Rauch family historical documents donated to University Archives

Becky (Cramer HS ‘39) Cunningham, alumna of Spring Arbor University, recently donated family artifacts to Spring Arbor University Archives. Among the artifacts were wills, death certificates, plaques and a poem titled “Old Ad Hall,” which references a historic building on campus.

The historical pieces once belonged to Cunningham’s aunt and uncle, Evadne Milton Rauch and Joy Harold Rauch (HS ‘16). The Rauch family has a rich tradition intertwined with Spring Arbor that dates back several decades.

Joy was born Sept. 15, 1898, in one of the buildings owned by the Free Will Baptist church at the time, an apartment connected to the old general store where Marino’s Pizza now stands. Evadne moved to Spring Arbor in 1918 to teach primary grades for Spring Arbor Seminary. On June 9, 1920, Joy and Evadne were married.

And, even though Evadne did not graduate from Spring Arbor, she remained dedicated to the community once she married Joy by contributing her time to the Free Methodist Church library for 17 years. Evadne showed her support of the Spring Arbor when she authored “Old Ad Hall,” as a dedication to the old administration building of Spring Arbor Seminary. When Evadne died, she left a generous gift to the University. Her only son, Chester, left a similar amount to SAU when he died in 2000.

As one of the surviving relatives of Joy and Evadne, Cunningham has inherited many of their belongings.

“There aren’t any immediate living relatives of Joy and Evadne. I thought someone should remember them,” says Cunningham, who funded the memory “tunnel” where she is standing in the photo above. The tunnel includes photos and facts detailing the history of Spring Arbor University. “I was a graduate in 1939, so I’ve always been associated with [the school].”

Over the years, she has also made contributions of her own to the Spring Arbor community, including the Veteran’s Memorial on M-60. She also built the Spring Arbor post office in 1962 and worked there as postmaster until 1980.

Susan Panak ’10, head archivist for SAU, continues to accept, organize and display artifacts donated by alumni and others associated with the University. She is currently working with Cunningham on the artifacts left from the Rauchs.

Panak has also been working on identifying photos from previous years at SAU. If you would like to assist in identifying photos, or have artifacts you would like to donate, please contact 517.750.6434 or email spanak@arbor.edu.

Old Ad Hall

We’re back today in the old Ad Hall to reminisce a while,
To clasp each other’s hands again, exchange a wistful smile;
We’ll try to capture one last time the spirit of these halls,
For fifty years of youthful dreams lie secret in these walls.

Each room recalls a teacher wise who patient, day by day,
Our footsteps led down wisdom’s paths – ‘twas such a long, hard way!

But more than all the lessons taught by precept, rule, and book,

The fragrance of their lives remains, secure in memory’s nook.
To some of us ‘tis hallowed ground on which we stand today
For in our hearts God spoke to us in a mysterious way;
Within these walls we pardon found, and freedom from all fear,
Or quietly He called us into service, far or near.

A few of us remember still the statute known as “Fifth Rule,”
How did Dan Cupid sneak inside and use it as his own tool?

Lo, up and down these stairways, and halls (so dark and narrow)
If truth were told, how many here fell victim to his arrow?
These brave old walls, condemned today, await the wrecker’s clatter,
We’re glad for progress, yet we know each blow our dreams will shatter;
And a strange, nostalgic yearning for the scenes of yester-years
Comes trooping back down memory’s lane as old Ad Hall disappears.

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