



...a miracle in the
 Santa Monica Mountains
 an astonishing saga...

“From a 34-acre campus on Vermont Avenue in Los Angeles to an 830-acre campus in Malibu, the transformation of George Pepperdine College into Pepperdine University is a thrilling saga. Only one person could have told this story with all of its behind-the-scenes planning and never-before-told details. Everyone who loves Pepperdine will be indebted to Bill Banowsky for writing this highly informative and engaging narrative. The University’s fourth president has bequeathed to the Pepperdine community a priceless and memorable volume.”

JERRY RUSHFORD
Professor of Church History, Director of Church Relations

“Bill Banowsky’s memoir movingly tells the powerful story of a miracle in the Santa Monica Mountains. By God’s grace, human hands and minds labored in love to create a flourishing, vibrant community of encouragement, where all who come are warmly welcome to explore the great and enduring questions of humanity. As Dr. Banowsky’s story exquisitely demonstrates, this is an extraordinary institution, transformed from a small college ‘named George’ to a multi-faceted, global university.”

KEN STARR
President, Baylor University

“At long last, this riveting book—that only Bill Banowsky could have written—tells the story of how a little Pepperdine College transformed from its days of obscurity into a vibrant, world-class university. I am proud of Bill for finally telling this providential story of entrepreneurial leadership in his lifetime.”

R. GERALD TURF
President, Southern Methodist University



THE MALIBU MIRACLE

A MEMOIR

BANOWSKY

WILLIAM S. BANOWSKY

PRESIDENT EMERITUS, PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

THE MALIBU MIRACLE

A MEMOIR



FOR

Gay Barnes Banowsky

AND

OUR FOUR SONS

David ❖ Britton ❖ Bill ❖ Baxter

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Published by Pepperdine University Press

24255 Pacific Coast Highway

Malibu, CA 90263

www.themalibumiracle.com

Consultant: Stephen D. Giddens, The Book Foundry

Photography from the Pepperdine University Archives and private collections

LA Times photo used with permission.

Printer: Regency Publishing Services, Ltd.

ISBN: 978-0-9824627-3-7

Printed in China

First printing 2010

A MIRACLE IN THE MAKING

This December 1969 panorama reveals the miracle of moving more than three million cubic yards of earth and rock. It especially dramatizes the Marie Canyon fill, which ran 120 feet deep at the Pacific Coast Highway. With twenty-first century, ecological protections and prohibitions along the California coastline, such a massive movement of earth would be utterly impossible today.

*BUT I KNEW

Even then, that it was the most ecologically perfect thing that could be put here."

