#)

Tags: [Landmark](#), [Students](#)

Published by MIZZOU magazine, 109 Reynolds Alumni Center, Columbia, MO 65211 | Phone: 573-882-5916 | Email: mizzou@missouri.edu

Opinions expressed in this site do not necessarily reflect the official position of MU or the Mizzou Alumni Association.

© 2019 — Curators of the [University of Missouri](#). All rights reserved. [DMCA](#) and [other copyright information](#).

[An equal opportunity/access/affirmative action/pro-disabled and veteran employer.](#)