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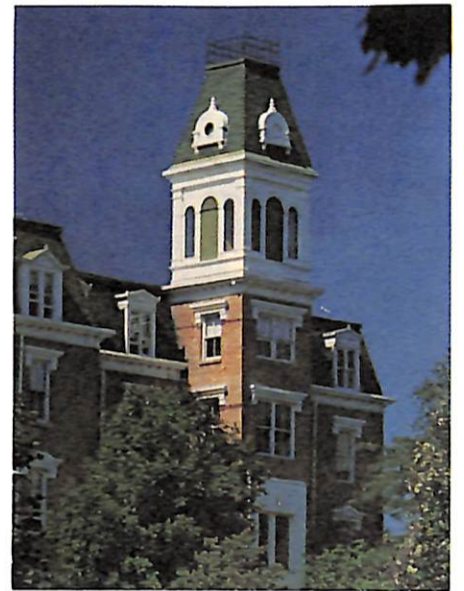
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August 1988

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DANA REVIEW

OLD MAIN BURNS



Old Main, Dana's historic 102-year-old original building, was completely destroyed by fire on Thursday morning, August 25. There were no deaths or injuries.

The cause of the fire, which began in the ceiling of a first-floor hallway in the north wing, was old electrical wiring. The north wing was the area of the building scheduled for renovation next year.

According to an investigator from the State Fire Marshal's Office, open wiring stapled to wooden beams was the only possible ignition source.

Preliminary estimates of the damage have been set at \$1.5 million. However, it is impossible to place an exact dollar figure on the loss because of the vast amounts of teaching equipment, books, and classroom materials housed in the various classrooms and faculty offices. The personal loss to individual faculty members is beyond estimation.

Housed in the building were the art, business, education, psychology, and foreign language departments, the Career Services Office, a computer laboratory and a new classroom/laboratory for color and black and white photography.

Fortunately, the teacher credential files of Dana graduates and most of the equipment in the photography lab were salvaged. And, as students, faculty members, staff and area volunteers continued to sift through the debris, other irreplaceable items were discovered.

Members of the Dana community and a crowd of area alumni and friends gathered for a prayer service in the shadow of the burned-out building that Thursday afternoon. Dana President Dr. Myrvin Christopherson characterized it as "a time for prayer, for reflecting and for thanks for the blessing Old Main has been to us.

"Then we will pull things together," he said, "get our community of alumni and friends all over the world to rally behind the College and come back stronger than before."

The building and its contents were insured, and representatives of the



Thursday morning, August 25: Students watch as fire destroys Old Main. The fire was discovered at 5:15 a.m. by custodial staff members Joan Masters and Virginia Scheibe when they came to work. Volunteer fire departments from Blair, Irvington, Kennard, Herman and Boys Town fought the blaze. Photo courtesy of Omaha World-Herald. Top photo: Old Main after 1985 restoration.

insurance company are in the process of completing a settlement.

Constructed in 1886 of handmade brick from the Blair Brickyard, Old Main was the oldest educational building in Nebraska in continuous use for its originally intended purpose.

The Danish pioneer founders who hauled those bricks by horse-drawn carts to the hillside location which was to become the home of Dana College would be proud of their 20th-century counterparts: Members of the faculty and staff, students, including members of the football and volleyball teams, and friends in the community spearheaded the cleanup process in order to be ready for the opening of the 1988-89 academic year on August 31.

After the fire Christopherson said that "approximately 15 classrooms and the same number of faculty offices were destroyed. Fortunately, we have enough other spaces on campus in which to relocate offices and

classrooms on a temporary basis.

We'll be ready to meet the needs of our students when they arrive back on campus later this week."

The tower and central section of Old Main were completed in 1886. The north wing was added in 1893 and the south wing in 1905. The four-story structure was of French Second Empire style architecture—a picturesque style popular in Denmark at the time Old Main was built.