—Bill Bamowsky

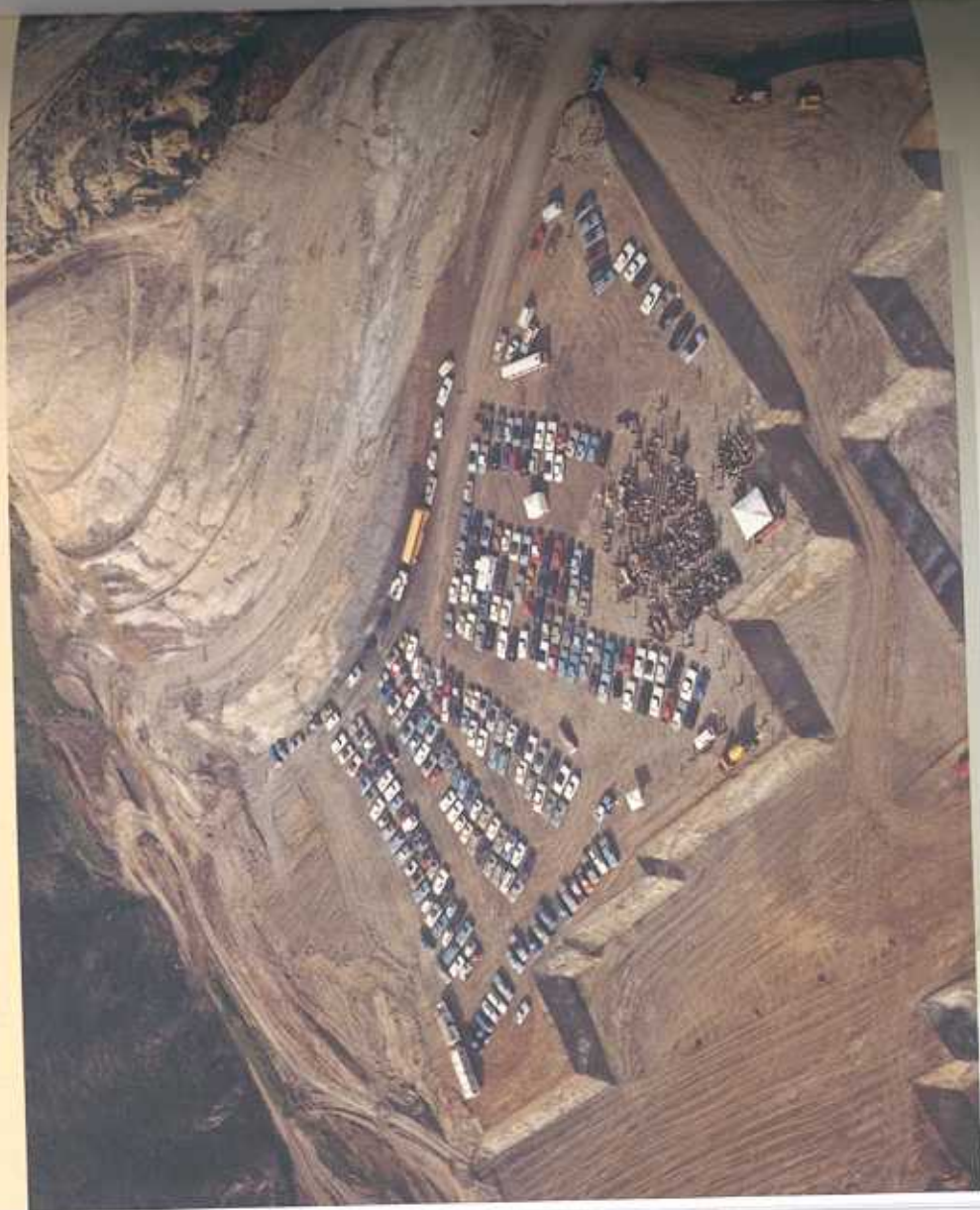


THE MALIBU GROUND BREAKING

"Clearly, the highlight of the morning was a short speech by Chancellor Banowsky. Titled 'A Spirit of Place,' it would soon find its way into the folklore of Pepperdine."

BILL HENEGAR

*Associate Vice President
Pepperdine University*



FRANK R. SEAVER COLLEGE

From the helicopter, it may look like a neatly carved pound cake laid out on the kitchen table. In reality, it's the neatly carved and completely compacted building pad for Seaver College. In the bottom corner, provided the dedication stage for

Historian Howard A. White enshrined the February 9, 1970, "Birth of a College" dinner as "one of the most memorable occasions in the history of Pepperdine College." But Norvel Young and I calculated a one-two punch. We decompressed for two days and on the third day we launched around-the-clock planning for the next supernal Pepperdine event—three months later.

"Dr. William S. Banowsky will be officially installed as chancellor of the Malibu campus May 23 in an impressive hillside ceremony on the new \$24.6 million campus site. The event will also mark the dedication of the Malibu campus which is scheduled to open for classes in 1972," reported the *Pepperdine News*. "David M. Lawrence, editor and publisher of *U.S. News and World Report*, will deliver the keynote speech and other notable dignitaries will speak.

"The installation and dedication will be held at a high point of the campus where the chapel will be constructed. With the appointment of Dr. Banowsky to the chancellor position, Pepperdine has paved the way for eventual university status with its multicampus concept," the news article continued.

