



AURORA UNIVERSITY

MAGAZINE ————— VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2 — FALL 2018



DISCOVER WHAT MATTERS. AND BUILD YOUR LIFE AROUND IT.

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About the Cover
William Miller, the founder of the Advent Christian denomination whose adherents established Mendota College, used this trunk to carry some 800 letters and papers to speaking engagements. Those letters and papers make up a large part of the Jenks Collection of Adventual Materials at Aurora University.



Rebecca L. Sherrick
REBECCA L. SHERRICK
PRESIDENT

Q: What do a spacesuit, the red slippers from *The Wizard of Oz*, Abraham Lincoln’s stovepipe hat and a Model T Ford have in common?

A: All are described in *The Smithsonian’s History of America in 101 Objects*, compiled by anthropologist Richard Kurin, PhD.

Later this academic year, Dr. Kurin, Smithsonian Distinguished Scholar and Ambassador-at-Large, will join us for an *Arts and Ideas* exploration of the relationship between humans and the things they create and use. While students of nonmaterial culture focus on abstract ideas and ways of thinking, scholars such as Kurin examine the richness and vitality of a story through objects and artifacts. In this edition of the magazine, we do the same.

Academic communities often are stewards of important objects. Visitors to our Smithsonian-affiliated Schingoethe Center know well the collection’s blend of Native American art and artifacts. Both the Jenks Memorial Collection of Adventual Materials and Doris K. Colby Memorial Archives, housed in Phillips Library, include such materials. Our George Williams College legacy is equally rich, as participants in July’s Coming Home weekend learned.

In the pages that follow, we explore the stories of Aurora College, George Williams College and Aurora University through objects in our collections. Here you will find the birch bark covenant signed by the founders of the YMCA’s Western Secretarial Institute in 1886, as well as the archaic equipment of one of baseball’s first heroes, two items that speak to the tenets of the Advent Christians who established our earliest iteration and even the fun footwear of one noteworthy member of the AU family.

We share this glimpse into the past at the outset of a birthday party that will unfold over the months ahead. Homecoming will be a good time for balloons, ice cream and cake on the Quad. Our plans call for more than festivities, however. We look forward to undertaking several special projects designed to ensure that AU graduates are prepared to compete effectively for crucial first jobs or placements in distinguished graduate and professional programs. Here’s what we have in mind.

Our signature capital project calls for construction of a 20,000-square-foot **Student Success Center** to house AU’s integrated academic advising, career development and alumni relations functions. A second anniversary priority is to develop the **Study Beyond Endowment**, which will help AU undergraduates afford the kind of off-campus experiences (internships, mission trips and domestic and international study) vital to deepening their preparation for the workplace.

From the vantage point of our 125th anniversary, we survey the past and set our sights on the future. What will the next century bring? How will Aurora University fulfill its essential mission of transforming lives through learning? This I know for sure. The quality of our university will continue to be measured in the accomplishments of our graduates. To put it simply, we fulfill our promises when our students succeed in life. And may it always be so. Happy birthday, AU!

A

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Treasures Most



According to Dr. Richard Kurin, Distinguished Scholar and Ambassador-at-Large at the Smithsonian Institution, famous objects tell the larger story of the American people, a thesis presented in his recent book, *The Smithsonian's History of America in 101 Objects*. His work is based on a 2010 collaboration between the BBC and the British Museum that attempted an even bolder scholarly feat: *A History of the World in 100 Objects*.

Let's take a quick trip through the Aurora University and George Williams College archives to learn more about some of the significant objects that comprise our institutional story.



Smithsonian Affiliate

OUR BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

May you continue to grow and affect so positively the lives of your students. The values of AU are our values, and we wish that AU will be as meaningful to the worthwhile lives of current students as it has been to us.

- Don '51 HON '11 and Betty (Parke) Tucker '52 HON '11

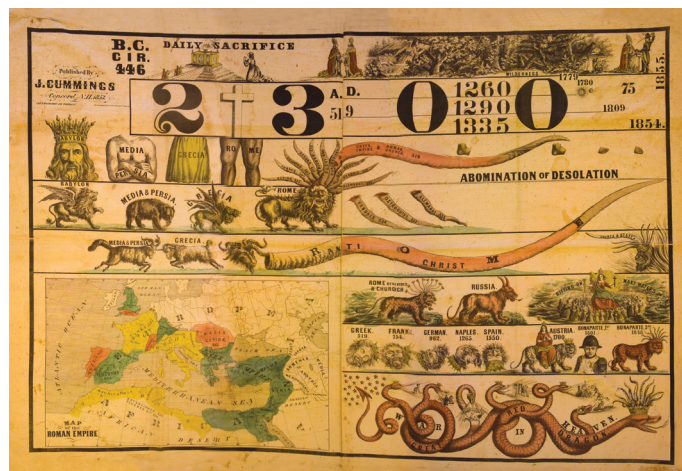
MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

Honor and revere the faithful past; respect and celebrate the dynamic present; be bold and daring in visioning the future.

—John Alan Boryk '65

Prophetic Chart

As 19th and early 20th century Advent Christian evangelists traveled from camp meeting to camp meeting to share the denomination's distinctive message, they relied upon prophetic charts to illustrate the events leading to the end of time. The lengthy and dramatic muslin banners were strung between trees or draped across stages to illustrate a preacher's message. The charts relied upon a mix of symbolism, biblical interpretation and fire and brimstone. So historic are the prophetic charts that Aurora University once collaborated with the American Bible Society to share these extraordinary artifacts in a New York City exhibit. AU owns many of these historic treasures. This particular lithograph portrays scenes from the books of Daniel and Revelation.



Dr. Pat's Microscope

Dr. Samuel H. McFarlane — known as Dr. Pat — taught biology at Aurora College from 1934 to 1970. His specialty was parasitology, a field sure to make his students both squeamish and enthralled. Aurora College President James Crimi once commented that “serious students have acquired his love of the natural world and of the scientific laboratory and have been influenced by the humility and gentleness of his human spirit.”

William Miller's Trunk

Early in the 20th century, Aurora College President Orrin Roe Jenks traveled the country to recruit prospective students, encourage donors to the small institution and collect important artifacts from the Advent Christian movement. Many of his “finds” are housed in the archives. The travel trunk of evangelist William Miller is one particularly noteworthy item. When discovered, the trunk contained sermons and some 800 pieces of correspondence written to or by Miller. His tent meetings played a vital role in rekindling the Second Great Awakening in the 1830s and 1840s. He is known especially for his proclamation that Jesus Christ would return at a specific point in the 1840s. When the day for the return came and went, the Millerite movement became more denominational in nature. The university's Advent Christian founding can be linked directly to Miller's work.



Sundial

It is traditional for classes to give a gift in their graduation year, and for the Aurora College class of 1921, a sundial had special meaning. One description called it “an ageless symbol representing the many lives of students who have cast their shadows on this campus.” So special is this symbol to AU that a sundial graces a stained-glass window in Lowry Chapel in Eckhart Hall. This is the original face of the sundial from the class of 1921.

