

Truman gives root to family trees

Love-struck alumni send children to their former alma mater

Alicia Collins

Assistant Features Editor

Truman is a shared experience within some families.

Some students on campus now attend the same University where their parents first met and fell in love.

Alumna Terry Overfelt said her first visit to the University with her daughter freshman Hillary Overfelt included standing on the purple staircase in McClain Hall where she and her husband first met.

"There are so many fun memories all around the campus," Terry Overfelt said. "It was sweet looking into the precious face of Hillary, one of our three children, and realizing the circumstances that forged our meeting."

Terry Overfelt said it did not seem as if it had been long enough for them to be returning with their daughter.

"I knew it had been a great place for us 25 years ago and was an even better place today," she said. "When your kids go away to school, you want to know they will be safe, happy and successful. [NMSU] had been all of those

things for us and could be for Hillary too."

Terry Overfelt said that when she began attending the University, she believed she already knew her future husband or that she would be swept off her feet by a relationship she was not necessarily seeking.

"I playfully expected to meet my future husband everywhere I went, and every time I met someone that I was interested in, I mentally combined our gene pools, wondering what our children would look like," she said.

She and her husband began dating during their sophomore year, and Terry Overfelt said Sept. 13, 1978 was a day she never will forget.

"I used to run along the north side of Centennial that eventually emptied into the bag leg of Thousand Hills Lake, and I suggested we drive there one night," she said. "I'm not sure what he thought I had in mind, but when I jumped in, fully clothed, he followed, and there in the water we had our first kiss."

Terry Overfelt said she thinks the college atmosphere promotes lasting relationships.

"The independence of your time and living arrangement fosters relationship building," she said.

Hillary Overfelt said she definitely received a trip down memory lane when she visited Truman with her parents during her senior year of high school.

"The second we walked in the building, [my mother] got on the staircase and said, 'This is where I met your father,' and we were waiting for our tour, so of course everyone was listening," Hillary

Overfelt said.

She said that when she was younger she was excited for college because she knew her parents had met during that time, but as she grew older she took a more realistic view of relationships.

"I realized people meet their spouses at all different points of their lives," she said. "Relationship success is really dependent on what point each person is in life because even if a relationship could be potentially successful, the

timing could be wrong and prevent it from developing."

Hillary Overfelt said her decision to attend the University was not affected by the fact that her parents met here, but she does think there is a reason for the number of couples who meet in college and go on to marry.

"College is one of the biggest transitions and changes in life, and a lot of what you do in college shapes who you become as a person," she said. "If people can fall in love and keep a healthy relationship during the most vulnerable and inconsistent time of their lives, everything else should be a little easier after that."

Freshman Dustin Hamilton's parents also met at the University.

Hamilton said his parents had grown up 120 miles apart, but they met through NEMO Singers, where his mother was his father's accompanist.

Hamilton said his initial decision to attend the University was based solely on the fact that his parents had gone here, but he also considered other universities.

"I made campus visits during the fall semester and was floored by the way I was treated here," he said. "At that point, it became clear that I would be attending Truman, hands down."

In the end, Hamilton made the



Photo submitted by Terry Overfelt
Jeff and Terry Overfelt attended the Alpha Kappa Lambda formal together in 1979.

decision to attend the University for himself without regard to his parents' past, he said.

His parents are not the only couple he knows who married after having met at the University,

Hamilton said.

"My aunt is also a Truman graduate, thus the reason my mom went to Truman, and she met her husband here also," he said. "Truman has several family ties."

Museum hides in Grim Smith Hospital

Artifacts will become part of a museum thanks to donation

Loretta Palmer

Staff Reporter

A \$1 million donation will help thousands of artifacts find a permanent home.

An array of issues surrounds the artifacts, such as the future of a museum at Truman and a \$1 million donation by former history professor Ruth Towne, who died in 1998.

These artifacts used to be part of the E.M. Violette Museum, which dates back to the early 20th century.

Eugene Morrow Violette, professor of history from 1900 to 1923 at the First District Normal School, now Truman State University, began collecting material to help students appreciate history.

Jeff Gall, associate professor of

history, said he understands Violette's reasoning for the museum.

"I think people learn and absorb information in all kinds of different ways," Gall said. "I think visual representations of the past are the most powerful way for someone to really experience the past and understand what the past was."

The artifacts include a variety of items that depict the lifestyle of people in northeastern Missouri during the 19th century. Other collections include artifacts from World War I, World War II and even the Middle Ages.

"I found it to be a very diverse collection of artifacts," Gall said. "Almost anyone could go there and find something that they could be engaged by."

The artifacts have been moved to several locations during the years, according to the E.M. Violette Museum's Web site.

The museum's last residence was the basement of the John R.

Kirk Memorial. The artifacts remained there from 1943 to the fall of 2003.

Elaine Doak, head special collection librarian and archivist, said Kirk Memorial had several climate-control problems that made the room an unsuitable place for the historical artifacts.