DEDICATING THE CAMPUS

"This is to confirm our conversation relating to the dedication ceremony," Pepperdine vice president Larry Hornbaker wrote Merritt H. Adamson, May 14, 1970. Larry reviewed with the recent donor of the Malibu land a list of eight logistical items that were needed to prepare for the event: "To remove the entrance gate into the Malibu site . . . To dismantle 200 yards of the barbed wire fence . . . To remove all of the cattle from the meadow . . . To hold the big luncheon for David Lawrence in the backyard of the Adamson Beach House." It was a major Malibu miracle moment.⁹

All Pepperdine friends and followers had heard Malibu buzz. Many had seen, at the Century Plaza dinner, the dazzling William L. Pereira pictures. But very few had actually seen with their own eyes Pepperdine's future home. Norvel and I knew that, when they did, they would be blown away. We scheduled a late-May weekend when the Pepperdine "congregation" could again assemble, not in some plush ballroom, but out on the freshly graded Malibu ground itself. They would stroll below the mountain peaks, smell the salt air and chaparral, and exult in the magnificent sweep of the land down to the sea.

At the "Birth of a College" dinner 3,400 people packed two ballrooms. That many and more turned out for the Malibu ground breaking. Except for Bible Lectures, it was the largest audience up to that time in Pepperdine history. The assembly included Pepperdine faculty, staff, students and alumni; members of the board of trustees and the president's board; Church of Christ members from across the country; many new Malibu neighbors; and academic delegates, including presidents and official representatives, from 48 universities and colleges around the country.

The program called for dedication of the Malibu campus, ground breaking for construction and inauguration of the founding chancellor of the Malibu campus. I delivered the "A Spirit of Place" inaugural address that, in the opinion of Henegar and Rushford, "found its way into the folklore of Pepperdine."

FOUR TITLES IN TWO YEARS

Over a period of only two years, President Young motivated me with four successively higher titles. I arrived in June 1968 as the first executive vice president of Pepperdine College. Nine months later, January 15, 1969, Norvel added "director of the Malibu campus." At the May 23, 1970, ceremony I was installed as founding chancellor of the Malibu campus. "This honor," Henegar and Rushford wrote, "acknowledged the important role he would play in the building of the campus that would soon rise literally beneath the feet of the attendees."

News of this third new title had actually surfaced six months earlier, on October 19, 1969, in the *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*:

Dr. M. Norvel Young announced Dr. Banowsky's appointment as the Founding Chancellor of the Malibu Campus today. President Young said Dr. Banowsky will coordinate all phases of the development of the new Malibu campus. "The aim," Dr. Young added, "is to achieve an integrated program between the Los Angeles and the Malibu campuses



GENEROUS HARD HATS

The two strongest early financial supporters of the Malibu miracle were Richard Melton Scatiff of Pittsburgh and Mrs. Frank Roger Seaver of Los Angeles. Good friends Dick and Blanche survey the magnificent Malibu campus.

THE AFTER IN 1972

This was the Malibu miracle in its first 1972-73 year of operation. No administration building, no faculty and staff housing, no law school. But the magical Seaver College was off and running. The Brock House stands sentinel over the panoramic scene.



and Dr. Banowsky has the responsibility to carry out this multicampus concept." He will direct the recruitment of faculty and staff, refine the interdisciplinary curriculum, lead the capital funds campaign and direct the design and construction of all facilities.

"Pepperdine College's new Malibu campus," elaborated the next day's *Los Angeles Times*, "will offer a curriculum built around the unity of knowledge, rather than academic speculation, according to Dr. William S. Banowsky, whose appointment as chancellor of the new campus was announced Sunday . . . Banowsky, a 33-year-old evangelical Protestant minister with a USC doctorate in communications, will be one of the country's youngest campus chiefs. Banowsky is known for his defense of traditional ethical and religious values in debates with *Playboy* magazine and the Episcopal Bishop of California, James A. Pike," reported the *Los Angeles Times*.⁶

For the fourth title, nine months later on January 1, 1971, I was elected fourth Pepperdine president. This was the first time that the title would be president of Pepperdine University rather than Pepperdine College. Dr. Young moved to the position of chancellor of the university. He also, for a few months, reigned as chairman of the board of trustees and chairman of the executive committee of the board. This unconventional arrangement seemed necessary at the time. We knew it would be temporary. We thought it was justified by the speed of things. Massively consequential decisions were being made in the moment. It was more of a battle than a time for participative deliberation. Norvel exploited every instrument of leadership for this march into new territory.