The landmark structure was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

In its earliest days, Old Main housed all of the facilities of the College—everything from the president's residence to dormitory rooms, classrooms, dining room, kitchen, library and chapel.

The braced-timber, wood-frame structure sat on a brick foundation

with a brick veneer exterior. It had remained essentially the same over the past 102 years.

Some remodeling work was completed in the building during the 1950s. A major renovation program, divided into three phases, was started in 1984. The first two phases of the renovation had been completed at the time of the fire. The third phase was scheduled for the summer of 1989.

After examining the condition of the remaining structure on August 29, engineers from Dallas, Texas, and Preferred Risk Group Insurance of Des Moines, the insurance carrier, declared Old Main a complete loss. The tower was demolished at 10 a.m. Tuesday, August 30, and the remaining structure is also being razed.

College officials are currently considering all possibilities for the replacement of the structure. >>



Blair firm gives check for \$250,000

President Christopherson '61 stands in front of burned-out Old Main with first major gift toward new building (see story below). *Photo by John Christensen '54.*

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Ann (Harms '54) George, Editor/Director, Alumni Affairs

Calls of sympathy, offers of help...

Even as Old Main burned, the college was receiving heartwarming calls of sympathy, support and offers of help from alumni and friends, Blair businesses, churches and sister colleges in Nebraska who learned of the disaster through extensive news coverage.

Callers were especially concerned about the following faculty members who had lost their offices, classrooms, and some or all of their files, books, lecture notes and teaching materials—in several cases, their life's work: in art, Milt Heinrich and Jim Olsen; in education/psychology—Bernie Matthies, Shirley McAllister, Kay Ferguson, Dorothy Olson; in business—Gil Ragan, Michael Doyle, David Miller; in foreign languages—Sybille Bartels and Diana Brown.

Because classes were to begin in less than a week, new arrangements for office and classroom space had to be made quickly. Professors in education/psychology, business and foreign languages and Mary Jo Kubic of Career Services now have their offices on the second floor of Rasmussen Hall, and the art department has moved into the Madsen Performing Arts Center.

"Thankfully, we had enough space, but it wasn't easy," said Phil Pagel, vice president for institutional advancement.

Replacing teaching and classroom materials has been more difficult. Several alumni have already offered their former professors class notes, teaching aids, books and other materials. Those wishing to help are invited to call the respective faculty member. »

Replacing Old Main—Great Plains gives major gift

Within days after fire destroyed Old Main, a Blair business gave Dana a major gift to be used toward replacing the building.

President Myrvin Christopherson announced on August 30 that Great Plains Communications Co. had given the college a check for \$250,000.

In a prepared statement, Robert C. Hunt, chairman of the Board of Great Plains, said, "Great Plains is proud of its partnership with Dana College. Many of our employees, their children, our subscribers and their children have attended Dana in the past. And to insure that opportunities continue to be available to future generations at Dana, we are prepared to demonstrate our belief in and support of the College in a tangible way." »

(Remembering, from page 4)

Later in the morning someone on the hillside called out, "There's a rainbow!!!" And clusters of people looked up to see the smoking, burning Tower. And truly, a rainbow's arc could be seen amidst the spray of the firehoses focused on the Tower.

On Tuesday, August 30, about ten minutes after 10 o'clock a.m., the wooden portion of the Tower was pulled down. It had been so weakened by the fire damage that engineers feared a strong wind might topple it.

Seven days have passed since the fire. I will never forget the sadness, the awful feelings of loss. Old Main had always been there for me. Now it is gone. What does this mean to me and to the college I love and serve?

I am completely ready to affirm that Dana is not a building. I know that the numbing pain so many of us feel comes from the fact that Old Main and the Tower was such a powerful symbol of Dana College. It was a symbol that all Danians of all ages could share.

