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A Dream Come True

ANDREWS, ANDREASEN UNVEIL BULLER HALL

BY KERI SUAREZ

I have been dreaming of this day for a good many years. And here it is,” said Andrews University president, Niels-Erik Andreasen, on Friday, July 29, while standing in front of the newest building at the University. It was a long-awaited day—the grand opening of the 42,000-square-foot, $9 million Buller Hall. This building project, which began more than 17 years ago, completes half of the new Undergraduate Learning Center located in the heart of the campus.

More than 300 Andrews University faculty, staff, Board members, donors and neighbors from the southwest Michigan community came to be among the first to walk the new corridors of Buller Hall. During the brief ribbon-cutting ceremony, Niels-Erik welcomed all the guests. David Faehner, vice president for University Advancement, expressed deep appreciation to numerous individuals for their support, specifically Allan and Mickey Buller, the lead donors for Buller Hall. David also noted the 500-plus donors who made this building project a reality. He also acknowledged The Troyer Group of Mishawaka, Indiana, architects for Buller Hall, and CSM Group of Kalamazoo, Michigan, for their project management.

When Allan stepped behind the podium, his words cast his vision for Buller Hall. “To the students who come here—I’d like to suggest that they keep their hearts open to the relationships that can be established here. The building was designed to encourage social, spiritual and academic relationships,” he said. Niels-Erik then presented the President’s Medallion to Allan. This special honor is reserved for special friends of Andrews who have built bridges between the University and the community.

Niels-Erik shared that this building represents a promise. Some time ago, during a conversation between him and Allan about the then-proposed building project, Allan asked Niels-Erik, “Can you promise me,” he implored, “that in future years
there will still be a good Christian college up north in Michi-
gan where young adults can receive a first-class Christian col-
lege education?” Niels-Erik committed to the promise, asking
for Allan’s help in return.

“This is where students will become Christian college men
and women. This is where the idea of a university is realized.
Andrews University will never be better than the quality of ed-
ucation offered here in English 101, Communication 101, Re-
ligion 101, etc.” said Niels-Erik. “That is what I promised all
these years ago—to establish such a center, to revive the heart
of the university right here in the oldest part of campus where
everything begins. I made this promise to myself, but of course
I cannot keep it by myself. So now I ask the faculty, staff and
students to help carry out that promise. It will take a while, but
it is well worth pursuing.”

“This building is built for students,” said Keith Mattingly,
dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. “It’s a building that
invites one to stay and study.” After thanking numerous indi-
viduals for their contributions to making this dream become
reality, Keith, whose voice started to break with emotion, said,
“In the end, there is one person who really gets a lot of credit
for today ... that person is Dick Scott.” Dick is director of fa-
cilities management and oversaw the myriad of details that ac-
companied the 15-month building project.

Clay McCausland, who attended on behalf of congressman
Fred Upton, offered these words: “Y et again, Andrews Uni-
versity stands as a leader in our community, and for that, I am
deeply grateful. Thank you for your vision and dedication to
providing high caliber education in southwest Michigan.”

After a special prayer of dedication offered by Andrews
University’s Board of Trustees chair, Benjamin D. Schoun, Al-
lan and Mickey, joined by several other University officials, of-
officially cut a large blue ribbon hanging in front of the main
entrance to Buller Hall. Then, all were invited indoors for
building tours and refreshments.

The first day of classes in Buller Hall and the newly reno-
ated Nethery Hall was Monday, August 22.

ABOUT BULLER HALL

Buller Hall is home to three academic departments, the Red
Rose Chapel, a student lounge and the Newbold Auditorium,
which is one of eight classrooms. It was built in a collegiate
Gothic architecture style that mirrors the style of its companion building, Nethery Hall. An indoor bridge walkway connects Buller and Nethery halls, allowing students easy access between the two buildings—particularly in times of inclement weather.

The three academic departments housed in Buller are the Department of Behavioral Sciences, the Department of History & Political Science, and the Department of Religion & Biblical Languages. Each of these departments’ suites is designed with a reception desk, a workroom, faculty offices and a common area with a lounge area surrounding a fireplace. Each department has a Gothic arch-shaped display case located in the main hallway where they can showcase their discipline.

An Andrews University floor mosaic on the main level, designed by Sarah Mitchell of The Troyer Group, mimics the mosaic compass in the Nethery Hall Four Points Lobby.

Occupancy sensors controlling the lighting throughout the building promote energy savings, safety and ambiance. The ample seating provided by the benches located throughout the main hallways will encourage student to stick around awhile after class.

NEWBOLD AUDITORIUM

Although unable to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony, Robson and Isabel Newbold are the donors for Newbold Auditorium. Robson attended Andrews, where he became close friends of Allan and Mickey. It was that friendship that led Robson and Isabel to be part of the Buller Hall project.

With a seating capacity of 260, the auditorium will primarily be used for larger general education classes. Each seat in the auditorium has its own power outlet; and the large screen, projection capabilities and voice acoustics make it an ideal space for lectures. The auditorium also includes a green room, temporary curtains and side rooms to facilitate drama productions.

RANDALL STUDENT LOUNGE

Numerous individuals gave gifts for specific rooms or areas in Buller Hall, including the Randalls. Much to Barbara Randall’s surprise, her husband, Charles, gave a special gift toward the Buller Hall project in honor of his wife. The plaque by the entrance to the Student Lounge reads, “This student lounge made possible through the generosity of The Charles Randall Family in honor of Barbara Randall.”

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, a small gathering was held in the Student Lounge, announcing this gift to Barbara. Charles said, “I asked Barbara out on our first date about 75 feet away from where we are standing today. Andrews has been wonderful to us, and it’s a big part of our lives.”

RED ROSE CHAPEL

A unique feature of Buller Hall is the Red Rose Chapel, a tiny, intimate prayer chapel located on the northwest end of the building. Keith says, “The only purpose for this chapel is prayer and meditation.”

The Red Rose Chapel is a gift from Hans and Herta von Stiegel, who met when they were students at Andrews University. The chapel is dedicated to their parents, Georg and Johanna Ludwig and Jack and Ruth von Stiegel, and named “Red Rose Chapel” in honor of Hans’ ancestor, Henry William Stiegel. A seventeenth century ironsmith, famed glass-maker and philanthropist, Henry “commonly used a red rose as decoration in things which were special to him,” says Hans.

ABOUT ALLAN AND MICKEY BULLER

Allan and Mickey met and began courting in the spring of 1939 while attending Emmanuel Missionary College. They both studied business administration, and Allan exhibited a spirit of service and leadership as president of the student body and president of his senior class. After graduation and military duty, the couple married and established their individual careers. Mickey earned a teaching certificate and was a Title I reading specialist for elementary students. Allan had a successful career at Worthington Foods, culminating as president and chairman of the Board. The Bullers made their home in Worthington, Ohio, where they raised their four children. They are active members at the Worthington Seventh-day Adventist Church. Buller Hall now stands on the campus location where Allan proposed to Mickey.

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