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Ask the Abbot

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What became of [the two] cannons [on campus]?

Tom Vavrek '70

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October 2007

Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

Father Anselm Keefe obtained a large cannon for the lawn in front of Main Hall in the 1920s. A smaller cannon was placed there in the 1960s. We held a huge pro-Vietnam War rally there in 1966, prominently featured in the 1967 yearbook. What became of both cannons?

Tom Vavrek '70

Answer:

Thanks for your question, Tom. I do recall the cannons being placed in front of Main Hall as you have mentioned. After looking into their whereabouts, I came across a story about where they ended up.

The large cannon that was there in the 1920s was donated as scrap metal during World War II. Chances are, it was melted down for use in building some other type of military equipment.

Further adventures also befell the second cannon to which you refer. The rumor is that some students thought it would be fun to place it in the Fox River. After learning of what had happened, Micky Kain, the head of facilities at the time, had the cannon removed from the water. It was then taken to the Door County home of Dr. Ralph Lenz, the college physician. I have heard that it was still there in the early 1980s, but it is unknown what happened to it when Mrs. Lenz passed away in the 1990s.



Ask the Abbot

As the founder of St. Norbert College, and having a prime seat in the center of campus throughout the years, I, Abbot Bernard Pennings, hold the answers to many of your burning questions about the college.

[Submit Your Question](#)



There may be more to the stories than these details of which I am aware. Perhaps some of our readers who know more about either of the cannons would be willing to **contact me** and share their recollections. I'll gladly share the information in issues to come!

Responses to "Ask the Abbot" questions are penned by St. Norbert College staff in the name of Abbot Bernard Pennings, O.Praem., who founded St. Norbert College in 1898.

St. Norbert College

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