But what did Old Main symbolize for me and for many, many others? It was a symbol, I believe, of the dauntless spirit, of the deep Christian faith, of the firm moral courage, of the love of learning, of the desire for an educated clergy and laity, of the firmly held belief that faith and knowledge ought to be partners, and that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

For me it was a link to the past which had carried us to the present time when we still care about more than just learning some things. When we are at our best, we care as an institution about the faith life of our students, about their integrity and about their moral and ethical standards and behavior. We want them to grow and mature as men and women physically, emotionally, morally, spiritually, intellectually. If they do not leave here as people willing to accept responsibility for themselves, people who are responsible to God and to

From the President

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Thursday, August 25, will go down in Dana's history as one of our darkest moments. The fire which destroyed Old Main caused many tears to be shed throughout the local community and among the Dana community worldwide. Many of you have written to express your concerns, to offer your condolences and to share your grief as well as suggestions for replacement.

You need to know that the engineers and other specialists who have examined Old Main after the fire have found the building structurally unsound. Much of the building was destroyed. What remained standing was so thoroughly damaged by water and heat that the building has to be razed. Even now, two construction companies are preparing bids to determine the extent of replacement costs. It is too early to indicate what our insurance settlement will be, but I am encouraged by the fact that we were properly insured. While our settlement will not likely cover the cost of a new building of our choice, it will go some distance toward rebuilding. Many of you have asked that Old Main be restored exactly as she was or with some features of the previous structure. Most often mentioned is the Tower. I cannot tell you that this will be done. I can only say that all suggestions will be taken into account. I do know that what we must do is plan for all of Dana's building needs for the next generations of Dana students. I believe that whatever the replacement building proves to be, it must be a very special, an extraordinary structure, one that serves as a landmark for many decades to come.

I am grateful to the many faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends in the area who have come to assist us in this time of need. Many have assisted with clean-up or the salvage of bricks and the few remaining features of the Old Main of a hundred years ago. Many may have forgotten that most of the interior and exterior of Old Main has been completely redone one or more times over the century, and so very few original features remained at the time of the fire. Nonetheless, we do want to respect, remember and celebrate the past of Old Main. We also want to seize upon this occasion

to build anew something fine and serviceable as well as beautiful, something which glorifies the purposes of this institution as the church of Jesus Christ in higher education.

I am pleased that we have been able to relocate faculty and staff into other quarters, not a suitable substitute for Old Main but, nonetheless, we have been able to provide areas where students are being served with minimal disruption. Many faculty members lost virtually all of their life savings of books and learning resources, as well as personal items. Regrettably, our insurance will cover only a small fraction of what has been lost of the personal property of faculty and staff. However, I am pleased to report that Dana people are resilient and determined people who will continue to provide excellence in teaching and service. Nonetheless, we do need your prayers and your support.

Because our needs are increased with the loss of Old Main, our ADD (Accelerating Dana's Development) campaign which will be launched this year, inviting gifts and pledges over a three-year period with a goal of almost \$10 million (including \$3 million in planned gifts and almost \$7 million in cash), must now be expanded to include Old Main. I am delighted that the lead gift to help us replace Old Main and attend to campus needs came from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hunt and the stockholders of their company, Great Plains Communications of Blair. The first gifts of land and financial support to establish Old Main 102 years ago came from Blair residents, and it is most fitting and heartwarming that this should be repeated in the gift from the Hunts and their company.

Let us weep at the loss of Old Main, but let us also rejoice in the good memories we have of that grand and beautiful building. Let us, too, rededicate ourselves to the high calling of Christian education service which has been Dana's for 104 years. We will rise from this tragedy, healthier and stronger and more determined than ever to serve. I am confident that, with God's help and yours, ours will be a bright future!

Myrvin F. Christopherson
President

others, we have failed.

It doesn't always work out that way. But that's what we want. That's why we're here.

That's why Ginny and I were eager to send our three children, John '76, Barbara '77 and Eric '82 to this uncommon school. There were much less expensive places they could have gone nearer home in California.

