



The Dean's Musings

History Reborn

No one would have believed the script. Colleges just don't get perfect donors like this. True-blue Gators with a deep love and respect for Arts and Sciences. Strong believers in historic restoration. And a deep sense that these renovations "should be done right."

Unlikely as it might seem, all these traits are found in our extraordinary CLAS benefactors, Kenneth and Janet Keene. Their name will be added to the current Flint Hall based on their major gift of \$3M to CLAS, which also makes available complementary state funds. The overall project will then provide for a beautifully restored Keene-Flint Hall and an equally elegant Anderson Hall.

Anyone who has seen the before and after scenes in Griffin-Floyd Hall will understand what these historic buildings can once more become. Keene-Flint Hall and Anderson Hall will be our anchor buildings fronting University Avenue, shifting the center of gravity for CLAS back toward the original historic district.

Many people deserve credit for this exciting initiative. First, thanks to the historic preservation stalwarts who kept the wrecking ball away from the buildings 20 years ago. More recently, gratitude is owed to Carter Boydston, chief fundraiser for CLAS; to Chuck Frazier, CLAS space czar; and to Provost Betty Capaldi, who made the defining decision allowing a package deal of two historic buildings that finalized our donors' participation. Most of all, of course, it is Ken and Janet Keene who are responsible for this landmark event.

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of restoring these two buildings. Not only do we recover our own history, but we regain marvelous facilities for future students and faculty. The Keenes have given a gift of truly inestimable value to the University of Florida.

Will Harrison, Dean
harrison@chem.ufl.edu

CLASnotes

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FLINT HALL TO BE RENOVATED

\$3 Million Gift To Restore Historic UF Building



Artist's rendering of renovated Keene-Flint Hall. Construction should be completed in the year 2000.

After 20 years of vacancy and decay, Flint Hall (1910) will finally get the renovations needed to restore its grandeur and integrity. Kenneth Keene (Math '47) and his wife, Janet, recently made the University a \$3 million gift to finance the project. With the addition of state matching and added capital improvement funds, the Keene's generosity will actually yield over \$18 million, enabling the concurrent renovation of Anderson Hall (1913), Flint's eastern counterpart in the

original UF campus design. Of the 12 remaining pre-1923 structures, Flint and Anderson are two of the last to be restored.

Pre-planning for both buildings has already begun, as the artist's renderings in this issue indicate, and formal planning should start in August, 1998. New and improved "Keene-Flint" and Anderson Halls will be completed in the year 2000.

The Keenes, who have already endowed a scholarship fund and donated money for a faculty center in Dauer Hall, are modest about their contributions. "Our principal motivation," says Ken Keene, "is to help provide proper educational opportunities for future UF students."



Artist's rendering of Keene-Flint's renovated main entrance, based on the original 1910 plans.

A History of Flint Hall

Much of the following was taken from "The Rehabilitation of Edward R. Flint Hall" a 1981 MA Architecture thesis by John Edgar Fuller.

Built in 1910, Flint Hall is the fourth oldest building on the University of Florida campus, and it is one of the 13 original campus buildings designed by architect William Edwards. In Edwards' campus plan, Flint and Anderson Hall (1913) were designed to serve as "gateposts" to the University of Florida, and with their striped awnings and ivy-covered walls they indeed formed a stately entrance to campus.

"Science Hall," as Flint was originally called, initially housed the Departments of Chemistry, Physics, Botany, Zoology, Horticulture, and Bacteriology. Biology and Zoology continued to maintain offices there until 1974, when the Department of Urban and Regional Planning and the College of Architecture began using the building to supplement their space needs.

Flint was also the original home of the Florida State Museum. The University Museum had been housed in Thomas



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Hall (UF's first building) but was relocated to the second floor of Flint in 1910. The Florida State Museum was founded in 1913, when T. Van Hyning came to the University of Florida to establish a collection of birds and eggs acquired from R. D. Hoty of Clearwater, FL. In 1918, the museum acquired its first large collection of history and art, the valuable Loring Collection from St. Augustine. The Museum continued to grow and eventually amassed an impressive collection of fish,



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Taken shortly after the building's completion, this photo illustrates the dramatic effect Flint Hall had on the (then sparse) UF campus

birds, crustacea, reptiles, mammals and mollusca of Florida in addition to Native American artifacts, history and art (*exhibit cases pictured left*). Eventually, the museum expanded to require all of the second floor of Flint, and it remained there until the need for additional space resulted in its relocation to the John F. Seagle Building in the 1930s. The Museum returned to campus in 1971, when Dickinson Hall was dedicated on September 23.

