

Narrow, endless halls of Venable's 'rat maze' still stump students

By TONI CARTER
Staff Writer

Venable Hall is the nemesis of chemistry students. Narrow, seemingly endless halls and a maze of first floor laboratories confound their attempts to get to class on time.

"The thing I remember most," said Sara Lewis, a sophomore physics major, "is that narrow little hall (on the south side of the building)."

Lewis called the building a rat maze. Only half-joking, she said the chemistry department must be working with the psychology department in studying the effects of the Venable maze on students.

Actually, when Venable was built in 1925, its factory style architecture was highly praised for efficiency, according to the book *Carolina Chemists* by Maurice Bursey, a professor in the chemistry department.

Students don't seem to be the ones praising the architecture. "I'll go down a hall," said Dorothy Wright, a junior biology major, "and come to an exit. I'll be expecting to come out at a certain place but I'll be at the other end of the building."

"That building is messing with the fabric of space/time. I know it is," Wright said.

The building is named for Francis Preston Venable, president of the University from 1900 to 1914. He came to the University in 1880 as a professor of general, analytical and agricultural chemistry. He was the first member of the University faculty to hold a doctorate.

When he arrived there were two chemistry labs, one in Person Hall and one in the basement of Smith Building, now the Playmakers' Theatre.

Venable — Old Ven to his students — was the only chemistry professor and had no assistants. Both labs were taught at the same time so he was kept, as he put it, "fairly on the run from one building to another."

Problems were abundant. On one occasion Venable showed the Smith Hall class how to put together small generators for hydrogen sulfide (a gas that smells like rotten eggs), then he ran across campus to get the Person Hall class started.

Upon returning to the first group, he found that in one respect the generators had proved a success, Venable said at the time. "Hydrogen sulfide had

been generated in generous quantities. The class had abandoned en masse the wretched cellar which served as a laboratory and were strewn about under trees and on the grass, some sick, some pale and some disgusted."

In spite of the inadequate facilities, Venable carried out research. In 1887, he modified the form of the Bunsen burner to allow easier regulation of the flame. He sold the rights to his modification for six of the new burners.

In 1893, with UNC student William R. Kenan Jr. and alumnus John Motley Morehead, Venable identified the substance calcium carbide from which the gas acetylene, used in welding torches, is made.

The need for a chemistry building resulted in the 1905 construction of Chemistry Hall. This building provided the lighting and ventilation that had been absent in Person and Smith halls.

However, the growing enrollment in chemistry soon made necessary the construction of yet another home for the department. Chemistry Hall was turned over to the pharmacy school and renamed

Howell Hall. The chemistry department moved into the newly completed Venable Hall.

In 1925, Venable Hall was the largest building on campus and was considered to be on South Campus. It covered an acre-and-a-quarter until 1953 when an addition was made to the west side that brought the size to more than two-and-a-half acres.

The building contains classrooms, offices and a large lecture hall with an illuminated periodic table of elements. It allows a lecturer to spotlight any element and was designed and built in the Venable Hall shop.

The first floor is home of the chemistry labs, which seem to have been arranged with no thought for logic, said Bettina Conway, technical assistant in the Venable Hall's Kenan Chemistry Library.

The labs do not seem to be numbered in any sort of sequence. They are hot and the whole building is dirty, Conway said.

Lori Buchanan called Venable Hall a rat maze. The junior journalism major got mud on her shoes

one day and entered Venable to try and get it off.

In her search for a ladies' room and paper towels she got lost. She finally wound up in a room marked "Authorized Personnel Only."

While she hunted through the room for paper towels, an old man came in and asked what she was doing. He said, "You're going to blow us all up!"

Buchanan retreated to another room. The same man found her and, believing her to be a thief, wanted to search her pockets.

She finally found a water fountain and was trying to clean the mud from her shoes when the old man came upon her again. She decided to keep the mud and left the building in a hurry.

Though Venable the building may elicit mixed response, it was named for a man who contributed greatly to UNC.

Venable established the UNC Press, the Athletic Association and, in 1903, the graduate school. He even built the first tennis court in Chapel Hill in 1884.

Harriers follow flour trial

By DAWN WARLICK
Special to the DTH

Running with an international flair? The Hash House Harriers have a distinctive jogging style. This intramural group runs through Chapel Hill following a trail of flour.

They follow a trail of flour because it is part of the worldwide Hash House tradition. Before the run, a course is marked with patches of flour. The object of the run is for the Harriers to unscramble the twisting, turning path.

