

Originally Forest Place, Alpha Hall was latest in dorms

Alpha Hall was the latest thing in dormitories — for the year 1906, that is. And who could pass up paying only \$35-\$45 per term for a room in the new private dormitory. Meals, by the way, were not included in the price.

The new building, which was originally called Forest Place, cost a whopping \$40,000. Only older readers will remember where it was located — Forest Place. Roughly speaking, the street ran from Third Street (opposite the Pi Beta Phi House) to the spot where the Beck Chapel now stands on the campus. John H. Loudon of Bloomington built and managed the dormitory originally intended for women only.

Thomas D. Clark, who wrote a multi-volume history of Indiana University, described the problem IU was having. "Joseph Swain (IU president) ... told the trustees in his annual report on Nov. 1, 1896, that it was becoming increasingly difficult for girls to find places to live. He expressed the belief that private homes were the best places for college girls to board ... but the number of coeds in 1896 was overrunning Bloomington's private facilities.



LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

Besides, Bloomington landladies showed a decided preference for male boarders."

Forest Place, which was constructed of limestone, could accommodate 100 women. The Bloomington *Evening World* of July 19, 1906, described the building's amenities. "There are seven reception rooms on the first floor, for the use of students. The bedrooms are located on the first and second floors; each floor has three bath and toilet rooms. There is an infirmary on the third floor, where in case of illness, a student may be removed and have a special nurse."

The new building was heated with steam and had electric lights. There was a gas plate for each corridor, but no chafing dishes or alcohol lamps were allowed.

Forest Place had its own laundry, and stu-

dents were required to use it, rather than finding outside laundry facilities. Washing of the students' bedding (which they were obliged to furnish) was free.

The bedrooms had two closets, a dresser, bookcase, study table and wash stand (basin) with continuous hot and cold water.

The rules allowed for single or double occupancy of the rooms, but there was no reduction of rent for single occupancy. Provision was also made for students during the spring and Christmas vacations, if they were willing to pay an additional amount.

Forest Place was strictly supervised by the university. A resident matron, answerable to the IU dean of women, lived in the dormitory.

Then, of course, there were the rules set up for the women residents.

They are spelled out in the *Evening World* article: (1) quiet hours were to be agreed upon by the women in consultation with the dean of women; (2) male callers were permitted in the public rooms of the building between 2 and 10 p.m. only; (3) the doors of Forest Place were locked precisely at 10:30 p.m. and any who would be out later had to have made spe-

cial arrangements with the dean; and (4) women who planned to be gone overnight were required to give the dean the address of that place where they would be staying.

Forest Place thrived in the years after it opened. In 1919-20, Dean of Women Agnes Wells reported that there had been enough applications for rooms to fill the place twice.

There were other facilities leased by the university for female students. Another IU historian, Burton D. Myers, reported that there were problems with one of the leased houses.

"The Indiana University Annex, 411 S. Henderson St., had been opened again for 1920-21, but it had not been so successful during the past year. They had not had money to make it attractive. The house was old and they had had a great deal of trouble with bedbugs. The furnace was hard to regulate and expensive to run."

Finally in 1936, IU bought the building that had once been called Forest Place and became, instead, Alpha Hall. It was torn down in 1961.

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