For the May 23 dedication, Strecker Construction Company graded and leveled the entire central knoll where Seaver College soon would rise. Some faculty argued the ceremonies should be conducted out on the flat meadow rather than up on the knoll. Norvel and I held out for the knoll. Guests parked their cars on the meadow and the flattened knoll. They sat in long rows of white folding chairs. Pepperdine faculty joined visiting delegates for the processional and convocation.

At 10:30 a.m., the color guard from Point Mugu Naval Air Station raised the flag on the hill where Brock House would be built. Their band played the national anthem. It was breathtakingly beautiful. Mrs. Frank Roger Seaver led the pledge of allegiance. Calvin Bowers, Dean of Ethnic Studies, delivered the invocation. Supervisor Burton Chase and United States Senator George Murphy spoke briefly, but inspirationally.

Keynote speaker David M. Lawrence, editor and publisher of *U.S. News & World Report*, delivered his 30-minute address, "The Role of the Private College in Today's World." Lawrence said, "Moral force is the greatest means

of achieving peace on earth. Private colleges have a special opportunity to fulfill the inspiration God has given us to love our neighbors and serve mankind."⁹

The program climaxed with my 12-minute address. Of hundreds of Malibu miracle speeches, that inaugural address has been most frequently quoted. Years later, a Pepperdine historian called it "an eloquent statement of strength and spirituality in defining this new campus."¹⁰ Norvel widely circulated it as "a statement of the philosophy of the College."¹¹ Subsequently, "A Spirit of Place" has been cited countless for 40 years. "Sometimes," as my father said on this occasion, "you just get it right." If I were addressing that same occasion today I would say the same thing. "Aside from Mr. Pepperdine's 1937 founder's address," testified eminent Payson Library Archivist Dr. James Smythe for the record, "this is the most famous speech in Pepperdine history."¹²

Today [I began], we dedicate this campus in the midst of the saddest semester in the history of American higher education. Six college students have been shot to death in the clash of consciences. Campus scenes of tear gas and bayonets are featured on the news. Scores of colleges have closed. As polarization accelerates both sides warn the worst is yet to come.

The boys who die in Vietnam today are grandsons of men who marched off in 1917 to fight the war to end all wars. Why then start another college? Because we have not chosen this time so much as the time has chosen us . . . We are determined to bring together on these hills a community of scholars who hold distinctive spiritual beliefs.

Unlike most church-related colleges, in our era of expansion we will strengthen not loosen our ties to the churches of Christ. But we will resist any sectarian spirit, do nothing to stifle open inquiry and never pose as an institution that knows all God's truth.

What we hope to create here, in these hills, is a *spirit of place*.

OPENING ON SEPTEMBER 5, 1972

As soon as we caught our breath, on Monday, May 25, 1970, Norvel and I caucused confidentially to confront the crucial questions: What should we announce as the certain date to open the Malibu campus for classes? And when should we announce it? We had to get it right! The *Los Angeles Times*

"In American higher education during the last third of the twentieth century Pepperdine was among those universities achieving the greatest growth in the fastest time."

••• R. GERALD TURNER


President

Southern Methodist University

Former Chancellor

The University of Mississippi

PART III



Pepperdine University

THE GROWTH OF PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

"Then, little Pepperdine College became a University"

THE OIL WORLD JOURNAL
September 15, 1971



THE FATHER OF PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

"M. Norvel Young was the leader who guided Pepperdine from a small college with 950 students in Los Angeles to full-fledged Pepperdine University at Malibu with an enrollment of 9,500." —*New York Times*, February 23, 1998

THE COLLEGE BECOMES A UNIVERSITY

This 1971 declaration debuted, not in an academic monograph, but in the *Oil World Journal*. A profile of Fritz Huntsinger and his 1970 gift of \$2.5 million for Huntsinger Academic Center celebrated Pepperdine's university status.

FATHER OF THE UNIVERSITY

Of the 12 publicly traded New York Stock Exchange corporations I served as a director, one was the company Fritz Huntsinger founded—Vetco Offshore Industries. Vetco, based in Ventura, California, supplied equipment for ocean drilling worldwide. Pepperdine's major source of financial support, the Hydril Company, also supplied worldwide drilling equipment.

