

UNC food service changes with the times

By DOUG LEWIS
Staff Writer

For the past several months, much has been written about the current problems facing UNC's attempts to provide a viable, self-supporting food service for students and faculty. A Food Service Advisory Committee, an independent research firm, Student Government and the Residence Hall Association have worked together on the current proposal facing the UNC Board of Governors in May. To understand fully the reasons behind this proposal, the history of food service on the UNC campus must be closely examined.

The first permanent dining facility used for students on campus was known as Commons Hall. The hall was located east of Peabody Hall and was opened at the beginning of the 1885 fall semester. It was a long wooden building measuring 100 feet by 45 feet. The Commons "guaranteed good fare at a low price." Students ate their meals while under the supervision of faculty and the house matron. They were charged \$8 a month for their meals and were served by student waiters, who received their meals free. Commons replaced Steward's Hall, another long wooden building which had been used as a dining facility since the early 1800s.

As the University grew, its need for a larger dining facility became more apparent. Thus, Swain Hall was opened in 1913. It initially operated successfully as a boarding house. But continued growth again became a problem. Compounding the increased flow of students was the fact that the facilities quickly became outmoded.

In an attempt to alleviate this problem, the University increased its dining facilities. In 1924, Spencer Hall and the Carolina Inn were built with places to eat. Spencer operated under the contract system, with each woman paying a set fee for meals. The Carolina Inn operation was a restaurant facility much like today's.

Although these two cafeterias helped to ease Swain's problems, they did not alleviate them. Because each drop in patronage caused food quality and service to drop, Swain soon became the University's "white elephant." The decision was made to close Swain and make an attempt at renovation. After having been closed during 1936, UNC President Frank P. Graham announced the reopening of Swain as a "dining emporium" for the 1937 fall term. Swain became an instant success, quadrupling its business.

Unfortunately, Swain's ineffectiveness in handling huge crowds undermined its successes. In 1939 *The Durham Herald Sun* reported, "Swain had long lines waiting outside, which was awkward in winter, and it had to turn away others."

In 1939, the decision was made to close Swain and build a new, modern facility—Lenoir Hall. Lenoir operated normally until World War II, when the Navy's pre-flight program was established.

Jim Cansler, associate vice chancellor for student affairs, commented on this period. "During the war about the only students on campus were those physically exempted from serving in the Armed Forces. Lenoir was used by the Navy for its training programs and Swain was reopened for the other military training programs on campus, including the Army's special training group."

After World War II ended, Lenoir experienced almost 20 years of relative financial success. The driving force behind this success was George Prillaman, manager of the food service from 1951 until 1969.

"My philosophy has always been to serve students at the University the best and most wholesome food in the entire area, at the lowest price," Prillaman said in a recent review. In a short time he was able to save the University \$50,000 a year. In fact, the University's food service operation became so successful it was lauded nationwide by several food management organizations and magazines.

During his time, two more dining facilities were built on campus. In 1961, the Pine Room was constructed under Lenoir, in its present location. It served as a cafeteria and a snack bar, serving such entrees as crab, trout, steak and roast beef.

In 1964, Ehringhaus Residence Hall was built with a cafeteria to fulfill the needs of students on South Campus. Ehringhaus operated on the same "pay as you go" system as Lenoir. In fact, all the dining facilities on campus operated this way with the exception of the cafeteria in Spencer.

Prillaman was bitterly opposed to the mandatory contract system used by many universities. "The college student of today does not want to be regimented," he was quoted as saying in a 1966 edition of *The News and Observer*. "In fact, he rebels against regimentation. Give him freedom of choice and let him buy his meals wherever he likes. This goes a long way in improving campus food."

Prillaman said he could attract students to his cafeterias with professional service, good food and specials. His 40 cent special—an entree, two vegetables, bread and butter and unlimited tea or coffee—was preferred by two-thirds of those students who ate in Lenoir. The special's price remained unchanged until 1965.

