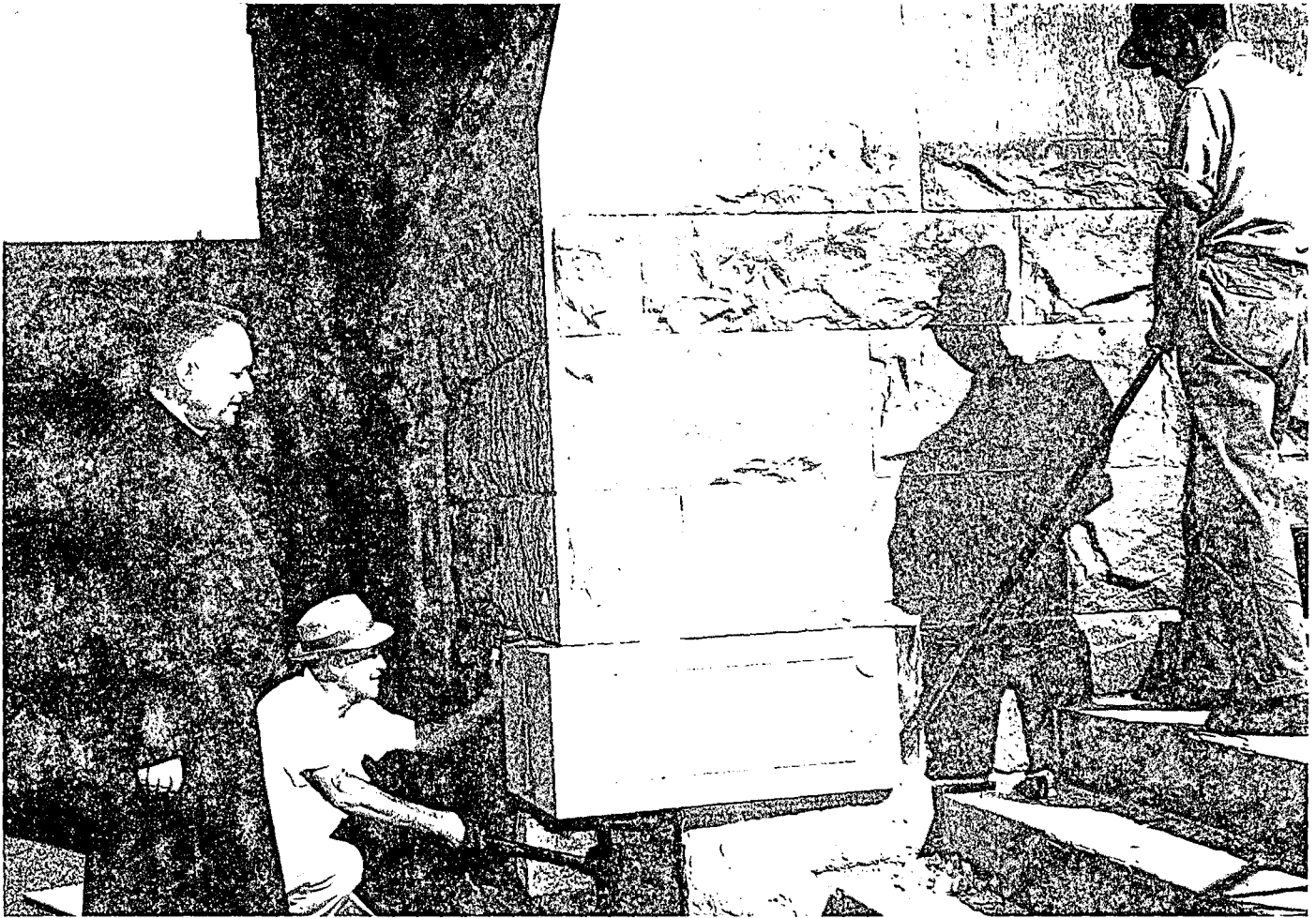


# The Decade of the Builder: John J. Long, S.J. (1953-1963)



*This is the last of a series of preprints from The University of Scranton: A Centennial History by Frank X.J. Homer.*



*Rev. Joseph A. Rock, S.J., then dean of the Graduate School and later academic vice president, watches as the cornerstone of Old Main is removed to be placed in the base of St. Thomas Hall in the summer of 1962.*

Of the twenty-one men who have served as President of the University of Scranton or St. Thomas College since 1888, none has left a greater mark than the Very Reverend John J. Long, S.J. Not only was his tenure in office, spanning an entire decade, longer than that of any of his predecessors or, to date, his successors; but, more significantly, during that time he was to direct a complete transformation of the University's physical plant.