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

I wish others the same high-quality liberal arts education I received from AU between 1966 and 1970.
—Marvin McMickle '70

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

I hope that AU continues to help students find their passions and equip them to make effective contributions for another 125 years.
—Pat (Smiles) Ziebart '75

Deacon White's Catcher's Mask

Early baseball great James “Deacon” White was known for many firsts, among them a controversial pitching windup and the first hit in any major league game, against the Fort Wayne Kekiongas. White boasted a lifetime batting average of .312 and once played all nine positions in the course of a single game. Most of the time, he played third base or served as catcher. White was a wizard of the “bare-handed catch” and is credited with the development of one of baseball’s first catcher’s masks. After retiring from baseball, he and wife Marium accompanied their daughter, Grace, to Mendota College, where Grace was a student and they took on roles as head residents of the women’s dormitory. Later, his family moved to Aurora. The Deacon, known for his commitment to upright living, was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 2013. He is the oldest player enshrined. The catcher’s mask is on loan to AU from great-grandson Jerry Watkins.



Herb Schingoethe's Square Dancing Boots

Herb and Martha Schingoethe were collectors of ... well, lots of things. But they are most associated with Native American culture and art, thousands of pieces of which they donated to become the basis for the Schingoethe Center (among their many other contributions to the campus). Perhaps less well known is that Herb long belonged to the Chicago Square Dance Callers Association. These are his square dancing boots.



Lowry Chapel Pulpit

For decades, this pulpit played an important role in Lowry Chapel, which honors Dr. Orrin Roe Jenks and serves as a site for services and ceremonies and as a hideaway for contemplation. Josephine Lowry began attending Mendota College in 1895 and graduated three years later. In 1986, the chapel was restored, thanks to a gift from Helena Wackerlin, who was born in 1898, the year of Lowry’s graduation.



Art by Ruth Van Sickle Ford

Artist Ruth Van Sickle Ford was a professor of oil and watercolor painting at Aurora College from 1964 to 1973. A graduate of the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, she later served as president and director of the organization for 23 years. Ford was the first female member of Chicago’s Palette and Chisel Academy. Today, her paintings hang in a wide range of galleries and museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago. In recent years, Aurora University leaders have acquired a number of Van Sickle Ford paintings for the institution’s collection. This large still life, known as one of the artist’s finest works, hangs today in the President’s Office.

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

Continue being mindful of new needs, offering affordable higher learning attractive to students, representing the cross-section of our society, being inspired by dedicated and enthusiastic educators.

—Ole Hovland '61

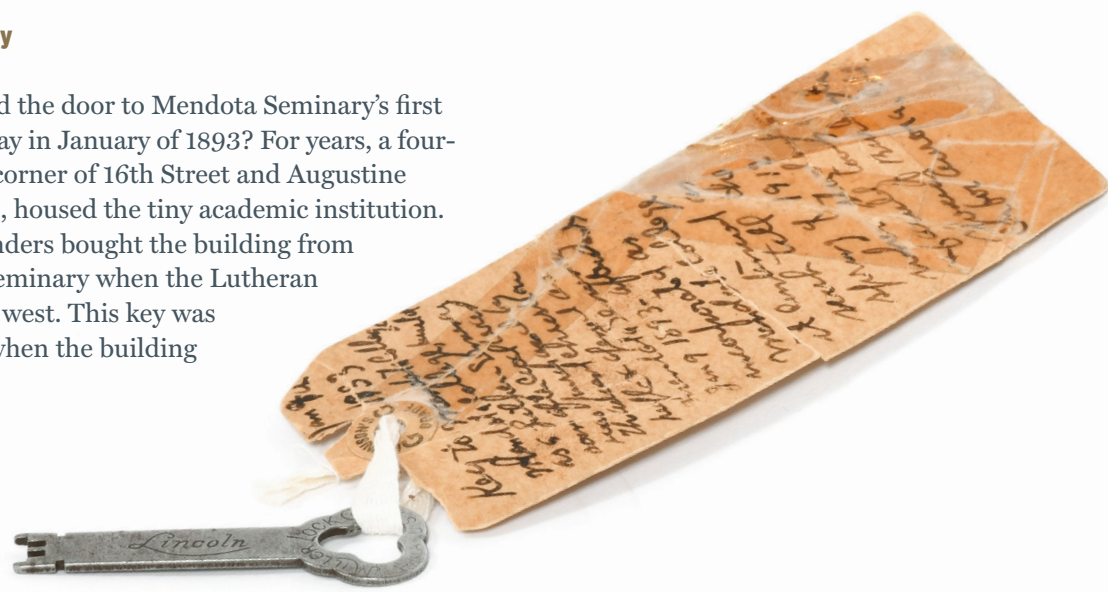
MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

May the success of all the years of education that has enlightened the minds of your students and propelled them into their chosen profession, leading to security and family, continue and the pride of making a difference add to the spirit of Aurora University.

—Les Suhayda '76

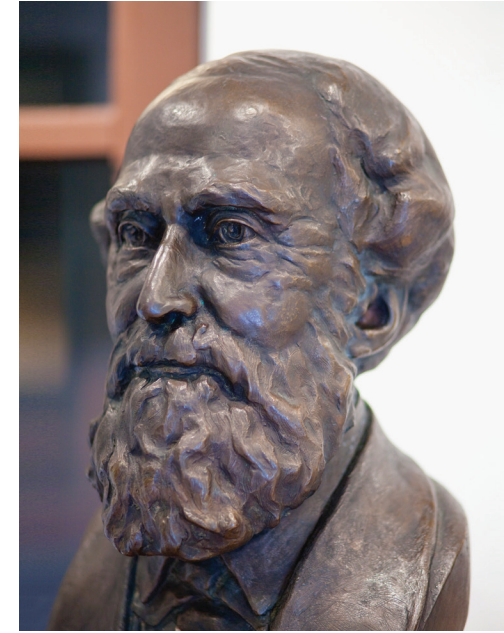
Mendota College Front Door Key

Was this the key that opened the door to Mendota Seminary's first three students on a snowy day in January of 1893? For years, a four-story brick building on the corner of 16th Street and Augustine Avenue in Mendota, Illinois, housed the tiny academic institution. In 1892, the seminary's founders bought the building from early leaders of Wartburg Seminary when the Lutheran organization opted to move west. This key was recovered from the rubble when the building was demolished.



Percy Snell's Playbook

For years, the baseball Spartans played on a home field named for Coach Percy Snell. Though his name was later associated with baseball, Snell was a man of many sports, including football. As a member of Aurora College's staff from 1926 to 1938, he was able to transform limited resources into dedicated teams. His abilities as a coach elevated not only the athletes' performance but also the morale of the entire college, the latter to such an extent that after a historic 12-7 win over Wheaton in October 1929, the first Homecoming was held the following year.