I thought of the five generations of our family that has been blessed by Dana College as I said goodbye to Old Main and the Tower. And I was thankful to God for Dana.

Thankful that my children studied science from teachers who teach the sciences in a building that has a plaque in the entry way which reads:

*And let those learn
Who here shall meet*

*True wisdom is with reverence crowned
And science walks with humble feet,
To seek the God which faith has found.*

And I am certain that the pioneers who built Old Main and her Tower would be thankful for that, too.

It just may be that this is the "Dana difference." »

Aerial view shows damage to historic structure

The gutted building was declared a total loss and is being razed. Efforts to save the Tower were unsuccessful. Old Main was on the National Register of Historic Places. Photo courtesy of Blair Pilot-Tribune.



Alumnus fights fire: "I kept thinking, 'Old Main, it can't burn down.' "

by Tim Nietfeld '80

Editor's note: Dana graduate Tim Nietfeld fought the fire in Old Main as a member of Blair's Volunteer Fire Department. Here he describes his experiences and thoughts as he and other volunteers struggled against the blaze.

First need to preface this article with this comment. When I came to Dana College as a freshman in the fall of 1976 and heard that Blair, Nebraska, was supported by a volunteer fire department and rescue squad, I was not really impressed. All I could picture was something a little more than a bucket brigade. . . I was wrong.

My alarm had sounded at a little before five a.m. and as usual it was now 5:20 and I was still in bed listening to a rather interesting version of "Nearer My God to Thee." I cannot remember if it was finished or not when the Plectron (a type of alarm system for the fire department) went off. I heard "Blair Fire Call, Structure Fire, Old Main, Dana College." There was something else after that, but I didn't pay a lot of attention. I was busy grabbing clothes and keys and heading out the door.

I was riding in the back of 860, a utility truck equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus, roof ventilating saws, first aid supplies, etc., putting on an air pack, making sure that the belts were tight and that the mask fit. Brian Klanderud was on the bench across from me, also getting an air pack on. Since I had not had much interior fire fighting experience, he was going through a mental check list with me to make sure that I had not forgotten anything. I don't remember much of the ride up the Hill, but I kept thinking, Old Main, it can't burn down.

We pulled in on the north side of the building off College Drive, drove up on the grass and parked on the east side of the north wing. When we all unloaded from the truck, the only fire that we could see was coming from a window on the north side, second floor. My first reaction was "piece of cake," we should have this out in no time. . . I was wrong again. We made an attack from the inside on that room and by the time we thought we had that extinguished, they were bringing another line up to the third floor because they now had fire up above where we had just been.

One of the guys said that they needed help, so I assisted in running that line up another flight. I no sooner got to the third floor than the bell went off on my air pack (letting me know that I had only enough air to get out of the building), and as I went back downstairs the fire seemed to have gotten worse on the second floor.

Bud Jensen, a 50-year member of the department, was changing air bottles and he fitted a full one on my

pack. He asked me how things were on the inside and I said jokingly that it was a lot different than when I was attending classes. It was then that I started to think about all the time that I had spent in that building. German classes, econ, theatre, music, just to name a few.

It was my third or fourth time in when I first started to feel the frustration of wanting to get this fire out and knowing that every attack we made seemed to control it a little, but fire would eventually break out somewhere else. I was now on the third floor. Ernie Brennies, an assistant chief, was leading an attack on the southeast room—I believe what was an education room. He instructed us to get down low and when he pushed the door in, black smoke would roll out, and then we'd go in and hit it with the water. We would spray for four or five seconds and then wait to see if we got it. It would do some good for a brief time, but then the fire would eventually flare back. The guy who was ahead of me on the nozzle was out of air, so he left to get a fresh bottle, and everyone else on the line moved up. I tried to get into the room a little farther, but the heat only allowed entry a few feet. I tried to spray with longer blasts of water, but the fire always came back even stronger. It was at this point that I started to think of all the things that were being destroyed. All the books, records, class notes, patterns, chairs, tables and desks, not to mention the memories.