Mrs. Frank R. Seaver's Hydril stock gifts largely built and endowed the Malibu campus. Pepperdine's other "petroleum friends" included Richard Mellon Scaife, Clint W. Murchison, Edwin W. Pauley, Lew O. Ward and Henry Salvatori. The Pepperdine ascendancy so awed these men that one called Pepperdine, "the oilman's academic darling." These patriotic oil tycoons hung out together and gave the Malibu miracle its biggest boost.

Even with such support, how did "little Pepperdine College" become a university? What was the process? Was accreditation required? Were faculty involved? How was this quantum leap so swiftly and smoothly orchestrated? How did the struggling college transform itself into a full-fledged major university?

These questions spotlight the leadership of M. Norvel Young—the father of Pepperdine University. Norvel may have been the only one who never doubted Pepperdine's ultimate triumph. When bitter years brought the survival fight, others seemed content to persevere as a college. Without Dr. Young's progenitive powers there would be no Pepperdine University.

The futuristic Norvel grew up in Nashville, three blocks from the campus of Vanderbilt University. He was inspired early and joined Pepperdine in 1938 with a Vanderbilt master's in history. He had been to the big league. He dreamed of making Pepperdine a university.

Norvel got his doctorate at George Peabody College but he never liked its name. Calling himself a "wordsmith," he grew impatient with "George" as part of Pepperdine College's name. "Nobody says 'Elihu Yale University' just 'Yale University,'" he reasoned. "We should look less like a Bible college, sound less parochial. First names on schools create second-rate clutter." In 1957, when Norvel became president, he preferred "Pepperdine College."

In the 1960s, when Norvel campaigned for me to return to Pepperdine, achieving university status was not part of our deal. I returned, not to help Pepperdine become a university, but to build the Malibu campus. Norvel's incessant university talk sounded impractical, if not a bit silly.

It sounded a lot less silly when Norvel telephoned at 7:00 a.m. on the morning of Tuesday, February 10, 1970. The night before, for the "Birth of a College" dinner, we filled the two biggest ballrooms in West Los Angeles with 3,400 supporters. "Bill," Norvel said, cutting to the chase after mutual congratulations, "now we must do two things. We must set a date for the Malibu ground breaking. And, Bill, it's time to proclaim Pepperdine University!"

The stunning dinner victory cleared my vision. "Norvel," I replied, "I couldn't agree more." Confidence aglow, Norvel and I felt bullish, if not a bit bulletproof. Allowing three months preparation, we picked Saturday, May 23, 1970, to dedicate the Malibu campus. Then we turned our attention to attaining university status.

NO ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Tutored by Pepperdine lawyers, Norvel and I studied how to qualify as a university. We learned California public education defined institutions systematically, but private education operated them unilaterally. No criteria controlled names. If a private college declared itself a university, an indifferent academic establishment left it free to name itself as it pleased. We confronted, not an accreditation process, but a public-relations procedure. That's all we needed to know.

If Norvel and I could muster the nerve, academic process would permit us to proclaim the college Pepperdine University. Since we did not want to look ridiculous, we spent several months mustering the nerve, making a convincing case with Pepperdine's boards, faculty, patrons and alumni, and with California's academic, political and media establishments. We worked

throughout 1970, won unanimous support and proclaimed Pepperdine University on January 1, 1971. Without much change in the ingredients we dramatically enlarged the size of the container. Norvel and I also doubled the positions at the top. He became the first chancellor and I became the first president of the university.

Over the months, we petitioned the advice and consent of academic and political powers. We created public leverage by letting the word seep out slowly. After a decade as Pepperdine president, Norvel Young enjoyed statewide respect as chairman of the 15-member Independent Colleges of Southern California. Governor Reagan also appointed friend and neighbor Norvel to the California Coordinating Counsel on Higher Education in 1968.⁴ His biographers pictured the Reagan-Young friendship in 1970, as Norvel took his turn as chairman of that powerful nine-member board: "One day at the Adamson Beach House, Ronald and Nancy Reagan came to lunch while he was governor of California. The next day, the governor showed up at the front door with a small tree in a tub to express his appreciation for the Youngs' hospitality."⁵

Matt Young recalled, "Reagan came to the beach house in his jodhpurs spontaneously and unannounced, by himself with neither security nor fanfare. My sister Marilyn answered the door and he gave her a tree."⁶

FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

Guiding Norvel and me through this passage were three California public higher education comrades: Glenn Dumke, Edward Carter and Franklin Murphy. Leading statewide lights, they were our Bohemian Club brothers. Pepperdine honorary doctorate recipients and high profile guests at the recent "Birth of a College" dinner.