Bust of Sir George Williams

When George Williams arrived in London at the age of 15 to work in a draper's shop, he was disgusted by the working conditions during the Industrial Revolution. In summer 1844, he and 11 friends formed the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). He continued to advocate on behalf of the working class, fighting for workers' rights and promoting a standard workweek. His ideals inspired the founders of his namesake college in Wisconsin. Queen Victoria made him a Knight of the British Empire in 1894, some 50 years after he created the YMCA. Upon his death in 1905, he was buried among Britain's heroes and statesmen in St. Paul's Cathedral.

The Birch Bark

On the evening of Thursday, August 12, 1886, Robert Weidensall, William Lewis and Isaac Eddy Brown lit a dedicatory campfire to celebrate the founding of the Western Secretarial Institute. The campfire was the culmination of two years' work by the men to establish a YMCA training camp on the shores of Geneva Lake. Earlier that summer, William Lewis had purchased four acres of lakefront property on what is now the George Williams College campus for \$3,000. The three men gathered after clearing land and elected themselves to offices. Lewis was president, Weidensall was vice president and Brown was treasurer. Weidensall offered a prayer that dedicated the grounds to God and the work of training young men for the YMCA. Said Brown, "The Holy Spirit brooded over that quiet gathering under the trees; no one who was there can forget the hush and thrill and uplift of those moments with God." The men signed their names on a piece of birch bark to commemorate the event.



MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

My wish for AU is for many more 50-year reunions of alums remembering the best years of their young lives. Memories of lifelong friends, remarkable professors, loving relationships and most of all, discovering what matters.

—Carol (Schwarz) Bragg '65

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

My wish for current and future students at Aurora University is that you will cherish this special time in your life and in this very special place. May you allow the experiences and opportunities while attending AU to help mold you into the complete person you were created to be!

—Tom Gandee '69



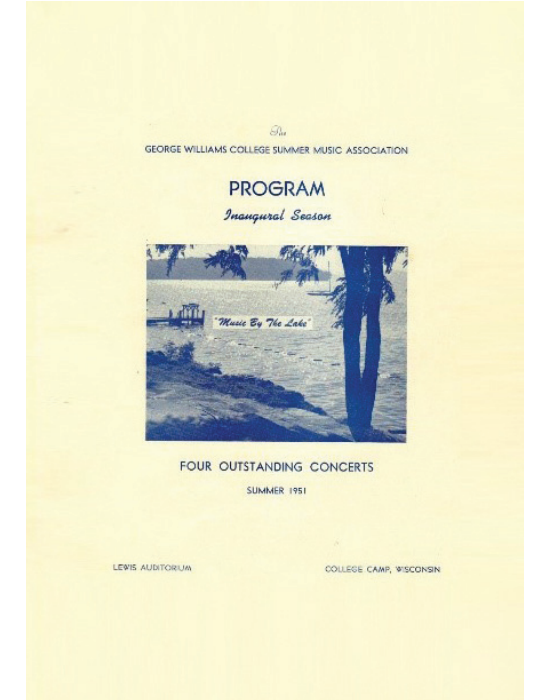
I.E. Brown's Diary

Isaac Eddy (I.E.) Brown founded the YMCA in Decatur, Illinois, and eventually became the YMCA state secretary. He was a published author, writing mainly about architecture of YMCA facilities, which later became standard reference for future Y buildings. He kept meticulous diaries. Daily entries detail trips around Wisconsin and Illinois. One such entry from Monday, August 11, 1884, reads, "Secretarial summer conference at Camp Collie. Committee met (Lewis, Weidensall and self) and named future gathering 'Western Secretarial Institute.'" More than 25 years later, on Wednesday, June 24, 1912, Brown posed with Weidensall and the class of 1912 at the water fountain. "Twenty-second Commencement" was his single diary entry for that proud day.



Robert Weidensall's Desk

Few names are more synonymous with the history of the GWC campus than Robert Weidensall. Railroad work called him to Omaha, where he became active in the Omaha YMCA and was elected its vice president in 1868. He was eventually made the YMCA's first international field secretary, tasked with organizing YMCAs along the Union Pacific rail line. This work put him in contact with William Lewis and I.E. Brown, and together they formed the Western Secretarial Institute. In 1905, Weidensall set out on a two-year around-the-world trip, visiting YMCAs wherever he could. With him was his Wooten desk, built in Indianapolis to his own specifications. The desk includes dozens of drawers and cubbies, a large writing surface and its own mail slot. Affectionately known as Uncle Robert, Weidensall dedicated 54 years of his life to the YMCA movement.

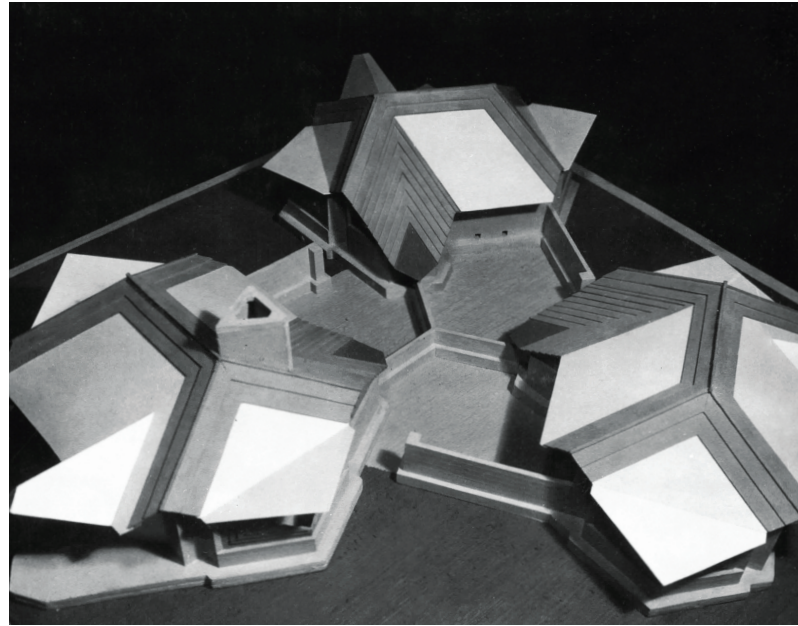


1951 Music by the Lake Program

A longstanding tradition began on Sunday, July 8, 1951, when the De Paur Infantry Chorus took GWC's Lewis Auditorium stage for the first Music by the Lake concert. That season featured just four concerts, but the next year saw nine, including one by the legendary Isaac Stern. The original concert series lasted 19 seasons, concluding in 1969. Since its 2001 revival, Music by the Lake has welcomed a wide variety of musicians. This year, it celebrated its 100th Sound of Summer.

Frank Lloyd Wright Cabin Designs

In February 1931, GWC trustees were presented with a peculiar scale model of new cabins destined for the lakeside campus. They were modular and fit together like a honeycomb, sharing a common courtyard. The trustees were intrigued, especially since world-famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright designed the cabins. A Wisconsin native, Wright was familiar with the Lake Geneva area. Alas, the cabins were never built, perhaps as a result of the Great Depression. Trustees also questioned the logic in building structures not fit for year-round use.