"The artifacts were moved because there were no environmental controls in the basement, where they were located," Doak said.

Later the artifacts were moved to the Grim Smith Hospital on East Patterson Street for safekeeping and have remained there since.

Doak said she thinks storing the artifacts was the right thing to do, rather than leaving them in the unsafe environment.

"I think [the people who donated the artifacts] would prefer them to be in storage rather than having something happen to them, which is what was going on," Doak said. "And knowing that eventu-

ally, hopefully, [the artifacts] will be back on exhibit."

Mark Gambaiana, vice president of University advancement, said the terms of Towne's \$1 million donation are to use 25 percent of the money for the creation and establishment of the museum.

The remaining portion is for an endowment. The interest from the endowment is for ongoing maintenance and operations, Gambaiana said.

Six years later, the money remains untouched.

Gambaiana said steady progress is being made to fulfill Towne's wishes.

The University purchased the former Kirksville fire station in 2001 and named it in honor of Towne.

Gambaiana said the problem is the need for additional staff and funds to transform the fire station into a quality facility to house a museum and welcome center.

Certain elements such as temper-

ature control and preservation of the artifacts are important, Gambaiana said. Towne's specifications only allow \$250,000 for the creation of the facility.

"The University needs to establish and make a commitment to complete this because the cost to create the museum exceeds the \$250,000 bequest," Gambaiana said. "The University has to allocate some resources either from its own resources or from additional private gifts to make this happen."

Michael McManis, university dean for planning and institutional development and executive assistant to the president, said University officials are unsure about how much additional money will be required, but the University has taken the initial step of assessing the fire station.

"We recently put some architects under contract to begin a study of the facility in terms of what would be needed and how we would use it effectively," McManis said.

He said the architects' report should be finished in a six to nine month period.

"The intent today is to transform that facility into a museum and visitor center that would house the museum collection, or at least some portion of the museum collection," McManis said.

The visitor center also might include some portions of the admissions, advancement or alumni offices, McManis said.

While passing through the center, visitors would be able to view a portion of the extensive artifact collection, McManis said.

"My hopes for the museum are revolving around fulfilling the intent of Dr. Towne's bequest," Gambaiana said. "She was an icon at the University and touched so many alumni and friends. This is a fabulous way to honor her memory, and when we fulfill that then we have not only filled our fiduciary duty but also the right thing to do."

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Landlord List

For Rent: Large two- or three-bedroom house three blocks from Truman. Off-street parking, washer/dryer hook-ups, new furnace and windows. \$450 per month. Available May 1. Call Jeff Behrmann owner/agent at 626-7598 for more information.

For Rent: Large one-bedroom duplex apartment three blocks from Truman. Washer/dryer, A/C, off-street parking available June 1. \$275 per month. Call Jeff Behrmann owner/agent at 626-7598.

For Rent: Two-bedroom house available near campus. \$350 per month plus utilities. \$450 deposit. Call 665-7186 for more information. Leave a message.

For Rent: Newer two- and three-bedroom duplexes available May or August. These units are not within walking distance of Truman but are located just north of downtown. All electric units include central air, garbage disposal, range, refrigerator, dishwasher, washer and dryer. Rent \$450-\$550 per month, one-month deposit. View online at rentkirksville.com, ID number 107 and 108, or call 626-5088 for an appointment.

For Rent: New three-bedroom, three-bath duplex available in August. Six blocks from campus. All electric unit includes central air, garbage disposal, range, refrigerator, dishwasher, washer and dryer. This unit features a unique design with plenty of space. Rent \$750 per month with one month deposit. View online at rentkirksville.com, ID number 191 or call 626-5088 for an appointment.

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For Rent: One-, two-, three-, four-, five-, six- and seven-bedroom apartments and houses. Most close to campus. May and August leases. Call 216-1179 for more information.

For Rent: Now taking applications for Boardwalk, Park Place, Water Works, States Ave., Virginia Ave. and St. James Place Apartments. Several two-, three- and four-bedroom units available. Call Four Horizons Realty, Inc. at 665-3400 or visit 703 N. Marion St. for more information.

For Rent: New duplex apartments. Near downtown and four blocks from campus. Two-bedroom. One walk-in closet. Washer/dryer, dishwasher, refrigerator and range furnished. Central air, garbage disposal and outside storage. May and August availability. \$400-\$425. Call 665-2796 Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For Rent: New three-bedroom, two full bath duplex apartment. Includes two walk-in closets, off-street parking, refrigerator, range,

dishwasher, garbage disposal, washer, dryer, outside storage shed. 802 to 804 N. Green. \$600 per month. Call 665-2796 Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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For Rent: Studio. \$300/month all utilities paid. Heat, water, trash, electric, wireless Internet. Three blocks from Truman campus, close to downtown. On-site laundry. Call 627-1400 or www.kirksvilleapartments.com for more information.

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