Dr. Glenn Dumke revered Pepperdine's faith and learning mission. We already knew Glenn's career at Occidental College, so when Governor Reagan appointed him chancellor of the California State University System we had a friend in high places. Later, when President S. I. Hayakawa resigned in 1972 to run for the United States Senate, Glenn would make major media waves urging me to become president of San Francisco State University.

Chancellor Dumke promoted Pepperdine within the state universities. Ed Carter handled the senior universities. Norvel and I knew Ed as chairman of Broadway Department Stores. When Governor Edmund G. (Pat) Brown appointed him chairman of the University of California board of regents we had another friend in high places.

Norvel first knew Dr. Franklin Murphy as chancellor of the University of Kansas. The three of us were confidants during Franklin's tenure as

UCLA chancellor. When publishing magnate Otis Chandler anointed him chairman of the Times Mirror Company we had another friend in high places. Franklin prepared the *Los Angeles Times* to treat our university announcement positively.

Norvel insisted on breaking the university announcement and breaking the Malibu ground simultaneously. He scheduled two meetings. Monday, May 4, the Pepperdine College board of trustees voted to become Pepperdine University. Tuesday, May 5, the Pepperdine faculty voted to support the advance. Norvel then let the cat out of the bag publicly at the May 23 dedication. "In six months," he proclaimed, "Pepperdine College will officially become Pepperdine University." He christened it "a multicampus concept."¹⁰

I followed Norvel with my inaugural address as founding chancellor of the Malibu campus and hailed "expansion of the Pepperdine dream to university status."¹¹ Details came days later in the published "A Spirit of Place" pamphlet. Norvel mailed out 40,000 copies. Its back cover published this first description of the new Pepperdine University: "Pepperdine College at Malibu is the newest member of the multicampus concept which, together with the original college in Los Angeles, the Pepperdine School of Law in Santa Ana, and the campus in Heidelberg, West Germany, will be the basis for the move to Pepperdine University status on January 1, 1971."¹²

ART OF IMPROVISATION

Pepperdine took the university leap of faith without any master plan. The nearest thing the Malibu miracle ever saw to a master plan was a 25-page document I drafted in 1968. Upon returning as executive vice president, I worked two months on "The Case Statement for a New Campus" that our fundraising consultant, Robert Johnson Company, insisted we produce prior to the public campaign. Norvel assigned the task to me. I retained Abilene, Texas, publicist Walter Burch to assist and we authored the legendary "Pepperdine Affirms."¹³ Except for that enduring affirmation the case statement was forgotten. It held no hint of becoming a university because in 1968 that seemed as far away as the moon.

Norvel, the best-read man I knew, always had a book in hand. He read in bed and everywhere else he could sneak a peek. Mention it, and Norvel had already read it. "Bill," he exhorted one 1971 day, "you must read Carey McWilliams's new book on the 1880s founding of USC. It sounds just like us."

"USC was never really 'founded.' Like Topsy, it just grew," wrote McWilliams, editor of *The Nation* magazine. "In fact, the needs were so

numerous and urgent that there was really no time to plan; the institution had to act first and plan later; in a word, it had to improvise. Improvisation, in fact, became a way of life."¹⁴

"That's what we've been doing, Bill," exulted Norvel. "Like USC, Pepperdine University is being born in creative chaos." Does USC's story paint Pepperdine's chaos into bright colors of unfolding providence? Or did Pepperdine just get lucky? Norvel and I decided most issues on the spur of the moment. We had no time to huddle. We called audibles at the line of scrimmage. We hung on to go with the flow. We composed on the spot. We shot from the hip. We extemporized as we went. By whatever metaphor, "improvisation became a way of life."