Except for the Estate residence used by the Jesuit community, every classroom, every laboratory, every office that was in use when Father Long arrived in Scranton in August of 1953 would be replaced over the next ten years in no less than twelve modern buildings, marking the first new construction undertaken by the University since the building of Old Main sixty years earlier. Included in this expansion were the first University-owned dormitories,

which made possible the start of the University's transition from a commuter college to one where at the end of the 1980's resident students far outnumber commuters.

Such an accomplishment was, of course, not the work of one man alone, but Father Long's vision and administrative skills provided the energy that propelled and inspired all of those involved in translating his plans into reality. He was



*The University's first student residences were (from left) Martin, McCourt, and Fitch Halls, used from 1955 to 1958 before construction of the lower quad on the site shown in the foreground.*



*Alumni Memorial Library under construction in 1958. Ridge Row is in the foreground, with the Estate and Loyola Hall in the rear.*

not without presidential experience, having previously served as President of St. Joseph's College in his native Philadelphia before being assigned to the Provincial's staff in Baltimore where he was stationed immediately before coming to Scranton. Of all of the University's Jesuit presidents since 1942, only Father Long and Father Nevils had previously served as a college chief executive before coming to the University. As an administrator Father Long acted firmly and decisively, even when his decisions were not always popular — as in the case of the move to drop intercollegiate football in 1961. At the same time, his direct and unpretentious manner won him respect and affection from faculty and students alike. He possessed an uncanny memory for names that was in evidence whenever Father Long met with parents and benefactors within the local community.

Among those who were to assist Father Long were a number of Jesuits who were assigned to the University at the same time as the new president. The Rev. Louis C. Kleff, S.J., served first as Father Long's administrative assistant before being named University Treasurer in 1957, a post he held for the next seventeen years. Since 1974 Father Kleff has been Director of Physical Facilities and Plant Director. No other Jesuit has had a longer period of continuous active service to the University. The Rev. Frank McG. Nugent, S.J., also came to the University in 1953 serving for one year as Evening College dean before assuming direction of the development campaign that translated Father Long's plans into reality. Father Nugent left the University by the end of

the decade for missionary work in Chile, but later returned to Scranton as rector of the Jesuit community for several years in the 1970's.

Under Father Long the University's academic administration reflected a greater degree of continuity than it had during the preceding ten years. The Rev. Herbert S.J. Baum, S.J., was dean of studies, overseeing both the undergraduate College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School, from 1953 to 1956 when he was succeeded as dean of the college by the Rev. William G. Kelly, S.J., who would hold that position for the next decade. In 1957 the Graduate School, after one year under Father Sponga as dean, came under the direction of the Rev. Joseph A. Rock, S.J., one of the most energetic and forceful administrators ever to serve the University.

By the early 1960's the Graduate School had expanded from its original master's degree programs in education, adding programs in history and English as well as one leading to the M.B.A. degree. In 1966 Father Rock became the University's Academic Vice President, the first to hold that office as a separate position responsible for overseeing all of the school's academic divisions.

In June of 1954, less than a year after Father Long had assumed the presidency, the University publicly unveiled an ambitious master plan proposing the erection of nine new buildings at a projected cost of nearly five million dollars. All of the new facilities envisioned in this plan were to be constructed on the property the University already occupied on the former Scranton Estate and adjacent sites. A science building was to be built on the Estate grounds along Monroe Ave. while classroom and assembly halls, an administration building, a chapel and a new Jesuit community residence were to be located elsewhere on the Estate grounds and the adjoining Platt Place lots. The plan called for conversion of the Estate residence itself into a new University library. Finally, the plan called for a dormitory, cafeteria building and gymnasium to be erected where the barracks buildings were then located along Linden Street.

Translating this multi-million dollar plan into reality obviously required the sort of capital funding that the University had previously failed to generate. Twenty years earlier, Brother Denis Edward had entertained similar dreams of expansion and growth which never materialized. Unlike his predecessor, Father Long was able to launch — and sustain over an extended period — the University's first successful development campaign. At the



*The first class to receive master of arts degrees from the University in June, 1952: (First row, from left) Molly Lucille Noone, Renato Mazzei, Dr. Lawrence Lennon, Gino Louis Martorelli, Marie Cobo Lesniak, Anne Elizabeth Carlin (Second row) Eugene Michael Langan, Joseph Richard Grzywacz, James Golden Hopkins, Walter Joseph Soya, William Anthony Waters, John Joseph Haggerty. Not pictured: Norman Fred Keiser.*

same time as the plans for new buildings were announced, he also created a new Development Council whose twenty-two members represented a broad cross-section of the area's business, professional and civic leaders, many of whom, like the chairman, Mr. E.J. Lynett, editor and publisher of *The Scranton Times*, were graduates of St. Thomas College or the University.