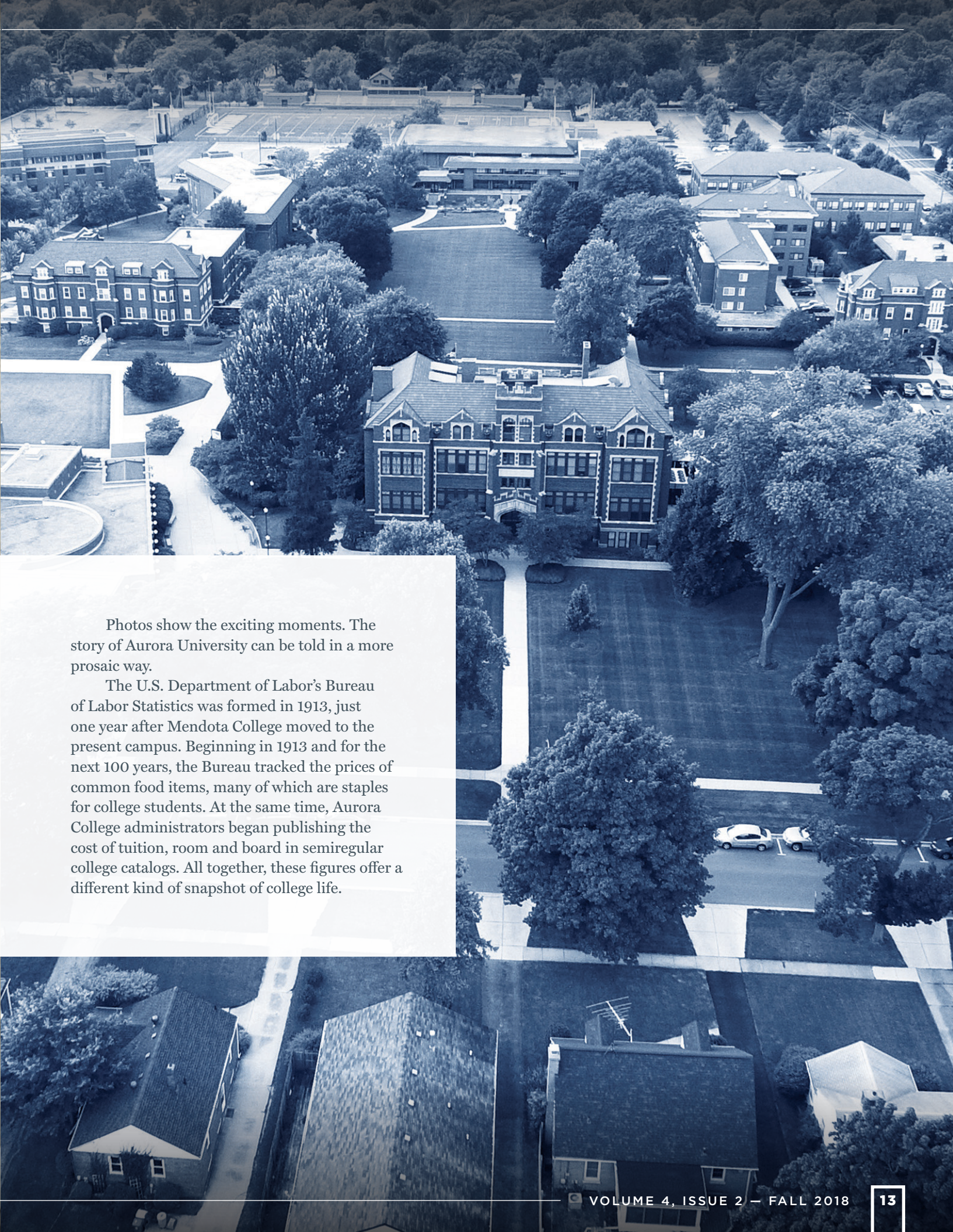
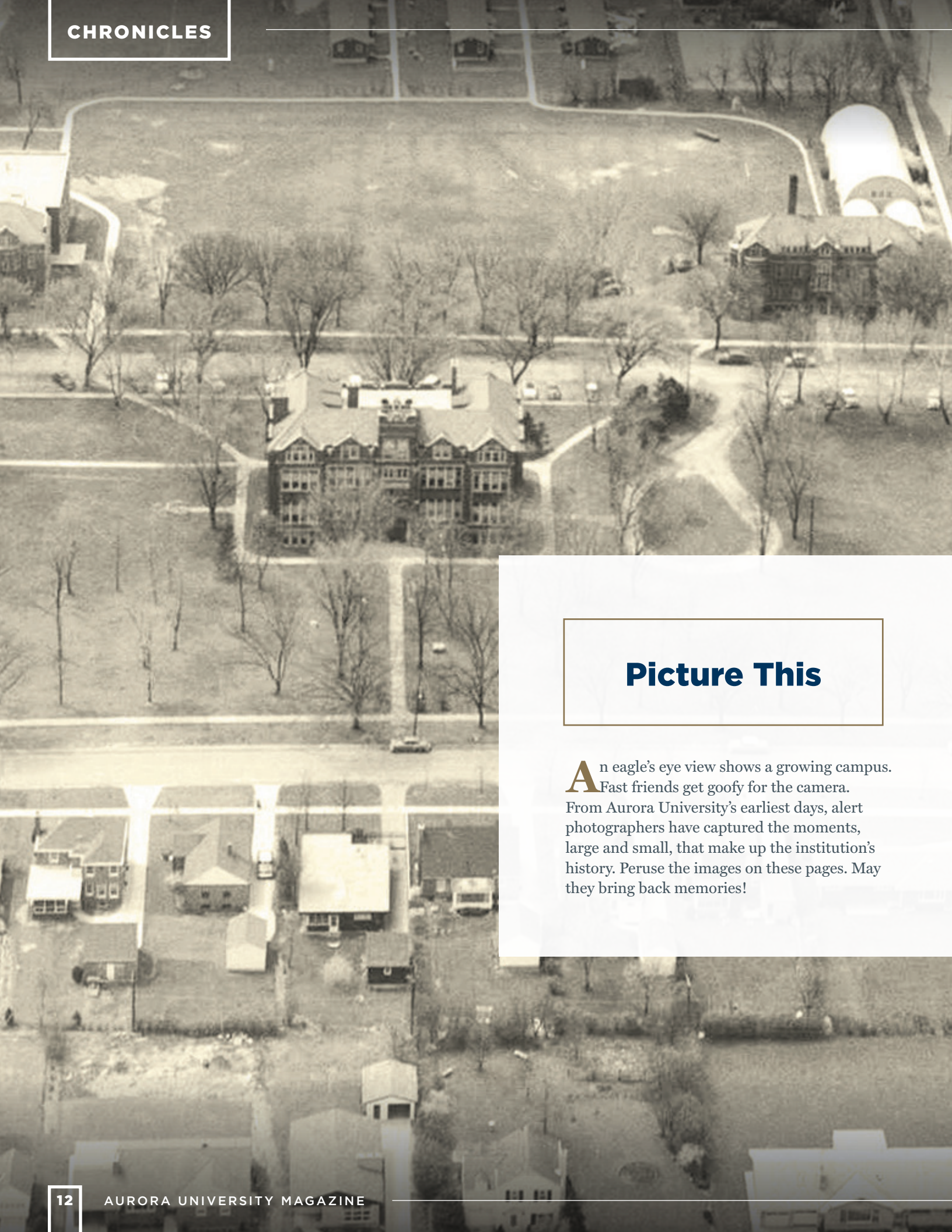


MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

I wish for growth, prosperity and another 125 successful years for Aurora University!
—Russell Thompson '79

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

I wish for Aurora University to hold tight to its roots and history while making itself available to all students.
—Marjorie (Cole) Thompson '62



Picture This

An eagle's eye view shows a growing campus. Fast friends get goofy for the camera. From Aurora University's earliest days, alert photographers have captured the moments, large and small, that make up the institution's history. Peruse the images on these pages. May they bring back memories!

Photos show the exciting moments. The story of Aurora University can be told in a more prosaic way.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics was formed in 1913, just one year after Mendota College moved to the present campus. Beginning in 1913 and for the next 100 years, the Bureau tracked the prices of common food items, many of which are staples for college students. At the same time, Aurora College administrators began publishing the cost of tuition, room and board in semiregular college catalogs. All together, these figures offer a different kind of snapshot of college life.



Year	1912	1917	1922	1927	1932	1937	1941	1947-48	1953-55	1956-58	1962-64	1966-68	1970-72	1978-80	1980-82	1990-92	1998-99	2001-03	2008-10	2012-13	2018-19
Tuition:	\$50	\$60	\$87 to \$100	\$115 to \$125	\$150 to \$200	\$150	\$170	\$293	\$405	\$450	\$750	\$1,200	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$3,300	\$8,100	\$11,700	\$13,368	\$17,400	\$19,900	\$24,000
Room and board:	\$144	\$180	\$198 to \$234	\$270 to \$300	\$270 to \$315	\$304	\$310	\$396 to \$450	\$531	\$531	\$612	\$860	\$1,056	\$1,785	\$1,900	\$3,270	\$4,890	\$5,589	\$7,412	\$8,804	\$11,380

FUN FACT	A loaf of bread cost an average of 6 cents.	Books and stationery cost \$10 to \$15.	Books and stationery cost \$30 to \$40.	A graduation diploma, cap and gown cost \$15.		Student fees averaged \$35 per year.	A \$2 music fee was charged for piano, organ, voice and orchestra lessons.		Residents paid \$18 per year for the College Health Service.	Aurora College began offering payment plans.				Eighty-five percent of Aurora College students received financial aid assistance.		The graduation fee was \$75.				Textbooks and supplies cost \$1,200 on average.
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\$

1913

Potatoes: 2.5 cents per pound
Rice: 8.7 cents per pound
White bread: 5.6 cents per pound
Butter: 38.3 cents per pound

1934

Potatoes: 1.7 cents per pound
Rice: 8.1 cents per pound
White bread: 8.3 cents per pound
Butter: 35.4 cents per pound

1947

Potatoes: 5 cents per pound
Rice: 18.4 cents per pound
White bread: 12.5 cents per pound
Butter: 80.5 cents per pound

1955

Potatoes: 5.6 cents per pound
Rice: 17.7 cents per pound
White bread: 17.7 cents per pound
Butter: 70.9 cents per pound

1975

Potatoes: 13.4 cents per pound
Rice: 47 cents per pound
White bread: 36 cents per pound
Butter: \$1.03 per pound

1987

Potatoes: 24.7 cents per pound
Rice: 42.2 cents per pound
White bread: 57.1 cents per pound
Butter: \$2.15 per pound

Note: Catalogs were not published continuously, and not all catalogs contained pricing information, so the dollar amounts listed on these pages are estimated averages for the given time period.

All food item values are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Tradition!

The path that each Aurora University student follows is unique, but the institution's traditions unite them all, past and present. There have been many traditions over the years. The following are just a few.

A

1 Homecoming has special meaning for AU student-athletes, who for many years have memorialized the institution's move from Mendota to Aurora during the weekend. Relay runners carry the **Spartan Torch** 50 miles, from where Mendota College once stood to the current location. The torch arrives before the start of the football game on Saturday afternoon.

2 When spring is in the air, AU **students are out in the community**. Many alumni recall spring break trips to Florida, where they volunteered at the Advent Christian Village. Today, students participate in various Alternative Spring Break trips, aligning themselves with nonprofit organizations such as the Love, Inc. social services agency in Wisconsin and Habitat for Humanity in Indiana.

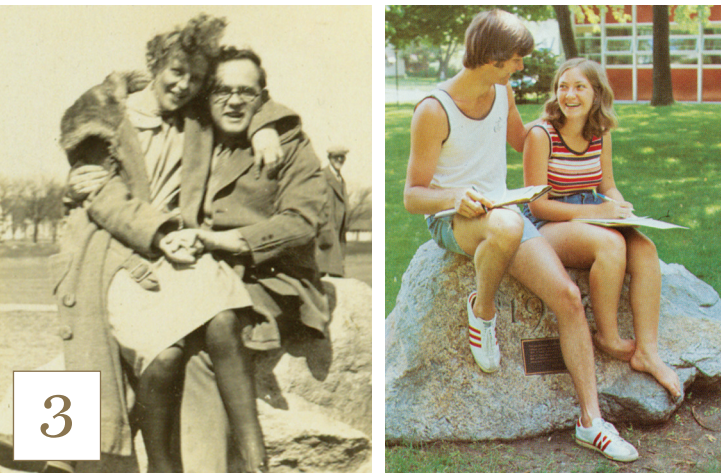
3 When the college moved from Mendota to Aurora in 1912, a special piece of the landscape came with it. The class of 1914 transported a boulder to Aurora via railroad flat car. **Engagement Rock**, as it would later be known, became a popular spot for marriage proposals. The rock stands in front of Eckhart Hall to this day. (Other places on campus have seen marriage proposals. Andy Patton '14 and Kayle Rieger '14 became engaged at the Schingoethe Center, where Kayle was a student worker.)

4 While Commencement ceremonies are formal, graduates have special ways of incorporating a personal touch. They partake in **friendly competition** when the president announces the names of their degree program during their ceremony. Each degree group is given the opportunity to cheer as loud as it can for its academic programs in what always proves to be a spirited and fun exercise for everyone in attendance.

