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Ask the Abbot

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Was there really a high school on campus at one time?

Brittany Draxler '12

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March 2011

Question:

Abbot Pennings,

Was there really a high school on campus at one time?

Brittany Draxler '12

Answer:

My dearest Brittany,

Many kind thanks for your inquiry. The answer to your question hearkens back to the very beginning of our beloved college.

Upon its founding in 1898, St. Norbert College did indeed serve as high school as well. As the years waxed on, St. Norbert High School evolved into a college preparatory boarding school housed within Boyle Hall.

In 1923, the West De Pere public school system erected Nicolet High School a stone's throw northwest of campus. We Norbertines purchased this building in 1959 as a new home for St. Norbert High School. With the new location came a new name that to this day humbles me greatly: Abbot Pennings High School.

That first fall, some 400 students enrolled at the new institution. It bustled for three decades, giving countless students a rich education steeped in faith. Changing times prompted its merger with other fine institutions of higher education, in 1990, to form our fine Notre Dame Academy in Green Bay.



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.

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At that time, the college assumed ownership of the building, and it underwent another metamorphosis, becoming the Pennings Activity Center, or PAC. Today you will find within its historic walls the campus safety department, the office of communications, the Upward Bound program and the student-run Knight Owl coffee bar and lounge.

This summer, PAC also will temporarily accommodate members of the admission team as their office is transformed into the new Ariens Family Welcome Center. You see, my dear Brittany, good stewardship of available resources is a tenet of Norbertine life, and it makes my heart swell to see this historic facility ever changing with the needs of the college.

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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