1965 marked a turning point in the fortunes of food service on campus. In that year, Chase Cafeteria was built to serve South Campus. Some were opposed to the building of Chase, including Prillaman, citing a small plot of land and the probable need for a board plan because of the lack of a large student base as future problems.

Additional problems soon cropped up. Charles Antle, associate vice chancellor for business, said "Chase had operational problems because of the design of the building. The kitchen was on one floor and the dining facilities were on another with only one small elevator to transport food and dishes. It also had high energy costs and was not cost-efficient."

By 1969, the University was losing \$200,000 a year and finally decided to let a private firm take over the food service program.

Contributing to this decision was a state legislature order that all auxiliary services connected with the University had to be self-supporting. SAGA, a private firm was contracted in 1969 to take over the system. Unfortunately, two strikes crippled their operation and they decided to leave after one year.

Lenoir Hall in history

Planned cafeteria conversion recalls 1969 labor strike

By DAVID ROME
Staff Writer

If the plan to convert Lenoir Hall into a dining hall is carried out, it will not be the first time that Lenoir has been used in that capacity. The history of Lenoir Hall indicates the political and economic magnitude of the UNC food service issue.

Anyone who was in Chapel Hill in the late 1960s probably remembers Lenoir Hall as a good place to go for an inexpensive breakfast, lunch or dinner in a spacious atmosphere.

Dr. Lewis Lipsitz of the political science department appreciated Lenoir most of all as a "pleasant meeting place," which provided a "real opportunity to meet people outside your own discipline." He noted the opportunity to mingle with students during a coffee break at Lenoir Hall in the morning, and he said he "always went to lunch with grad students and other faculty."

Something happened in the late 60s which changed Lenoir Hall from a spacious, inexpensive cafeteria run at a financial loss by the University into the focus of a labor dispute which involved the whole campus in the turbulence of the time.

On Feb. 23, 1969, UNC food service workers began a four-week strike. J. Derek Williams wrote in his Master's thesis titled "It Wasn't Slavery Times Anymore" — *Foodworkers' Strike at Chapel Hill*.

"Intolerable working conditions provoked UNC cafeteria workers — most of them black women — to walk off their jobs. Although unprecedented, the strike came at a time and place that were already ripe for confrontation over labor, racial and student issues."