5 Many classes want to memorialize their time on campus through a **generous gift** and extend positive wishes to new generations of students. The class of 1914, for example, gave the university a marble bust of Abraham Lincoln, which remains on display in Phillips Library. More recent class gifts include funding for the pipe organ Opus 119 in Crimi Auditorium. Recently, the class of 1968 has raised money for a naming space in the new Student Success Center. The class of 1969 is hard at work raising funds for the bell tower at Spartan Athletic Park.

6 In the 1900s, many incoming freshmen wore **beanies** to distinguish themselves from upperclassmen. At Aurora College, this tradition remained from 1912 until the second half of the century. Some first wore them during Field Day activities at Camp Rude in St. Charles, Illinois, a time for first-year students to become acquainted with other students and the college. The beanies were blue, surmounted by a small white button and bearing an "A" on the front.

7 For many years, Lowry Chapel was the home of an annual service that honored members of the graduating class and featured professional musicians. In more recent years, the university has celebrated the achievements of seniors during **Honors Convocation**. The event is held before Commencement to recognize students who have achieved academic excellence, provided leadership both on and off campus and served the community in a noteworthy way.



MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

For Aurora University, I wish another 125 years of continued success, hoping future students will receive the same quality of education and life I have enjoyed.

—Sherwood H. Boatwright '58

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

May you continue to shine as a bright light of faith, learning and discovery, where friendships are formed.

—Karen Creecy '87



Alumni Dining Hall and University Banquet Hall

Alumni Dining Hall at Aurora University has been upgraded, with a new layout able to convert into a gathering space when not in use for food service. The floor and furniture are new, as is the equipment in the kitchen. In warmer months, diners can enjoy a new, raised patio.

The entrance to University Banquet Hall no longer includes stairs, changing the hall to a walk-in facility. Outside, a patio with outdoor furniture welcomes all. Inside, the center divider is gone. The space now includes A/V equipment, a new floor, a new ceiling, a stone accent wall and a backlit glass wall showing off colorful LED lights.

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The Chapel

George Williams College has received a visible — and powerful — reminder of its faith-based roots in the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Earlier this year, the Chapel was built at the location of the Ingalls Children's Building, portions of which are incorporated into the new design. It is a place where students and community members can worship and where important life events, such as weddings and academic honors, may be celebrated.

Folding doors open wide to a patio overlooking Geneva Lake. A pergola leads next door to the Mabel Cratty Building. A garden and a path with seating offer a site for reflection. The light spilling inside is plentiful, and special art glass windows add a colorful ambience emulating the nature all around. Custom pews, a piano and beautiful new Bibles enhance services.

The Chapel was dedicated in July.

A



Maine artist Varda Avnisan created the Chapel's four art glass windows specifically to integrate with the new building's intent and nature setting.

"The idea of creating art for a place of worship was very exciting," she said. "The challenge was to create the windows so they reflect spirituality and a place of contemplation."

When she works on such a large project, she strives to make sure that all the parts complement each other to create the look, feel and harmony she sees in her mind. She experimented with different color combinations and different techniques. She melted different colors at a very high temperature to see what organic designs she could get.

The results add a rich and memorable detail to the Chapel.



A Community Approach to Student Success

While navigating the college experience can be difficult for students, determining factors that may hinder their success can be just as challenging. To help, Aurora University's Office of Student Life implemented the Knock and Talk program, with faculty and staff volunteers going door to door in the residence halls to speak with

students about obstacles they may be encountering. Since fall 2016, Knock and Talks have taken place once a semester around midterm.

"Our goal was to get the right departments in touch with the students, as opposed to suggesting who they should reach out to, so they will make more use of campus services," said Ann Almasi-Bush, assistant dean of student life.

Volunteers use prompt sheets provided by the Office of Student Life. Notes for each student go on an individual prompt sheet. Staff from Student Life then use the sheets to develop targeted interventions for the students.

As just one example, a student expressed stress from not being able to register for her classes due to a financial hold on her account. Based on her discussion with a volunteer, a counselor contacted her and a financial aid specialist helped her obtain a new loan. Now the student is excelling at AU and more connected to the resources available to her.

"Once we facilitate the initial connection to a department that can support their success, students can be more proactive in seeking out those services in the future," said Amy Gray, vice president for student success.

Due to positive response from the campus community, Knock and Talk sessions will continue.

A

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

To equip AU students to have a faith they live out in the world, not just an abstract set of beliefs, that will have a lasting positive impact in their community.

—Chari (Boyer) Apperson '78

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

My birthday wish is for the students to continue to enjoy the sense of community and Spartan pride that I enjoyed more than 35 years ago.

—Katie Keller '83

Another Successful Year

Beautiful spring weather added to the celebratory atmosphere during this year’s Commencement ceremonies in May. More than 1,500 students walked during the undergraduate and graduate ceremonies at Aurora University and George Williams College.

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Doctors of Humane Letters

The following individuals received Doctor of Humane Letters awards during this year’s undergraduate Commencement ceremony at Aurora University.

The name **Richard C. Irvin** has long been synonymous with the city of Aurora. Born and raised in the second largest city in Illinois, Irvin now serves as its 59th mayor. The path to this position was paved with service to country, educational pursuits and dedication to the value of citizenship. After graduation from high school, Irvin enlisted in the U.S. Army and served in both Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He then earned a bachelor’s degree from Robert Morris University and a Juris Doctor degree from Northern Illinois University School of Law. He served as an assistant state’s attorney for the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office and as a prosecutor for the Kane County State’s Attorney’s Office. Prior to being elected mayor of Aurora, Irvin was alderman-at-large for 10 years.

For 15 years, **Robert W. Pritchard** has embodied the Aurora University core value of citizenship by building positive relationships and advocating for others as a state representative. This representation includes involvement on five education committees, as well as the governor’s School Funding Reform Commission. Pritchard earned degrees in communication from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He worked for two universities, and he served on the Hinckley-Big Rock Board of Education. Like many of his constituents, he grew up on a family farm and operated it in later years. He also served as executive director of the Illinois Agricultural Leadership Foundation and president of the national Agricultural Relations Council.

For **Pearl H. Rieger**, seeking knowledge has been a lifelong passion. She has pursued education to ensure that others experience the transformative power of learning themselves. As a result, her commitment to continuous learning has enriched the lives of countless children and their families. After a career as a speech pathologist, Rieger earned a Master of Arts in Educational Psychology from the University of Chicago, where she became interested in the emerging field of diagnosing learning differences. Rieger worked with Chicago schoolchildren and established her own private practice. She went on to help establish the Rush NeuroBehavioral Center, an affiliate of Rush University Medical Center, where she served as a psycho-educational diagnostician and supported the center’s work assessing children with brain-based disabilities.



Peer-to-Peer Partnership

Performance and safety are constantly on the mind of the student-athletes at Aurora University, even when the score is unfavorable and a win becomes a matter of pride.

Behind the scenes, those two goals are of equal importance to AU’s exercise science majors, who are learning to improve student-athletes’ training regimens.