I (along with 40 or 50 other seniors) remember taking all the desks out of the building late one night and spelling 1980 out on the east lawn. We even underlined it. And I remember crawling up on the Tower with Gary Cissell and Skip Brown and lashing the president's parking sign (I think that was the same night we filled his office with balloons) to the wrought iron around the top of the Tower. Oh yeah, and there were some classes there too.

I got a lung full of smoke and told the guy who was behind me that I had to get out. I was thinking to myself as I was crawling down the stairs. Where the hell is the fire coming from. When I got outside I learned that Dale Olsen had been taken to the hospital for smoke inhalation and heat exhaustion. Up to this point I had not really thought about the danger, but I now realized that no building is worth losing a life. I looked at the Tower which was now partially in flames and knew that we were doing the best anyone could do.

We made one more attack on the fourth floor. As we walked up the stairs we had to stop on each floor to rest before going up the next flight. I found it ironic that, as a student, I remembered carrying sacks of clay up those stairs to the art department and felt a very similar pain and shortness of breath. We were in the northeast corner of the art department. Brian and Rick Nielsen were ahead of me. We would hit the fire with water for a few seconds and then feel the steam conversion come back down on top of



A crane lifts off debris in an effort to salvage faculty files and records. Photo by John Christensen '54.

us. Even though the heat seemed unbearable, we knew that once you can feel the steam, you know you're making progress. It was shortly after that when we were called back down. Irvington 450 (an 85-foot aerial) was hitting the roof with a deluge gun, something to the tune of 1,500 gallons per minute. I remember the ceiling tiles dropping on us and recalling how things like that used to happen at Alumni Memorial Auditorium, only then you didn't have to have a fire.

When we got back down I remember all the help everyone was giving. Members of the Firemen's Auxiliary, assisted by Dana people, were serving water, pop, coffee, and cookies. And Dana's faculty and staff and students were helping carry things from the building once it was stable enough to go in. All we had to do was ask and there were more than enough willing hands. I thought to myself, "That's the way it's always been around here."

I was told that we had the fire under control about 10:30 a.m.

At the time I am writing this I am not sure what the status of the building will be, but I want to offer these final comments.

First of all: It was a unique experience to fight a fire in Old Main. Not only because of the challenge, but because of the memories. I want to take this time to thank Catfish, Dinger, Hooknose, Bobbo, Loonie,

Dazzler, Spud, and the many others who were patient enough to train me with their knowledge and experience.

Second and final: Old Main has given education her best. She has stood strong for more than a century and has helped in giving Dana College the strength to get through some rough times that would have crippled most other schools. Let us not let emotion and sentiment get in the way of progress, safety, and excellence of education. Let her rest! And in her place build something bigger, better, and stronger that will take Dana College through another century. >>

About teacher credentials: Although teacher credentials were salvaged from the fire, they were damaged by smoke and water. Alumni concerned about their credentials can write to Mary Jo Kubie of Dana's Career Services Office for update revision forms. Please enclose a check for \$20 made out to Dana College.

About bricks: Alumni and friends who'd like to have a souvenir of Old Main will be able to purchase a brick at Homecoming or order one by mail. At the time this special edition of the Review was prepared, a price had not yet been determined. For details, please write to Dana's Alumni Office.

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DANA COLLEGE



REMEMBERING OLD MAIN

Norman C. Bansen '47,

Professor Emeritus
of English and Danish

When I was a grade school boy in Ferndale, California, I saw my first photograph of Old Main in "The Ansgar Lutheran," national news magazine of the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church published in Blair. My mother commented that possibly I would someday attend that college; until then I had not thought about anything that far away in time.