These were the same community leaders who at the beginning of the 1950's had been instrumental in creating "The Scranton Plan," a comprehensive scheme for attracting diversified industries into Northeastern Pennsylvania. The energies that had won national publicity and designation as an "All-American City" for Scranton were now, thanks to Father Long's leadership, to be harnessed on behalf of the University.

The implementation of the 1954 master plan was necessarily to be done in stages and the Planning Board agreed that the first priority was the construction of a new science building at an estimated cost of just under a million dollars. Also originally included in this initial phase was conversion of the Estate residence and a planned extension into a new University library, as well as construction of a new Jesuit residence. These were, however, deferred with a new library eventually built as a separate structure.

More than three decades were to pass before the Jesuit community moved out of the Estate in 1987 to a new residence, Campion Hall, located not far from where it had been placed in the 1954 master plan. Fund-raising for the new science building to replace the antiquated laboratories in Old Main and the Chemistry Building on Wyoming Avenue began in earnest early in 1955. Fueled by initial gifts of \$100,000 each from the Lynett family and the Most Rev. Jerome D. Hannon, who had become Bishop of Scranton after the death of Bishop Hafey the previous year, the campaign was almost at its goal by the time ground was broken for what was to be the Loyola Hall of Science. That took place on June 3, 1955, the first such ceremony for the University since the cornerstone of Old Main was laid on that long-ago Sunday in August of 1888.

Despite delays in its construction, Loyola Hall was formally dedicated on December 8, 1956, and put into operational use by the start of the following spring semester. Its four floors of modern labs and classrooms, including three large amphitheater lecture halls, were topped by a penthouse containing studios for WUSV-FM and the station's broadcast tower. Major renovations thirty years

later, including expansion of the penthouse into a full floor, have significantly altered Loyola Hall's appearance, but when it first opened its modernistic architecture presented a dramatic contrast with the rest of the University's physical plant and symbolized the start of a new era of expansion. While intended primarily as a classroom and laboratory building for the biology, chemistry and physics departments, the addition of Loyola Hall also made possible a number of other changes in University facilities that clearly presaged a complete withdrawal from the Wyoming Avenue properties.

In the fall of 1957 the offices of both the dean of college and the registrar, the latter position now for the first time in twenty-two years not held by Frank O'Hara who shifted over to alumni and development work, were moved to Loyola Hall where they stayed until St. Thomas Hall opened in 1962. Only the Treasurer's Office, Graduate School and Library were left in Old Main where few, if any, classes were held during the day, permitting the Prep School to use the Green Room as its cafeteria. The Prep also took over use of the old Chem Building.

At the same time, the space vacated in the E Building by the physics department was converted to a new cafeteria, whose former quarters in the B Building basement were given over to the bookstore that had been next to the Green Room in Old Main. The E Building, where an enlarged chapel dedicated to St. Ignatius Loyola had been installed on the second floor some years earlier, now served as a modest, but centrally located, student activities center.

While Loyola Hall was built exactly where it was planned in the original 1954 plan, none of the other facilities shown in those drawings, although eventually built, were completed exactly as first envisaged. Inevitably, unforeseen circumstances and opportunities influenced the course of expansion over which Father Long presided. Even before construction began on Loyola Hall, the possibility of acquiring University-owned housing for resident students arose. In April of 1955 the University received as donations two adjacent properties on the northeast corner of Linden St. and Quincy Ave., diagonally across from the B Building. The structures on both lots were derelict and quickly razed, but the lots themselves were destined to become the site of the first dormitories built by the University.

With the Loyola Hall project only just begun, any additional new construction could hardly be undertaken immediately. Just one month later, however, in May, 1955, the University was able to



*"A" Building is demolished in 1962, following the opening of St. Thomas Hall. The site is now the front of Galvin Terrace.*



*These lots on the corner of Linden and Quincy were acquired by the University in April, 1955, and used as the site for the first new dormitories — the lower quad.*



*The Most Rev. Jerome D. Hannon, D.D., successor to Bishop Hafey, was one of the benefactors to the University's physical expansion under Fr. Long.*



*The second floor cafeteria in the Student Center in 1960 — subsequent efforts to brighten its appearance have not changed its basic configuration.*



*Fr. Long (right) and Fr. Kelly greet guests in front of the newly opened student center in 1960.*

purchase three houses on the west side of the 300 block of Quincy Ave. which were put into service that fall. Named after benefactors, Martin Hall, McCourt Hall and Fitch Hall became the University's first student residences, along with one of the Platt Place houses, St. Robert Hall, which had previously been used as to house Jesuits who could not be accommodated in the Estate or La Salle Hall. Over the next three years two other nearby houses, one on Monroe Avenue in back of the A Building and another, referred to as Casey Hall, on the northwest corner of Clay Ave. and Linden St., were also purchased and used as student residences prior to the construction of the first new dormitories.