In just one example, women’s volleyball players and exercise science students recently teamed up for a study that examined these athletes’ power, reaction time and vertical jump

performance throughout the season. After practices and games, exercise science majors took over, working to quantify the level of stress placed on the athletes’ bodies in different environments.

Outside of the classroom, exercise science majors have the chance to work on fitness testing, functional movement screening and other types of research projects with the athletes on specific teams, including not just women’s volleyball but also football and men’s hockey. To do so, they have access to a state-of-the-art laboratory with Division I equipment that can measure parameters such as cardiovascular function, body composition, force, muscle activity, velocity, power output, reaction time and decision-making ability.

Findings from the study are allowing the coaches to modify training sessions to maximize performance.

“Information about how quickly our student-athletes can recover after matches and practices is invaluable,” said James Seitelman, head women’s volleyball coach. “It tells me how hard to train the players and if we can train more without losing quality repetitions.”

For their part, the student-athletes are excited to have their peers aid in their athletic performance. They are always curious about new ways they can gain an advantage through training equipment or performance data.

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MY BIRTHDAY wish FOR AU...

My prayer for AU is that all students would fully identify what is important and build their lives anchored upon their convictions. My prayer extends to each faculty member, coach and administrator that they realize every student needs guidance in discovering core values.

—Charlie Bell ’58

MY BIRTHDAY wish FOR AU...

My wish for AU is that it continues to bring quality education to our young adults/students through technology and personal attention.

—Trisha (Tucker) Peterson ’93

The Boons and Benefits of an AU MBA

When Jackie Speciale first joined her family’s manufacturing business, she had a background in horticulture — which means she had a lot to learn in her new role as senior manager of purchasing, finance and human resources.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Columbia College and then a Master of Business Administration at Aurora University’s Woodstock Center. The factors that influenced her decision about AU were not just professional but also personal.

“Aside from academic knowledge, I chose to pursue an MBA with a concentration in leadership because I wanted to address a weakness in myself: lack of confidence,” she explained. “I tackled this head on by taking chances in my classes and encouraging open feedback from classmates and professors. I had some challenging professors, but they believed in me, and I made sure to learn as much as I could from them.”

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“I chose to pursue an MBA with a concentration in leadership because I wanted to address a weakness in myself: lack of confidence.”

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Her classmates at the Woodstock Center included professionals from different sectors — banking, health care, automotive, insurance, manufacturing, public safety, public administration and entrepreneurship — and she now has a built-in network of colleagues in McHenry County, where she lives.

“The collaborative learning format there gave me a greater appreciation of and empathy for people with different types of personalities,” she said. “I use this skillset often in my career and volunteer activities.”



Photo courtesy Journal & Topics Media Group

The strong streak of volunteerism in Speciale’s life also has benefited from the self-assurance she gained in her classes. While pursuing her MBA, she became a disaster services volunteer with the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago, offering support to people displaced by a house fire or weather-related event. She works in teams that form very rapidly and often with people who have never worked together before.

Speciale is involved in an extraordinary number of other community projects, some in collaboration with Woodstock Center staff. One of them is a mentorship position with the Woodstock High School INCubator program, guiding students through a yearlong entrepreneurship course. Last May, her students gave a competitive business pitch to a board, and her team was chosen as the winner.

“I’m so proud of their hard work and all of the things they have learned,” she said. “I utilized leadership and networking skills that I developed in part thanks to Aurora University. It is nice to see how that impacts our next generation.”

In 2016, she was named among McHenry County’s Women of Distinction for being a role model and leader in her community.

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Love for Languages

One of the joys of the Aurora University experience is that an encounter with the life-changing can materialize unexpectedly. Adriana Bonilla was working toward an undergraduate degree in accounting because she had been told it would lead to a guaranteed job. Then Costa Rica caught her eye and waved hello.

She took a chance on AU’s study abroad program in the Central American country. For two months, she attended the University of Costa Rica, enjoying course work in culture, literature and language. She connected with local residents and with other program participants. Program-sponsored excursions or unstructured weekend adventures with new friends were bonuses. Why not, when a bus ticket good for travel to a coast cost a mere \$25? Bonilla was transformed.

“It was because of this first study abroad experience that I decided to change my major to focus on foreign languages,” she said. “I had been thinking about it a lot but never acted on it.” At AU, she believed in her choice enough to morph her major into Spanish.

A trip to France had always been a dream, so when the opportunity to study there came up, Bonilla didn’t hesitate. At the Institut Linguistique Adenet in Montpellier, she was placed in a cohort based on her abilities in the



Photo courtesy of Adriana Bonilla

language. As in Costa Rica, field trips and amazing adventures were part of life outside the classroom. She gained lasting friendships and deep cultural insights — and enough exposure to French to help her earn the equivalent course work of a major in the language.

“I love to immerse myself in different cultures,” she explained. “Learning another language introduces me to gastronomy, the arts, traditions, social norms, politics, philosophies and so much more.”

A passion for language has guided Bonilla to a new career. After graduating from AU, she moved to France for a year to begin a job as a teaching assistant in English. Afterward, she will return to the States to start earning a master’s degree in French at Louisiana State University, with a PhD a possibility as well.

“Studying abroad truly opened up doors for Adriana,” said Dr. Terri Schroth, associate professor of foreign languages and director of international programs at AU. “She wouldn’t have had these opportunities without that.”

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Field Guide

The list of offerings in the study abroad program at Aurora University is growing, right along with interest in these trips, specifically experiential learning opportunities like internships and volunteering.

The idea of living in another country for an extended period of time — whether a semester, a summer or the month of May — may seem intimidating to some, but Dr. Terri Schroth works closely with students who are exploring a study abroad experience. She guides them through all steps of the process, including choosing and registering for a program. For those who go, she provides a predeparture orientation and support during and after their sojourn.

“The students get personalized attention, and programs are customized for each student’s needs,” she said.

Getting the chance to relish the taste and texture of Italy’s famous cuisine, feel the staccato of flamenco in southern Spain or visit Germany’s gorgeous, historic castles — all while taking classes, of course — can be an enriching enhancement to the students’ education. AU is prepared to offer it.



OUR BIRTHDAY wish FOR AU...

Our wish is that Aurora University continues to challenge students to discover a meaningful philosophy of life with an emphasis on character and scholarship. In so doing, they will become graceful and contributing people, discovering their involvement in services to others.

—John ’67 and Jody (Lobb) ’68 Fenlason

MY BIRTHDAY wish FOR AU...

While attending Aurora College, I found for my life what has become the university’s slogan: “Discover what matters and build your life around it.” That happened to me educationally, ethically, religiously and in too many other ways to count. I wish this for all future students.

—Sid Tice ’47

Student Success at Aurora University

Aurora University educates students for lives of meaning and success. The AU community ensures that students develop positive values, master vital skills and command important knowledge. As we celebrate our 125th anniversary, we believe in the nobility of this mission, and we seek support for two exciting new projects that will help us fulfill it.