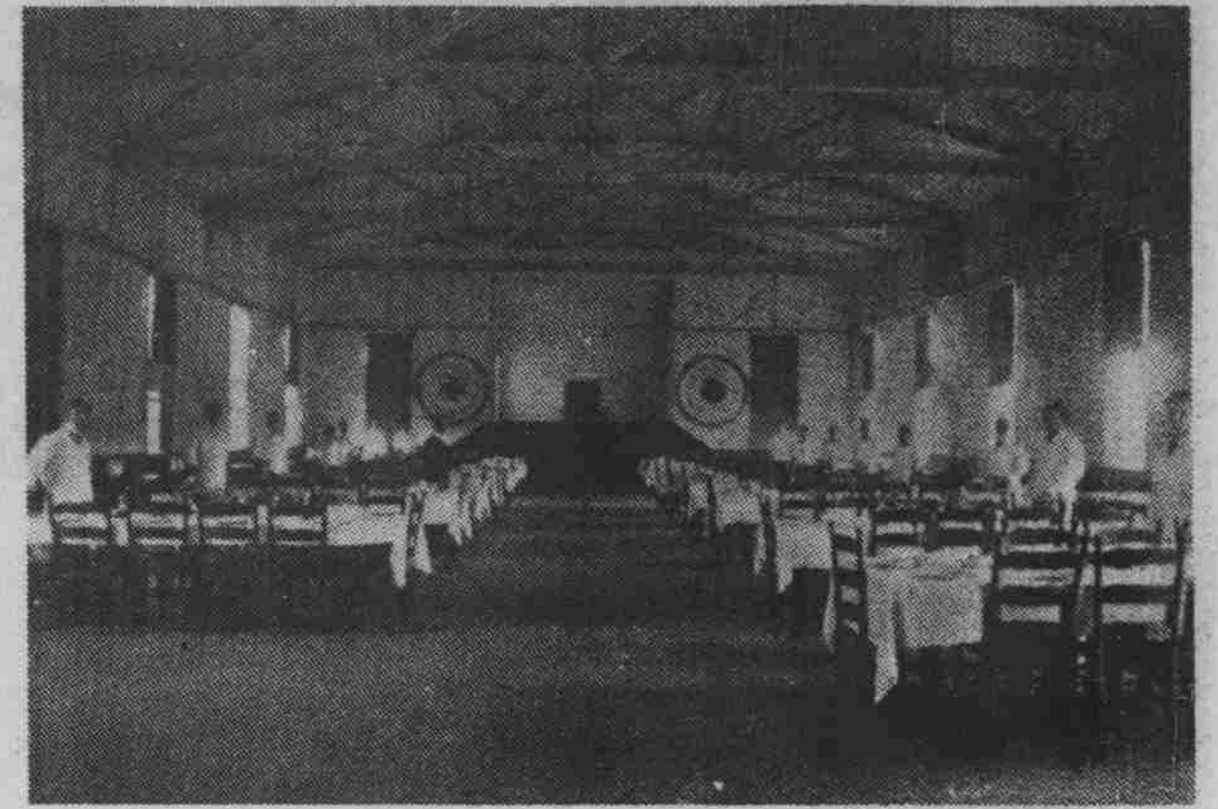
Lipsitz agreed that there was little question that the food service, although "cheap and good," was managed "poorly from the standpoint of the workers." The University was losing substantial amounts of money and "the manager of food service was trying to cut all the corners he could. Things they did were outright illegal," Lipsitz said.

With considerable support from the student body and faculty, the foodworkers left Lenoir Hall and set up a strike headquarters in Manning Hall. (Manning Hall was unoccupied at the time because the law school had just moved out.) Lenoir Hall remained open for about two weeks as the strike gained following, new techniques and state-wide concern.

"There was much discussion at this time about closing the food," said John Temple, vice chancellor for business and finance in a recent interview. "However, the decision was made to limit the number of facilities and reduce losses."

Subsequently, the Spencer cafeteria, the upper floors of Lenoir and Chase all were converted to other uses, leaving only the Pine Room and half of Chase to serve the student's food needs. A new firm, Serv-O-Mation, was contracted in 1970. After initial losses Serv-O-Mation experienced success for about six years. In 1974, Serv-O-Mation added the Fast Break facility in the Carolina Union. Unfortunately, Fast Break also experienced problems because of poor design. "The Union was not built to accommodate a food operation and thus suffered from exhaust and fire-safety problems," Antle said. Serv-O-Mation then lost money for two years and decided to leave in 1980, citing poor facilities and competition both on and off campus.

In 1980, the University contracted ARA food services, which has one year left on a three-year contract. It remains to be seen how the University will solve present food service problems.



Interior of one of UNC's cafeterias in 1905 ...Commons Hall served as gathering-place for students

When private industry did take over, Lenoir Hall — the good place to meet and eat — was a quick victim. Lipsitz said, "One of the reasons Lenoir was abandoned was the private food service found Lenoir to be uneconomical." Some of those same workers who had fought so hard for increased pay and improved conditions were found to be uneconomical, too.

Will the new Lenoir Hall recapture the friendly meeting place atmosphere it once had before the tumultuous 60s? Dr. Lipsitz said he hoped that at least part of Lenoir Hall might become "something on the model of the Parisian (outdoor) cafe ... like a coffee house ... something with a little class."

