



Historic Pembina Hall

Pembina residents worried

by Greg Halinda

Residents of one of the oldest residences on U of A campus fear that the university will replace their living quarters with offices within the next 10 years.

At a meeting of the Facilities Development Committee last spring, Dr. A. Warrack, VP Administration, raised the possibility of reassigning Pembina Hall as office space. Pembina currently houses graduate and mature students.

As soon as this news spread, concern among Pembina residents and other interested parties grew.

The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) signed a petition at their general meeting during the summer and sent it to Warrack in protest. The Pembina Hall Students' Association (PHSA) executive met with Warrack, who told them Pembina Hall wouldn't be touched at least until 1988.

Warrack's response to GSA's petition was in a letter, where he stated he was pleased to ensure Pembina Hall's use as a graduate student residence throughout his

current term, which ends in 1991.

PHSA formed the Save Pembina Committee this summer. Donna Babchishin, past president of PHSA, says, "We (Save Pembina Committee) want to work with the university on this. Warrack said Pembina wouldn't be touched until 1988, now he's saying not until the end of his term. We have asked Warrack for the university's current stand on the issue. We need a clarification so that we can work fairly with the university."

The Save Pembina Committee wants a long-term designation of Pembina Hall as a residence. "Our campaign has nothing solid to act on right now," says Babchishin, "we are still waiting to hear from Warrack."

"The reassignment of Pembina is not in my planning horizon," says Warrack. "Concerned Pembina residents should look to the board decision-making system that will be in place after my term." He continues, "More options for the future are better than fewer. It is hard to say how extreme space requirements will be in the future."

Ted Yu, president of PHSA, finds it ironic that the university would consider vacating graduate students from Pembina: "Pembina is one place you can live in a residence environment without having your marks suffer; that is, there is not the noise problem one finds in Lister Hall. Many graduate students in Pembina use their rooms as offices as well. If Warrack's suggestion goes through, he may take away the best facility for graduate students to stay in."

Babchishin agrees. "It is ironic when one considers that the university stated it wants to increase the number of grad students, as proposed in the university's plan for the future, published last March."

Pembina Hall was completed in 1914, after both Athabasca and Assiniboia Hall were built. It has served as a residence to this day, while the latter two buildings, almost identical in appearance, have been relegated to office space. Pembina Hall is one of the oldest buildings on the U of A campus.

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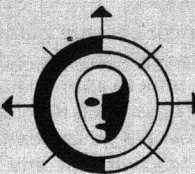
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