In August of 1939, just short of half a century ago, I glimpsed Old Main from a bus south of Blair on the last lap of a 2,000-mile bus trip by a young freshman. A taxi from Blair brought me to the quadrangle west of Old Main. Three years later on a bright late spring morning I said goodbye to the middle-aged Old Main, already then far more than a building to me: I waiked over and gave the north wall a farewell pat, knowing that the war would prevent my return that fall.

After four years of army service I was back for my senior year and editorship of the "Danian." I convinced the business manager that we needed space for the staff in a small room on the fourth floor of Old Main, central section. Elizabeth Solevad, now Nielsen, was staff artist and soon had an impressive mural on the wall. The associate editors were Elizabeth J. Hansen, now Hungerford, and Paul Simon, now a U.S. Senator and this year among the Presidential candidates.

For 33 years, beginning in 1953, my office was on third floor of Pioneer Memorial with a splendid winter view of Old Main; summer curtained the building with the foliage of fine old trees. That view often reminded me of lines I had chosen from Tagore to accompany the frontispiece photograph of the Tower in the 1947 "Danian":

Be not ashamed, my brothers, to stand before the proud and the powerful with your white robe of simpleness, Let your crown be of humility, your freedom of the soul, Build God's throne daily upon the ample bareness of your poverty, and know that what is huge is not great and pride is not everlasting.

One summer afternoon in the 1970s as I was strolling across the campus I learned that Old Main is far-famed. Recognizing two young men as travelers, I spoke to them. One of them said, "This is a sentimental journey for me. My father, Ansgar Christensen, came to Dana as a student in the 1920s from his New Zealand home. I grew up with a large photograph of Old Main over the mantel in our home." Perhaps that New Zealander is the pilgrim who has traveled farthest to see our Old Main.

I stood at dawn yesterday morning on the redwood deck of my home for a last glimpse of the Tower rising above the graceful gables and stone chimneys of the house built by the late Professor J.P. and Gertrude Nielsen. Shortly after 10 o'clock the Tower, burned beyond any restoration, was pulled down. Time and fire claimed those walls and that Tower; today another throng rose up and sang "Hail Dana" at the impressive opening convocation after James Cloyd, our first black student body president, had spoken eloquently and movingly about the Dana family. And I remembered that it was my "Danian" associate Paul Simon who as student body president in 1947-48 arranged for a scholarship that brought the first black student to Dana.

Lara Jean McBride,

a senior from
Wheat Ridge, Colorado

As a prospective student, I was constantly reminded of the fact that at Dana, the people are a family. The community is more than just individual people. Everyone works toward common ideals. It has become even more evident to me this past week than ever before.

When Old Main started to smolder, it was as if the community was trying to save a friend's life. People felt as if a member of the family was dying. I believe a member of the family did in fact pass away. As we watched the flames claim Old Main's long life, it was like watching a slow death and feeling as if there was nothing we could do. The helpless feeling consumed us all, but there were rays of hope that began to shine through every passing minute.

The first sign of hope occurred when there were tangible objects being taken out of the building. Desks, equipment, books, etc. In comparison to what was lost, it seemed like a small amount, but there was more to come. Although the fire consumed most of what was in the building, and I realize we will never be able to fully replace the items, there are some things that fire didn't touch.

You see, as a student, I helped create a lot of memories in that building over the past three years. The fire can never remove those. I remember wanting desperately to save the table in Shirley McAllister's office. I know the sentiment that she shared with me concerning that table's history. I slowly began to realize that the memory of that table will never leave me.

Old Main is gone, along with the table and other precious items. I am thankful that I was able to create memories with other people. I will be able to share those memories with future generations. But, it isn't like the members of this family to dwell

on the past. Aren't we always looking forward to the future?

I am excited about the fact that during my next two years here at Dana, I will be able to start making memories in a new building. I actually get to help start a new story. It also makes me look forward with a great deal of hopefulness when I realize who will be working to make this dream happen. It's more than just individuals, it's the Dana Family. The same family that built Old Main now has a chance to leave a new mark in history. So, I value the time I shared in Old Main; however, I can't help but look forward to working with my family in the pursuit of a new common ideal. The love that has kept this family together until now, will only help to make our future brighter!

