

The way we were

Glimpses of Andrews in print

by Kelley Wilson

Imagine Andrews University over 100 years ago. Is it hard for you? It was hard for me. It took all the energy I had to conceive of a place (and time) without cars, radios, televisions and computers.

Imagine Andrews University, 1874. Only, it's not Andrews University, and it's not in Berrien Springs. It's Battle Creek College, and it's in Battle Creek. In 1874, the College was founded partly because of "the reluctance on the part of many parents to send their children to schools wherein a constant contact with corrupt youth cannot be avoided," according to the 1876-77 College Bulletin.

The original campus was built on twelve acres and cost \$16,000 (that's less than a full year of undergraduate tuition and fees now!).

In 1874, the College offered three "degrees" which they called courses. There was the Classical Course that spanned a five-year period. Students taking this course received knowledge from the "classical" world: Latin, Greek, math, sciences, astronomy, etc. Then there was the English Course, a three-year course that was provided for "those who don't want languages." (I would have opted for the English Course.) The third course, the Special Course, was a two-year intensive for students who would be missionaries or factory workers. All the basics were taught in the Special Course: history, English, spelling, Bible, math, etc., according to the bulletin.

At Battle Creek College in 1874 they were all about studying, and they were serious. Strict rules governed the students in their daily life. "In passing to and from recitations any communication or unnecessary delay is particularly forbidden," says the 1875-76 bulletin. *They were forbidden to talk to each other on the sidewalk!* So, take heart, those of you who felt less than bold about introducing yourself to strangers between classes on campus—you're

simply operating under an old rule of Andrews.

They were not only forbidden to talk on campus, they couldn't talk to each other in the buildings either: "Students shall not communicate with each other in the building during school session." The administration later expanded that rule in 1876: "Students are required to abstain from communicating with one another by talking, whispering, writing, nudging, or other annoying gestures."

Things were simple back in 1874. There wasn't much to think about—the rules spelled it out. Absences were simple: "When the number of unexcused delinquencies amounts to ten, the student ceases to be a member of the school."

Socialization was extremely limited: you probably wouldn't have heard "What are you doing tonight, Shirley?" very often. The bulletin stated: "Students are expected to go to their homes or boarding places immediately upon the closing of the session . . . and they are not to go out evenings nor go down to the business part of the city." In 1875, the first curfew was enforced. "Students will be required to be in their rooms at, and after, half-past eight o'clock in the evening." And dating was also simple—it just didn't occur. Flirting wasn't even allowed. In the 1870s, it was the practice that "everything like a spirit of courtship and flirtation should be frowned down," and "gentlemen must not escort the ladies upon the street or to and from public gatherings."

Then, in 1901, the College moved to Berrien Springs and was named Emmanuel Missionary College. Some things had changed. By this time, the degree programs had expanded to include The Ministry, The Canvassers' Department, the Medical Missionary Department, the Music Department and the Domestic Department, which was

Past
&
Present
Future

added especially for women because “no amount of intellectual culture can compensate a young woman for the lack of the training that should make her a homemaker in the practical . . . sense.” By this time, students’ curfew was 9:30, and they were required to be living in dormitories.

Some things hadn’t changed. The bulletin of 1915 stated: “It does not seem best to permit any mode of escorting during school life because general permission would bring a spirit of sentimentalism into the school which would interfere with study and good order, while discrimination would be regarded as favoritism, producing jealousy and leading to reckless transgression.”

Consequently, the men and women couldn’t leave campus together either. “Tuesday, the young ladies may go to the village. Thursday is set apart for the young men.” (Although, no doubt there still wasn’t much to see in Berrien Springs in 1915.)

And students think it’s hard to get an overnight leave now? In 1930, if students wanted to leave campus, they had to get slips signed from the head of the department where they worked, the dean of the home where they lived, and the president of the college, who may have also required a written statement from a parent or guardian.

So if you couldn’t date and you couldn’t leave campus and you had to be in your room at 9:30 when the lights went out, what could you do? Play sports, right? No. “Because of the unwholesome spirit of rivalry and habitual waste of time resulting from games, we cannot encourage them.”

The College also provided rules governing dress and modesty (that strangely applied solely to women). In 1930, students read in the bulletin, “Every young woman should acquaint herself with the standards of the institution and come prepared to adapt herself fully to them.”

By 1955, the rules about flirting and courtship had been abolished, but you couldn’t go any farther than those two activities. “Students will not be permitted to marry during the school year. Announcements of engagements, shower invitations or wedding invitations may not be sent out earlier than one month before the close of the school year. A clan-

destine marriage during a vacation period may disqualify an applicant for acceptance or may cause a student dismissal.”

So, imagine Andrews University evolving over the past 124 years. For the majority of that period of time, communication wasn’t allowed, definitely not cross-gender communication. Cars weren’t allowed. Curfews were strict. Sports were forbidden. Fraternizing was unheard of. What did they do all day? Probably studied. And actually graduated (on time!). And had outstanding relationships with the Lord. Probably.

Sometimes I think I would have liked it back then after all.

Past & Present Future

Did you know?

- **They had rules for terrorists attending Battle Creek College? “No ball or missile is to be thrown, tossed, or struck outside the limits of the playground” (1875)**
- **In 1880, dormitories were considered unsafe for the healthful moral growth of students?**
- **In 1900, students in the Education Department could specialize to teach “sloyd”?**
- **Birch Hall, a residence hall for women at EMC, also housed the college dining room and an isolation ward?? (1945)**
- **In 1955, they taught classes like Filing, Secretarial Practice, and Experimental Cookery?**
- **In 1975, freshmen having cars were required to leave their keys and license plates with the dean?**
- **In 1975, the Vice President for Student Affairs had to give his approval if you wanted to get married? Who gives this man to this woman? The Vice President.**