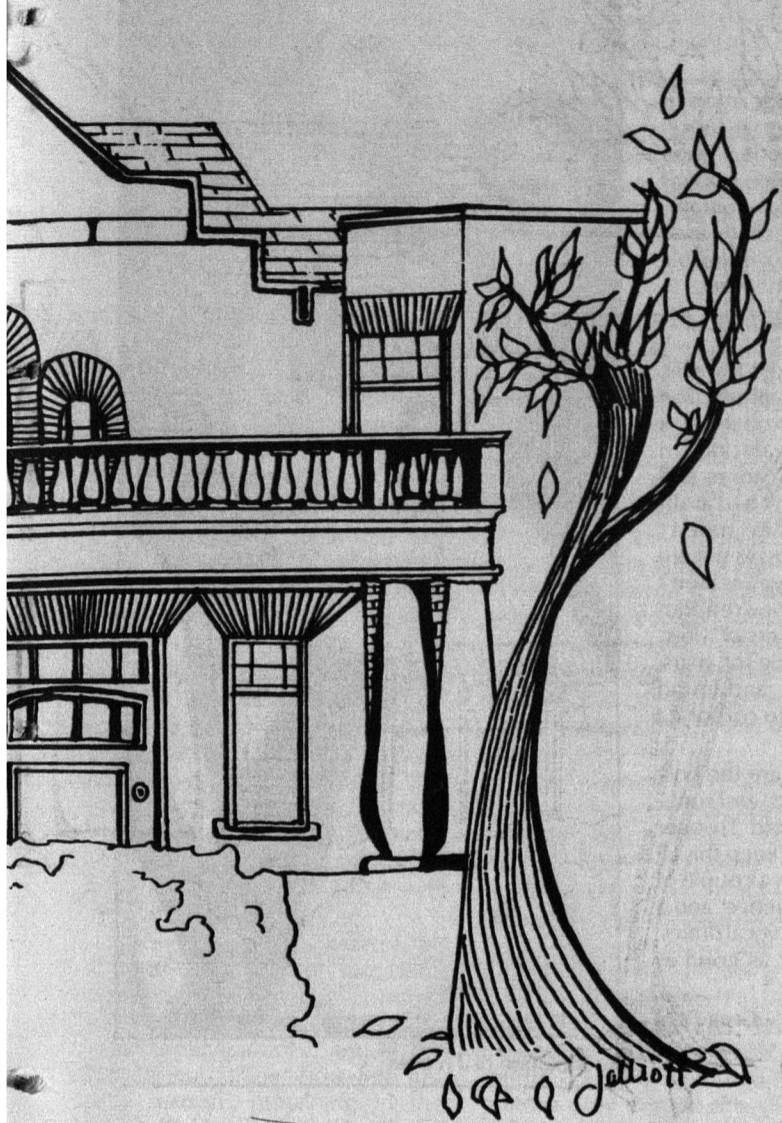


heritage of the University Campus



"Students walk right by without knowing what it is."

Brenneis agrees that the atmosphere in the house is distinct. "The pace of life is different," he says. "It's not 1989 in this house — it's a weird feeling to leave after you've been here awhile. People can get a sense of what life was like then." Brenneis also noted that Western history is short, "but there is history here, there's a tradition we want to revive."

The Friends of Rutherford House are an integral part of the programs offered here which include the Founder's Day tea, and Hallowe'en and Christmas parties in the Edwardian tradition. The Friends, a non-profit organization, also raise funds that go directly back into the house for such things as furniture renovation.

Also significantly attached to the house is the Delta Upsilon fraternity. After the death of his wife in 1940, Rutherford sold the house to the fraternity who used it until 1969 when it was taken over by the University. It was then leased to the provincial government who restored it and officially opened it as a historic site in 1974. The Delta Upsilon continue to promote and fundraise for the house. They raised enough money to build a beautiful oak paneled conference and meeting room in the basement.

There is a week long Open Door Days from Monday September 18 to Sunday September 24, so stop by, take a break from school, and visit this graceful old house as students did 75 years ago.

photos by Kevin Law
graphic by Joanne Elliott

dinner. The gentlemen would have joined them from the library later in the evening, and musical recitals, piano or even a quartet, were often part of parlour entertainment. The yellow-peach painted walls and two sets of windows makes for a considerably brighter room than the more sedate dining room and library.

Upstairs, a stained glass skylight above the oak stairwell and landing lends an air of distinction and airiness to the second floor. As we tour the bedrooms Brenneis and I are joined by Barbra Thompson, the executive director of the Friends of Rutherford House. They both point out interesting information on the lives of the Rutherfords as I note the artifacts particular to each room. In Hazel's room, a whalebone corset and angel white cotton lace dress are spread on her bed, ready for wear. In her closet hangs a black convocation style robe that all students at the University had to wear — if they were not worn in class, the student was marked absent.

Rutherford's son Cecil fought in World War One and returned home uninjured. His

smallish room is austere. An original running desk sits in one corner; iron skate blades, the kind that attached to shoes, rest on top of the desk. Three starched collars of differing styles lie flat on his dresser along side two khaki colored military caps.

"The pace of life is different, it's not 1989 in this house."

The Rutherford's master bedroom is substantial with a dark rosewood "sleigh bed" positioned mid-room against a wall. Large bedroom window offered a panoramic vista of the river valley then, when trees were not obstacles as they are now.

There are other rooms and artifacts that represent the unique history of the house and the times, and both Brenneis and Thompson believe the house holds an important position in the historic chronicle of Edmonton and the University of Alberta.

"We want more people to be aware of this site," says Thompson, noting that campus students, who are closest to the site, are often the ones least acquainted with it. "Students," she adds, "walk right by without knowing what it is. Students can come and soak up the atmosphere. It's an alternative place to go on campus."

Every year the graduating class would gather at the House for Founder's Day tea.