John Beck '50,

Director of Church Relations
and Planned Giving

Old Main was burning. The worst fears of generations of Danians were coming true.

The shadows of the first students who used to carry coal to their fourth floor rooms and then worry about the threat of fire seemed to be dancing in the flames. Old Main was truly burning this time.

I stood below on the hillside where I used to sleigh ride as a boy, wiped away a tear, and watched the hungry flames eating away at the mansard roof and licking at the edges of the Tower. The old building had lasted for nearly 102 years. It was clear that nothing could save it now.

I thought about my father, Marcus Beck, now 88, whose life has been so entwined with this building. I feared that he would find its loss more than he could bear. Somewhere we have a picture of him as a five-year-old, standing on the emerging foundation of Old Main's south wing. The picture was taken with his grandfather, old Marcus Beck, in 1905.

Dad attended Dana (Class of '22), was on the commercial faculty for a year, was a co-chairman of the 1920s fund drive for the old gym (AMA), served two terms on the college Board of Trustees, and has always loved Dana deeply. He met the woman he was married to for nearly 60 years at Dana.

The sounds of the flames crackled in the crisp morning air. A piece of burning wood fell near the old stairwell entrance on the east end of the south wing. That stairwell was removed in the remodeling done in the late 1950s. No door now, just bricks. In the '40s and '50s it was a place for courting. Much of the building was. The piano was not the only thing practiced in practice rooms. Old Main was a place to talk, to feel the stirrings of love, to share intimate thoughts in the protecting darkness.

There were times in Dana's history when Old Main was the only warm place on the campus where a young couple could go on a cold winter's night and share some time alone. Many very strong marriages have come out of relationships with their roots in and around Old Main.

I met my wife, Ginny, at Dana, as my brother, Marc, met his wife, Peggy, and my father met mother and our sons John and Eric came to know their wives, Julie and Heidi. Danians have had love affairs with truth, with knowledge, with the Christian faith and with other students over the years. Some chose to be married in the little chapel that used to be on the fourth floor of the north wing. Marc and Peggy were married there.

Strangely, the old stairwell that led to the chapel survived the fire. The deep indentations in the steps worn in by the generations of Danians since 1893, were not even charred.

The fourth floor was nearly burned off now. The eyes played more tricks, and shadows seemed to move through the flames. The art department was nearly all consumed by the fire. Do memories burn, too?

Memories from its years as a chemistry laboratory. . . or far back in time when those first students carried coal to warm themselves in their dormitory rooms. Do memories burn?

I stood below on the hill and watched those hungry flames and I was deeply sorry that my two granddaughters, Dana and Erica, children of John and Julie's Dana marriage, would never know this building when, God willing, they come here to this place as students.

There were so many thoughts to think and inward tears to shed.

And then I noticed the man who stood next to me. And I was glad to see him, for he is a friend and I knew that it was fitting that we should be standing here together. He felt it, too, for we both knew the stories of a century ago when the Tower was built.

The man next to me was John Wolsmann, who farms near Blair. His grandfather, also named John Wolsmann, was just getting started as a young immigrant and was working for my great grandfather, Marcus Beck, who farmed near Orum. Grandfather was also treasurer of the first board.

In the 1959 college history, "Saga of the Tower," Dr. William Christensen records information from an interview with John Wolsmann. He still remembered it well. He told of driving the team and wagon provided by Grandfather to haul the bricks from the brickyard to the building site on the Hill.

Is it pressing truth to think that Marcus Beck and John Wolsmann once stood on the hill, side by side, and gladly watched the Tower rise? I know that two of their grandsons stood on the hill, side by side, and sadly watched the Tower burn.

(continued on page 2)