This tradition began in Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia in 1937. The run, originated by A.H. Gispert, began and ended at a restaurant called the Hash House, according to Andrew Balmagne, a UNC freshman and Hash House runner from South-Queensferry, Scotland. He has participated in Hash House Harrier groups in Hong Kong and Bangladesh as well. Balmagne said that in some Hash House groups women were not allowed to participate.

"The key to Hash House success is that it allows people of all abilities to run together and have fun," Balmagne said.

There are more than 200 Hash House groups worldwide. These groups also hold joint runs on both local and international levels called Inter-Hashes. An international Hash was held last year in Washington.

Locally, the 1½-year-old UNC group originated with Marty Pomerantz, associate intramural recreation director. Pomerantz is a member of the Tar Heel Harriers, a group which includes Durham and Orange County runners. Pomerantz decided Hash House running would be a good intramural sport. "I'm always interested in any new program that we could use as an intramural at UNC," Pomerantz said.

The person who sets the course is known as the "hare." Usually this is Pomerantz. One Wednesday when

Balmagne was the hare, the run trekked through the Student Union, around campus and through neighborhoods, wooded areas and fields.

The UNC Hash House Harriers are a lively group. They work together to unravel the path, yelling calls of direction as they run. Hash House running has its own vocabulary. "On, on" means one has the trail. "checking" means stop to find the trail and "are you" asks who has discovered the trail.

Wednesday, the run was about four miles long. Because the faster runners must often backtrack the trail they blaze, slower runners can actively participate also. "Traditionally, Hash House runs are from five to seven miles long," Pomerantz said.

Pomerantz likes to keep the UNC runs between two and four miles long to include all types of runners. "I encourage anybody to run with us. The larger the group, the more fun it is."

The group's size fluctuates with the weather. Pomerantz expects to see 30 runners on a pretty day. "The idea is to bring along a friend so the group is a continually growing thing . . . the UNC group is totally informal," Pomerantz said.

Both Pomerantz and Balmagne noted that in most Hash House groups the after-Hash refreshment is as important as the run. Balmagne said that one of the differences between the UNC group and the groups in Bangladesh and Hong Kong was "there we consumed beer immediately after the run. The beer was centrally provided. Here we do bring-your-own."

The runs are publicized in the Campus Calendar of *The Daily Tar Heel* and begin at Woollen Gym. The Harriers meet several times a month to run. Hash House running is a lively way to exercise and a welcome change from the track or regular sidewalk routes. Anyone interested can call the Intramural Office for information.

court

The 80 nuclear plants already operating nationwide are not affected by the ruling.

The immediate impact of Wednesday's decision also is muted because expansion of the industry has slowed in recent years. No utility has sought a license to build a new facility since 1978.

The industry's future has been clouded by the high costs to build new plants and safety fears raised by the accident which shut down Pennsylvania's Three Mile Island plant in 1979.

The Supreme Court, rejecting the position of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, said the California moratorium did not conflict with a 1954 federal law on atomic energy.

While the federal government has exclusive power to regulate safety of nuclear plants, Congress has allowed the states to make economic decisions, the court said.

"Congress has left sufficient authority in the states to allow the development of nuclear power to be slowed or even stopped for

economic reasons," said Justice Byron R. White in his opinion for the court.

California said its moratorium was prompted by concerns that future nuclear plants might one day be shut down because the federal government had not come up with a way of disposing of radioactive waste. That would mean interruption of electricity in the state with drastic economic consequences, state officials said.

Besides California, eight states have enacted laws or taken administrative steps to prevent new nuclear plants: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Oregon, Iowa, New York and Wisconsin.

Four other states — Maryland, Rhode Island, Vermont and Hawaii — have placed restrictions on the development of nuclear plants.

President Reagan signed a law in January that promises a system for burying radioactive waste by 1998, but environmentalists contend there is no guarantee under the law that a safe method will be found to protect the environment.

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OSA

something similar will be done by the association to keep the students informed, she said.

There is also a transportation committee of the OSA, which members said they hope will improve the carpooling system. The organization also plans to talk to authorities in efforts to make the bus service more efficient, she added.

Students needing advice to the legal services which are offered by the University.

"We hope to conduct seminars in apartment complexes next year to familiarize students with

CGC

MacDonald emphasized that the band was only making a one-time, emergency request. The band will undertake a major fund-raising effort next year to gain greater financial independence, he said.

Committee member Greg Hecht (District 15) recommended that the CGC loan the band

these services," said Cappel.

The OSA also has an intramural sports committee, which is in charge of setting up teams for off-campus students.

The officially recognized organization meets every two to three weeks and will hold its next meeting April 27. All off-campus students are eligible for membership.

"It's a very worthwhile group, and we're eventually going to accomplish a great deal for off-campus students," Egerly said.

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