STUDENT JUDICIAL ACTIVITY February, March 1982

Charge	Court	Plea	Verdict	Sanction
cheated on Math 31 exam	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Guilty	Suspension through spring semester, 1982; F in course
plagiarized English 1 paper	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Guilty	Suspension through summer sessions, 1982; probation through spring semester 1982; F in course
cheated on Chem 11 exam	Undergraduate	Guilty	Guilty	Probation through fall semester 1982; F in course
engaged in conduct disrupting University employee's ability to perform duties	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Not Guilty	
cheated on Classics 25 exam	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Guilty	Probation at least through fall semester 1982; F in course
plagiarized English 2 paper	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Not Guilty	
cheated on Math R exam	Administrative Hearings Off.	Guilty	Guilty	Probation through summer sessions, 1982; F in course
cheated on Geology 11 final	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Guilty	Suspension through spring semester 1982; F in course
cheated on Geology 11 final	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Guilty	Suspension through spring semester 1982; F in course
cheated on Psychology 10 final exam	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Not Guilty	
cheated on Psychology 10 final exam	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Not Guilty	
cheated on Psychology 10 final exam	Undergraduate	Not Guilty	Guilty	Suspension through spring semester 1982; F in course

For further dispositions, contact the Honor Court.

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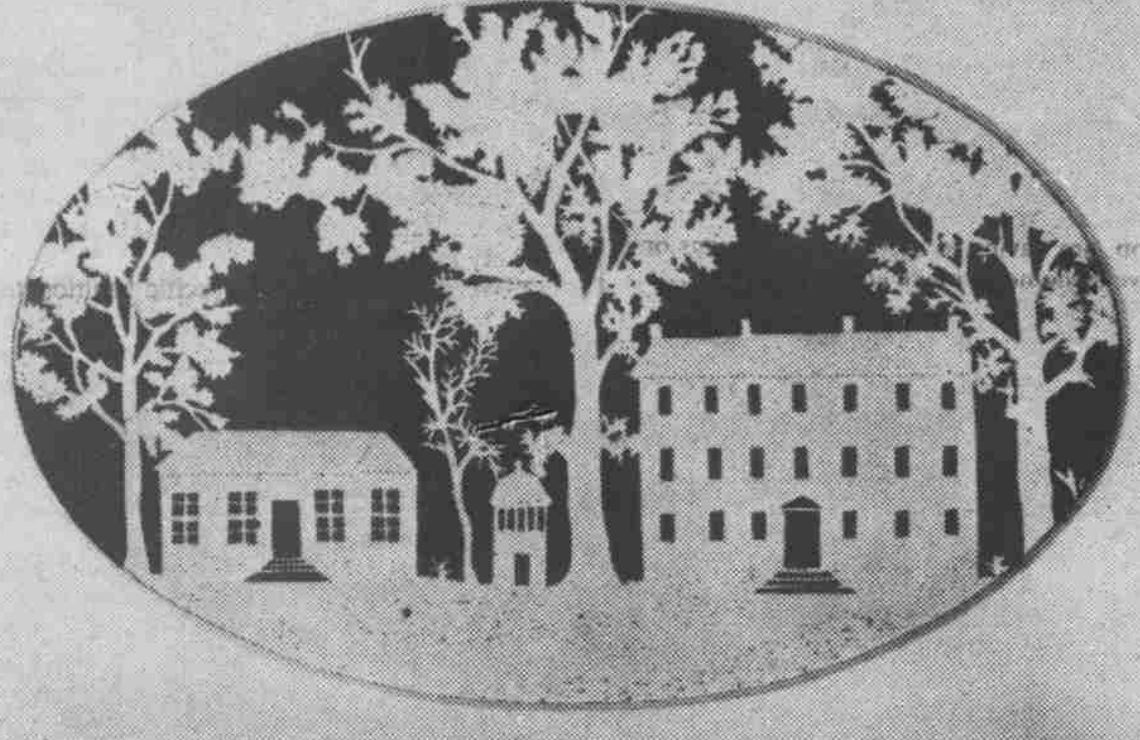


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Art of Steward's Hall (left) as it looked in 1814 ... UNC's oldest building once was used as cafeteria

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