FUMBLING FOR A FOUNDER

It was improvisation that led us to Mrs. Seaver. On November 1, 1968, Norvel and I started with no plan to finance the campus. We were flying, as aviators say, by the seat of our pants. With no endowment, Pepperdine lived hand to mouth. While Norvel raised money for operations, he had not raised a dollar for expansion or endowment. The 1968-69 Pepperdine College Financial Statement reported total expenditures of \$5,285,655, with total revenue of \$5,583,305, and gifts and grants totaling only \$820,904.¹⁵ With a minuscule operating surplus, we sailed into uncharted waters without a compass.

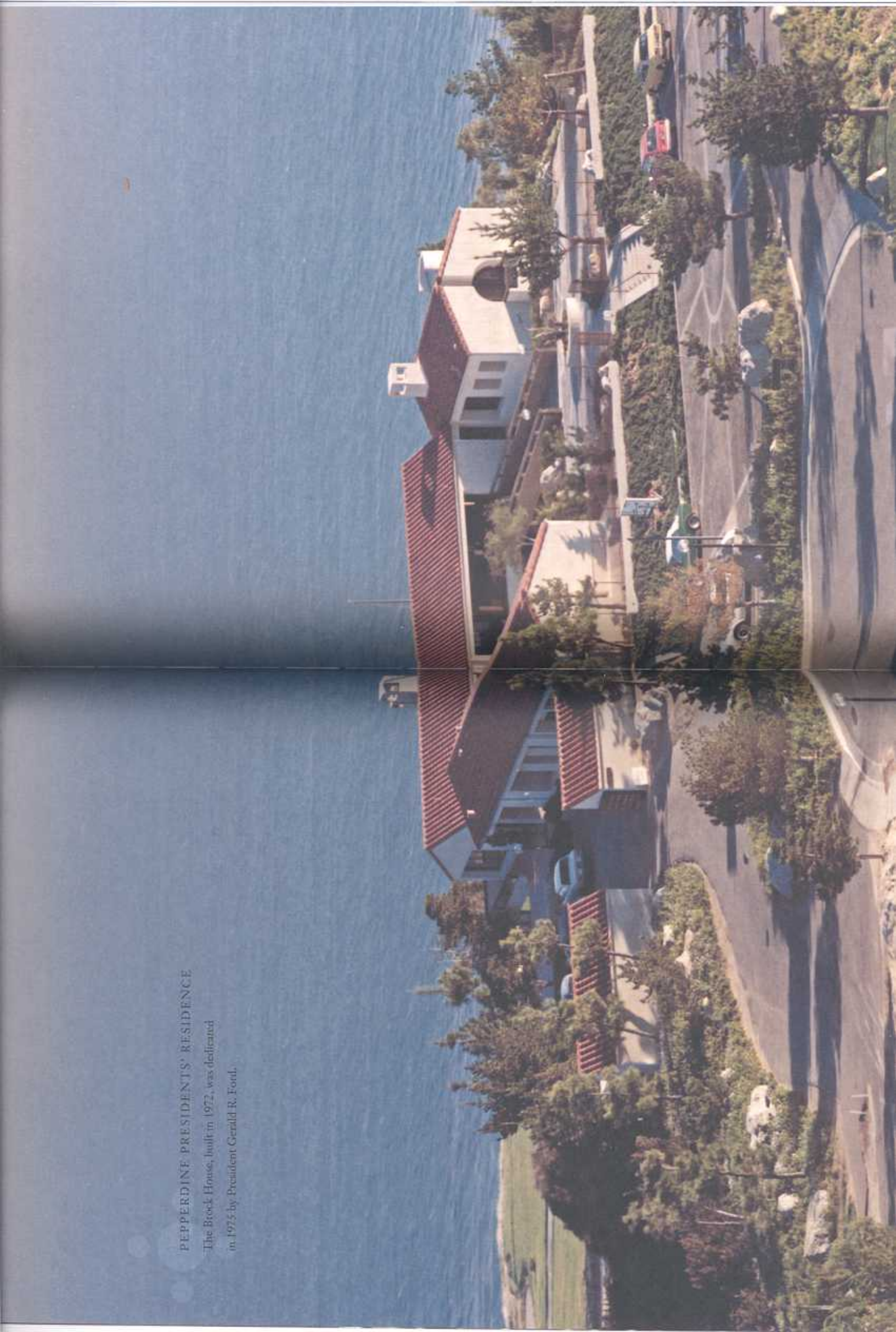
Raw improvisation, aided by divine guidance, financed the Malibu miracle. Norvel and I intuited that the only way to do it was the way universities had always done it. We must find one donor to contribute most of the money and name the campus in his or her honor. But how much money? Recalling that Mr. Pepperdine's gifts totaled \$3 million, Norvel and I settled arbitrarily on \$6 million. Among Pepperdine prospects, who could, and would, give that much?