The **Study Beyond Endowment** will help AU students afford participation in off-campus learning opportunities, such as internships and study abroad experiences, both of which offer special advantages to those who participate in them. Our goal is to raise \$1 million in initial funding for the Study Beyond Endowment.

The **Student Success Center** will house our academic advising, student employment, internship, career development and alumni relations programs. Professionals in these offices will help students discover their strengths, discern their vocation and build the competencies necessary for life after their undergraduate career. An investment of \$8 million will be required to bring this vision to fruition.

Become a part of continuing the tradition of student success. For more information, contact **Meg Howes**, vice president for development, at (630) 844-5256 or mhowes@aurora.edu.

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A STEP Toward College

Nine expressions ping-ponged between excitement and curiosity as a robotic device was tossed into Geneva Lake to help explain shipwrecks and underwater exploration. It's a wonder that the nine young men had anything resembling excitement left, as they had just spent the previous days riding horses, kayaking, rock climbing, singing to karaoke, making art, hiking and more. One evening, they had also observed Jupiter in the night sky.

These lucky fellows were participants in Aurora University's Summer Transitional Enrichment Program (STEP), held at George Williams College over 10 days in

June in conjunction with Vermont's Landmark College, which is dedicated to students who learn in different ways. Each STEP student was a college-bound high school junior or senior with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). STEP was designed to help students with ASD build skills for their transition to college, including social strategies.

Afternoon adventures each day used exciting topics — from robotics to code breaking to the culinary arts — to jump-start interaction and model the interpersonal and communication skills the students will need to succeed in college.

The program didn't include only games and adventures, though.

Like college, there was an academic portion. In the mornings, STEP participants wrote a college admission essay and worked on strategies for social pragmatics, the ability to communicate using social cues. In the evening, they stayed in residence halls just as they would in a college setting.

This inaugural STEP was a success, according to Dr. Donna DeSpain, executive program director for STEP. "We easily met our goals of having the students experience what college life is all about while living in a residential setting," she said.

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MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

To continue to provide a quality education at an affordable cost to the next generation.

—Francis J. Muska '72

MY BIRTHDAY *wish* FOR AU...

My wish for AU is, regardless of how it grows, it retains a small, personal feel, a safe place for individuals from all walks of life with dreams to pursue.

—Rosa Lee (Frost) Ashby '56

Adjunct music professor **Michelle Areyzaga** took second place in the American Prize for singers. She also maintains an active solo career across the United States.

Noah Bailey '16 directed three youth theatre productions for Steel Beam Theatre, a professional nonunion theater in St. Charles.

Dr. Bridgitte Barclay, associate professor of English and chair of the English Department, co-edited the book *Gender and Environment in Science Fiction*.

Dr. Gerald Butters, professor of history, is working on a book, under contract with Wayne State University Press, on the career of film director Kevin Willmott.



The Champaign County Coroner's Office hired **Claire Doty '18** as a deputy coroner and autopsy technician.

Aurora University's Finance Association was selected for the second year in a row to be part of an elite group of finance programs to compete for recognition as the top equity research team, hosted this year by CDW Corporation.



Wyatt Flickinger '18 completed recruit training with the Bettendorf, Iowa, Police Department and began solo patrol in August.

Members of the History Club, along with other history majors, participated in the Teaching Black History Conference at the Carter Center of the University of Missouri.

Georgine Maisch, assistant professor of nursing and simulation lab coordinator, has become the third nursing professor from Aurora University to receive the Nurse Educator Fellowship Award from the Illinois Board of Higher Education. She is one of the 10 Illinois nurse educators to receive the 2018 award.

Dr. Carrie Milne-Zelman, associate professor of biology, along with **Alison Etheridge '18** and **Lisa Geihm '19**, studied turtle populations in a Canadian lake as part of a government-funded citizen science program.

Adjunct music professor **Joel Moore** released a new album of original jazz music called *Magnetic on Magnetic*.

Anthony Parra '14 has been serving as a Kane County juvenile probation officer and was recently hired as a special agent by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency.

The Illinois Principals Association (IPA) named **Gloria Trejo**, EdD candidate for educational leadership, the Illinois Principal of the Year.



Dalilah Villa '19 won second place in the Fox Valley Orchestra Youth Voice Competition.

A Past with a Purpose

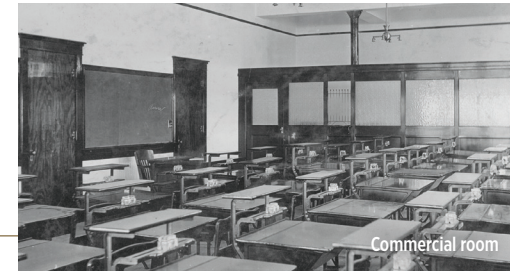
The Quad is the heart of Aurora University and is punctuated on the east by Eckhart Hall, the campus's oldest building. Eckhart was the students' first indication of their new home when they arrived after their journey from Mendota for Aurora College's opening in spring 1912.

Completed in just under a year and a half after its groundbreaking on May 31, 1911, Eckhart was built to be the institution's sole academic building. The layout met that purpose.

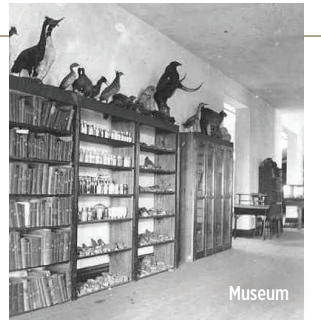
Several decades and remodeling projects later, Eckhart Hall still serves as one of the first buildings many prospective students enter on their first visits to campus. Today, it is listed on the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places.

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The third, uppermost floor included two halls designed for social gatherings and club meetings. Three larger rooms were meant for the museum and other purposes.



The second floor included one general classroom, two music rooms and a commercial room designed for students in bookkeeping.



The main floor housed the President's Office, the library, the treasurer's office, an assembly hall with a stage to fit up to 270 people and six classrooms. Two of the classrooms were separated from the assembly hall by a removable wall, increasing the main hall's capacity to 400 people.



The basement accommodated the science department, including two laboratories, two storage rooms, three classrooms and one lecture room.

MY BIRTHDAY wish FOR AU...

It is my wish that AU will continue to provide the opportunity for students to “discover what matters,” that they may become shining lights in their future endeavors.

—Norma (Bragg) Sondgeroth '56

MY BIRTHDAY wish FOR AU...

My birthday wish is for another 125 years of stimulating minds to build better futures for future generations.

—Guadalupe Reyes, Jr. '70



347 S. Gladstone Ave.
Aurora, IL 60506-4892



Join us Homecoming 2018 | October 12-14

Join fellow Aurora University alumni and friends for a weekend reunion. Be there on October 13 when the softball field at Spartan Athletic Park is named for former coach and mentor Dr. Sam Bedrosian. For the complete weekend schedule, visit aurora.edu/homecoming.