These acquisitions marked a broadening of the University's planned expansion beyond the confines of the Scranton Estate properties, which had been the focus of the initial 1954 plan. When the original Martin, McCourt, Fitch and Casey Halls were no longer needed as residences, their lots subsequently became part of the sites for facilities that might otherwise have been located closer to the Estate, including a new Student Center and additional new dorms. Over the next three decades the University's growth would extend its campus further into the lower Hill Section, not so much as part of any comprehensive master plan as in response to needs as they arose. From 1955 on the University has repeatedly been able to either rehabilitate properties that had already suffered decay or maintain those that would might have otherwise become derelict.

As soon as the construction of Loyola Hall was completed, Father Long and his Development Council lost no time in moving on to the erection of permanent dormitories. In the spring of 1957 work was begun on four small dorms arranged in a quadrangle on the corner of Quincy and Linden directly across the street from Martin, McCourt and Fitch Halls. Each contained twenty five double rooms on three upper floors, with lounges on the ground level. When these dorms, later to be known as the lower quad, were opened in the fall of 1958, they took their names from the houses they replaced, Martin, McCourt, Fitch and Casey. The University was fortunate in its timing in that just as the new dorms were being built, the federal government, responding to the Soviet launching of the Sputnik space satellite, inaugurated a series of programs that provided substantial federal funding for higher education, including long-term, low interest loans for construction of facilities for student housing and activities. The University was able to use

such assistance not only for the cost of the lower quad, approximately \$800,000, but for a number of the other new buildings that appeared over the next several years, including the Student Center, the Long Center and additional dorms.

In the spring of 1958, as the new dorms neared completion, the Development Council set a new library as its next priority. A fund-raising campaign targeted toward the University alumni was undertaken, thus when built the new library was dedicated as Alumni Memorial Library. Instead of being erected as an extension to the Estate residence, as originally planned, the new library was built as a separate, three story structure on the southern side of the Estate grounds bordering on Ridge Row.

While the extent of the University's growth beyond the Estate properties over the coming decades could not be foreseen in 1958, it was, nonetheless, unfortunate that the new library, although at the time an ultra-modern facility with no less than 32,000 square feet of space, came to be located on what proved to be the far extremity, rather than the center of the University's campus. Thus, when three decades later, the time for the expansion of Alumni Memorial Library has now come, the University is presently planning for a new and much larger facility that will be located at a much more centrally situated site.

Even before construction of the library was complete, work was begun on a new student center on the corner of Linden and Quincy, just east of the A Building where the original Martin Hall had been located.

The library building was finished before the end of 1959, but several months and a legion of student workers were required to complete the arduous task of transferring the library collection from Old Main on Wyoming Ave. to Alumni Memorial Library. Both the Library and Student Center came into operational use in the fall of 1960.

The Student Center, later named in memory of Atty. Joseph F. Gunster, '17 exhibited a distinctive architectural style with a roof design meant to symbolize an open book. It contained a broad range of facilities including a large multi-purpose auditorium, cafeteria, snack bar, lounges, bookstore, student activity offices, and even a basement rifle range for the ROTC. The University's subsequent growth was to stretch the Student Center to its limits, and significant internal renovations have subsequently been required, including conversion of what was originally an open-air patio on the third floor into another enclosed dining area.

The physical expansion under Father Long was not solely reflected in new construction. In 1958 an agreement with the Scranton family allowed the University to take possession of those portions of the Estate which had not been included in Worthington Scranton's original 1941 gift. This included the three-story structure built into the Estate wall at the corner of Linden St. and Madison Ave. and used in the 19th century as stables. The Scrantons had enlarged it in the 1920's and placed a handsome suite of offices on the top floor. Father Long moved his presidential office there in 1958 from its former location in LaSalle Hall on Wyoming Ave. The other Estate properties taken over at the same time were a greenhouse and an indoor squash court. The latter was first used as a training room for Coach Carlesimo's athletes, later as a print shop, and finally in 1976 refurbished into a small office and meeting room facility now known as Alumni House.