The historic character of Flint Hall was substantially damaged with a late 1950s renovation designed to maximize square footage. The north, south and west entrances were bricked up, and the two-story stairwells were converted to one-story units for additional classroom and office space. The original Gothic vaulted ceiling and arched entryway were destroyed, and composite columns, carved woodwork, ornamental plasterwork and the formal entry hall and stairs were all removed. Terra cotta ornamentation on the exterior surrounding the north entrance was also done away with.

After continued decay, Flint Hall was condemned in 1978 by the State Fire Marshall, who prohibited its

use as an instructional facility until numerous code violations had been corrected. The building has remained vacant since then, although various departments have used portions of the building for storage. Over the years of disuse, the interior of Flint Hall has continued to deteriorate (*present interior condition pictured below*). Until now, that is. Finally, historic Flint Hall can reoccupy its rightful place as both a University showpiece and an active and useful academic building for many generations of Gators to come. 🐾



Profile of the Donors: Ken and Janet Keene

Kenneth Keene's long, positive relationship with the University of Florida began in the summer of 1942, while he was still in high school. His mother, a South Bay, Florida school-teacher, brought Keene with her to Gainesville that summer, where she was taking courses to update her teaching license. She enrolled Ken at UF's P.K. Yonge lab school, where he met instructor Hazen Nutter. Nutter was impressed with the young Keene, and convinced Mrs. Keene to leave her son with him in Gainesville, where he could continue his studies and help Nutter care for his elderly mother.

Nutter, says Keene, "had a substantial influence on me. He held three jobs simultaneously despite his health condition.....and he always inspired me to do my homework. He also taught me how to drive," Keene remembers fondly. Keene, who by this time had graduated from P.K. Yonge and started college, left the Nutters and UF after his freshman year to join the Navy. He served until the end of WWII (19 months).

Because the Navy put him through a special 11-month training program for radar technology, Keene was able to convince the registrar to give him 30 hours of Arts and Sciences credit upon his return to UF in 1946. Keene kept in close touch with Nutter, who continued to take in and support other students. To commemorate the man who so impressed him, several years ago Keene

donated both a conference table for the Ruth McQuown Room and an endowed memorial scholarship fund in Nutter's name.

After graduating with a math degree in 1947, Keene was admitted to The University of Michigan, which, he says, "had one of the top two programs in actuarial science in the country." Keene credits a Liberal Arts education for his success in graduate school and the business world. "There are two categories of actuaries," Keene says, "those who can present themselves well and have a strong business orientation, and those who, in today's vocabulary, might be called 'nerds.' My CLAS education gave me a broad view of a number of subjects, which was very important in my career."

Keene began his professional life as an actuary in Hartford, with a 16-year stint at Aetna. Next he worked for several large brokerage and consulting firms in New York City, including Met Life and Johnson and Higgins, where he spent 17 years before retiring in 1987. What does this 70+ George Bush look-alike enjoy doing in his free time?

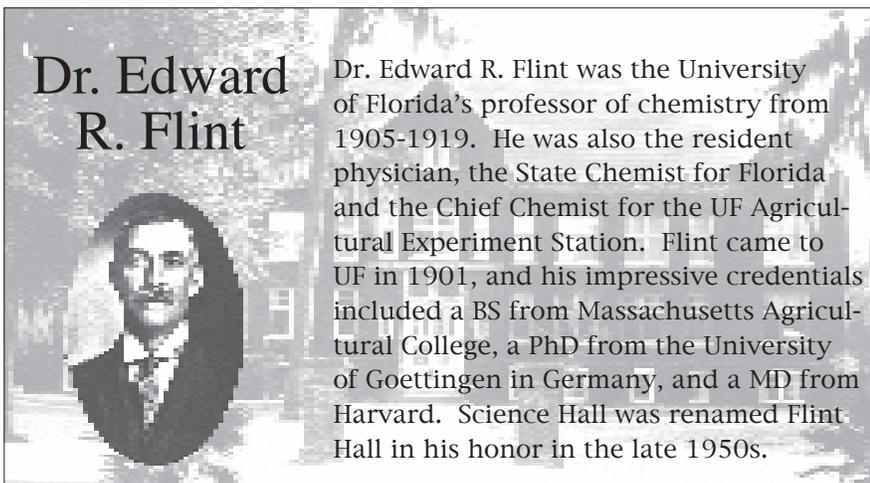


"Shooting hoops," Keene says. "I'm a devoted fan of the regional YMCA," he continues, "and I spend three or four hours a day there."

