



# 40 Years in the Making

by Karen Pearson

IMAGINE LEAVING ANDREWS AND NOT RETURNING FOR  
OVER 40 YEARS. WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU MOST  
NOTICE AFTER SUCH A RIP VAN WINKLE EXPERIENCE?

Every year the Alumni House sees hundreds of visitors, many returning to their alma mater for the first time in decades. That was the case with Dr. Herbert Holden, who recently paid a visit to campus. Last here in 1963, he noticed there were more than a few changes that had taken place during his absence.

As a student, in 1936 Herbert Holden had a choice of three things he could be “when he grew up.” As his father explained it to him, his options were “to preach, teach or practice medicine.”

Holden chose to attend Emmanuel Missionary College where his interests drew him to the sciences—biology and chemistry, with a little history on the side. As a premed student, his ultimate goal lay in the area of medical research.

However, Holden’s Andrews experience began long before 1936. In the mid 1920s, his father brought the family to Berrien Springs when he became president of the

Lake Union Conference. Holden entered EMC Elementary School and went on to attend the Academy. He remembers walking to school in the severe Michigan winters, with the wind howling about him, struggling through snow that often reached his waist.

After high school, Holden attended EMC for two years when enrollment stood somewhere between 600–700 students. During that time he was impacted profoundly by the self-sacrificing spirit of his professors, and their obvious commitment to serving the best interests of their students. He fondly remembers classes he took with professors Phipps, Hollands and Thiele. His experience at EMC, with its focus on serving, provided a good foundation for the five decades he would later spend as a doctor in private practice.

After two years at EMC, Holden studied for a year at the University of Wisconsin, before transferring to Loma Linda in the fall of 1939. Believing he had his life and

career well mapped out, Holden was one of the many young Americans whose lives drastically changed course with the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Shortly after marching to receive his diploma, Holden joined the navy and marched to Idaho for basic boot-camp training.

Farragut Naval Training Station was located 30 miles from Sandpoint, at the southern tip of Lake Pend Oreille. It had been built in 1942, as a direct result of the Pearl Harbor attack, and was the second largest naval training center in the world. Within 15 months a total of 293,381 soldiers would pass through its gates to receive their basic training.

of ensuring high standards of medical education and ethics, and developing programs to serve the health needs of the public.

Holden also joined the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), serving as a member of their Board of Directors for 6 years and as President of the national organization in 1975. His involvement led to extensive traveling, speaking and writing. His articles and papers have been published in numerous medical journals. He attributes his love of public speaking to the early training he received from his pastor father.

During his 50 years in practice, Holden witnessed many

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While there, Holden became part of a community of 60,000 men and worked in its 5,000-bed hospital. He remembers serving in wards that held 50 beds, and in each bed, a man suffering from pneumonia, scarlet fever or meningitis. Many of these patients had tubes protruding from their chests, draining away fluid from their lungs. In those days the doctors considered themselves fortunate to have penicillin for treating their patients.

After the completion of his basic training Holden began a four-year stint serving on troop-transport vessels. These ships usually held between 2,000–3,000 men and it was while on board one of these ships that Holden had his first experience as a surgeon.

A young soldier came into the ship's hospital with acute appendicitis. Carefully, the young doctor applied open-drop ether to anesthetize the man, picked up a scalpel and made his first incision. Holden smiles at the memory, saying he is happy to report that his patient survived and literally went on to fight another day.

At the end of the war, Holden returned to California, where he started his own practice and served his community as a general practitioner for over 50 years. During that time, he delivered multiple generations of babies. Fondlest of all memories are the friendships he developed with his patients over the years, many of whom are still in contact with him.

In addition to faithfully serving his local community, Holden served the medical community on a national level when he joined the American Medical Association (AMA). For 25 years, he was a delegate for this society of medical professionals, helping to maintain its mission

changes and advancements in the medical field, but says that people's problems remain the same. Patients will always need doctors who show they care.

For those wanting a career in medicine, Holden has a few words of advice. "In pursuing the study of the sciences, don't ignore literature, philosophy and the social sciences. These make for a well-rounded professional who is able to relate to patients on many levels, offering empathy and counsel on social and spiritual issues, as well as meeting their physical needs."

So what were the most apparent changes on campus that he noticed after his long absence? They were the extensive transformations to the physical structure of his alma mater. He was very impressed with the quality of the new buildings—Chan Shun School of Business, the Howard Performing Arts Center, and the remodeling of the Seminary.

But in spite of the many physical changes to the campus, the one thing that hasn't changed is the level of commitment to service he experienced as a student. It may have been 41 years since he was last on campus, but in his personal life and through the many years he spent serving both his local community and his country, Holden has embodied precisely the principles for which Andrews stands—spiritus, mens, corpus.

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*Karen Pearson works in the office of University Advancement at AU. She is studying for a degree in Liberal Arts, with a writing emphasis. She hopes to graduate eventually—hopefully before her children. When not working, Karen likes to read, write and go scrapbooking with her girlfriends.*