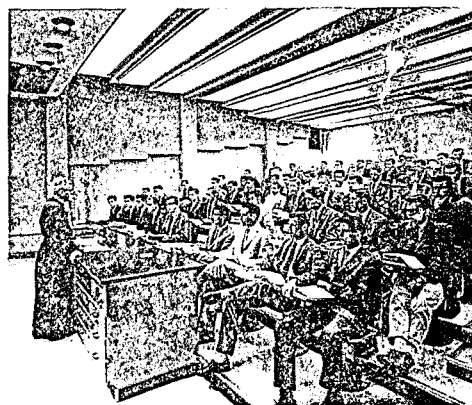
Even before Alumni Memorial Library and the new Student Center opened, Father Long and his Development Council, then chaired by the Honorable T. Linus Hoban, President Judge of the Lackawanna County Court, were beginning to plan the next, and most ambitious, stage of the expansion program. In January of 1960, a new capital campaign, Citizens' Aid for University of Scranton Expansion or CAUSE, was announced seeking nearly two million dollars for construction of a large, L-shaped classroom and office building that would be situated along Linden St. and Catlin Court where the B and E barracks buildings were situated. The funds were raised in three phases, advance gifts, commerce and industry and a community campaign in which no less than some 6500 families throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania made contributions. By June of 1961 construction began with the dismantling of the B and E Buildings and within fifteen months St. Thomas Hall, named after St. Thomas Aquinas whom Bishop O'Hara had first chosen as the University's patron. At the same time construction was also proceeding on a second quadrangle of four small dormitories located above the lower quad. Financed by long-term federal loans, these were to be named in honor of Bishops Hafey and Hannon, the Lynett family and Brother Denis Edward, the only Christian Brother to be memorialized on the University's campus.

With the dedication of St. Thomas Hall in September, 1962, the University was able to vacate its Wyoming Ave. properties completely, but not before the

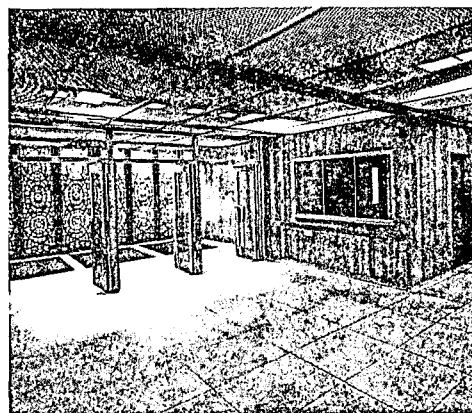
original cornerstone in Old Main was carefully removed and placed in the base of St. Thomas Hall as a lasting reminder of the University's origins. Scranton Prep, which had been displaced from the old Thompson Hospital building by the widening of Mulberry St., used Old Main for two years before it was returned to the diocese and razed in the mid-1960's. The last of the barracks, the A Building, was also now redundant and its site used as a faculty parking area before being converted into recreational space that was eventually incorporated into Galvin Terrace, a complex of outdoor basketball and tennis courts. St. Thomas Hall itself, with some 50 classrooms and much of the academic administration's offices, became the center of a campus that for the first time in over fifteen years was consolidated. Even though the University's growth over the last quarter-century has seen its facilities become somewhat more dispersed, St. Thomas Hall remains its largest building.

1963 marked the 75th anniversary of the University's founding, and with the celebration of the diamond jubilee came the announcement that spring that Father Long's presidency would be coming to an end. He was, however, to remain in Scranton as an advisor to his successors until his death in 1971. Thus, he was able to witness the finishing touches to the physical expansion program that came over the next few years.

Two more dormitories, each twice as large as those in the quads, were built in 1965 along Clay Ave. next to the upper quad. One Driscoll Hall, was named in memory of Prof. James Driscoll, a classmate of Frank O'Hara's in the charter class of 1925 and a long-time teacher at the University and the Prep; the other, Nevils Hall, honored the University's first Jesuit president. The one facility included in the original 1954 plan that had not been realized under Father Long was an athletic center. With the aid of a redevelopment project that enabled the University to acquire properties on the south side of Linden St. from Catlin Court to North Webster Ave., a modern field house was erected across from the quads by 1967. Its dedication symbolized the successful completion of the expansion program inaugurated thirteen years earlier, and represented the last new construction undertaken by the University until some sixteen years later. It was therefore especially fitting that the new athletic center should have been named in honor of the University's "Builder": the Rev. John J. Long, S.J. [5]



*Rev. William Herlihy, S.J., lectures to a freshman theology class in Loyola Hall in the fall of 1960.*



*The Student Center lobby as it originally appeared in 1960. The Office of Student Affairs has since been expanded several times, and the area is now undergoing yet another renovation.*