Keene's wife, Janet, grew up in California and began working as a flight attendant for American Airlines in 1961. She married Ken in 1968, and despite the couple's busy lifestyle, she still works half of each month for American. Ken says that Janet's airline benefits allow the couple to fly anywhere they want, a perk which fuels their love of travel. From their home in Connecticut, they regularly visit California, Florida and the Washington, DC area, where they are restoring a 1785 townhouse.

Janet has been renovating houses as a hobby since 1981, and Ken says she has an exceptionally good sense of style. "She uses a lot of common sense," he says of her decorating. "Everything she does is classic but functional."

"I enjoy historic projects, so the Flint renovation really appealed to me," Janet explains. Both Keenes plan to be very involved in the restoration process, but Janet is especially interested in contributing to the interior decoration. "I'm really excited," she says, "I can't wait to get started." 🍷



Dr. Edward R. Flint

Dr. Edward R. Flint was the University of Florida's professor of chemistry from 1905-1919. He was also the resident physician, the State Chemist for Florida and the Chief Chemist for the UF Agricultural Experiment Station. Flint came to UF in 1901, and his impressive credentials included a BS from Massachusetts Agricultural College, a PhD from the University of Goettingen in Germany, and a MD from Harvard. Science Hall was renamed Flint-Hall in his honor in the late 1950s.

Keene Gift Will Also Fund Anderson Restorations

As an added bonus, the Keene's gift for the renovation of Flint Hall will also fund the tandem completion of Anderson Hall (1913), Flint's eastern counterpart. "Language Hall," as Anderson was originally known, was the first home of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as well as the library, book store, president's office, and registrar.

"The Keenes wanted their gift to have a significant impact on both the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the University of Florida as a whole," says Associate Dean Chuck Frazier. "By writing Anderson into the proposal, we were able to generate additional state funds, dramatically increasing the potential benefits."

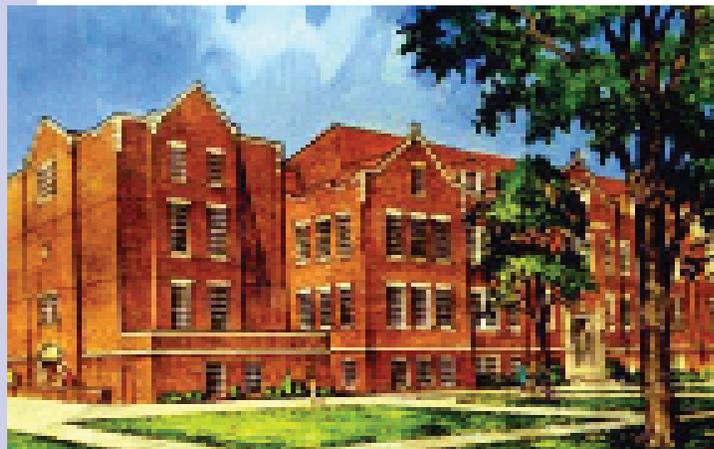
Because Anderson and Flint are both part of the northeast quadrant of campus (where the majority of libraries, teaching departments and classrooms are still located), UF Provost Betty Capaldi put a priority on securing funding for them. "They will be wonderful

classroom/office buildings in a location where we really need them," she says.

Although a "phased renovation" of Anderson began in 1993, progress has been painfully slow due to a shortage of funding. Thus far, the building has received an updated transformer, computer wiring and a fire-rated stair tower on the west side. The north entrance—which, like the original grand entrances to Flint Hall, had been blocked off decades ago in efforts to salvage

additional classroom space—has also been restored to its original state, complete with maple landing and stairway up to the first floor.

But this progress is minor considering the amount of work necessary to properly and completely renovate historic Anderson. Fortunately, the Keene's gift will allow a "full restoration," says Frazier, so that along with maximizing useful space, "all architecturally significant



Above: Artist's rendering, NE corner of renovated Anderson Hall, illustrating the new elevator tower.

Below, left: Firefighters battle the blaze that destroyed the third floor of Anderson Hall in 1971.

features will be preserved and /or restored."

Additionally, the burnt-out third floor of Anderson, boarded up since the 1971 fire which badly damaged it, will finally be rebuilt for classroom and office space, and a new elevator tower and stairs (see rendering, above) will allow Anderson to meet Americans With Disabilities Act and fire code standards for the first time.

The dual renovation of Anderson and Keene-Flint Halls addresses serious CLAS problems (decaying facilities and the need for additional teaching space) while also alleviating a major UF pressure: increasing enrollment and the resulting shortage of classroom and instructional support facilities. Since CLAS is a central part of UF's instructional program, the Keenes' gift will indeed have the major significance they'd hoped for. 📧



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Above: Anderson Hall in the 1930s