We sifted through names like Huntsinger, Tyler, Stauffer, Ralphs, Straus, Thornton, Elkins and others that would later grace campus buildings. We searched for a campus founder to pay for site development, utilities, roads, parking lots, sewers, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping and much more. By January 1, 1969, we narrowed the list to Richard Mellon Scaife, Charles S. Payson and Mrs. Frank Roger Seaver. The Scaife and Payson families were two of the wealthiest in America; the Seavers were one of the wealthiest in the west. All three families loved Pepperdine dearly and would eventually rank among its biggest donors.

Norvel and I, with no notion of the outcome, prepared three formal proposals. The trial and error of fundraising requires rough-hewn readiness to endure rejection in pursuit of success. We had no idea who might say yes

PEPPERDINE PRESIDENTS' RESIDENCE

The Brock House, built in 1972, was dedicated
in 1975 by President Gerold R. Ford.



"This Malibu campus achieves absolute perfection and the man who pulled it all together is Bill Banowsky."

GERALD R. FORD

38th President of the United States
September 20, 1975



FUNDRAISING

On a typical Malibu morning, President Banowsky visits amid construction with donor Clint Murchison. In the background, Vice President Larry Hornbaker discusses with Mrs. Seaver, Mrs. Brock and Gay the construction of the Brock House.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE MALIBU CAMPUS

At last came the great day—Monday, January 13, 1969. Pepperdine College launched phase one of site preparation for its Malibu campus. "Dr. Banowsky," recorded President M. Norvel Young, "was challenged to take the lead in constructing a truly innovative master plan that would directly influence the shape of brick and mortar." On that first day who could have dreamed it was destined, one day, to be voted "the most beautiful campus in America"?

PROVOST JERRY E. HUDSON

As president, I committed to leadership by delegation. By February 1, 1969, I had organized the construction leadership team, commonly called "the team of twelve." It included two Pepperdine executives and ten construction professionals. "In the discharge of the duties of office there is one rule of action more important than all the others," advised Ronald Reagan. "Never do anything that someone else could do for you. Delegate!"

Dr. Jerry E. Hudson joined me at the Pepperdine pinnacle. A protégé of Dr. Howard A. White, Dr. Hudson earned his PhD at Tulane University and joined the Pepperdine history faculty in 1962. He rose through the ranks to become dean of the Los Angeles liberal arts college in 1970. Deep roots of the Hudson and Banowsky friendship ran back to idyllic undergraduate days at David Lipscomb College in 1950s Nashville. Jerry wooed Ann around campus while I wooed Gay. Twenty years later, both families landed all alone high atop the brand-new Malibu campus. The Banowskys and their four sons lived in the Brock House. The Hudsons and their four daughters lived next door in the Mallman House. Jerry and I, working intimately together, built the campus and felt on top of the world. For us it was Camelot!

While organizing the construction team of twelve, I also formed the Malibu faculty interdisciplinary committee to redesign the undergraduate liberal arts curriculum.⁹ I first appointed Dr. Hudson chairman of the committee's humanities division. Then, I promoted him to the powerful position of Malibu provost and dean. In that dual role, recorded his mentor Dr. White, "he had immediate oversight of the construction of the physical facilities and the planning of the academic program."¹⁰

The founding student newspaper reported in 1972 that Dr. Hudson "headed the administration of the new campus." The students got it right. Jerry Hudson played an indispensable Malibu miracle role. He capped his career with distinguished presidencies at Hamline University in Minnesota and Willamette University in Oregon and of the Collins Foundation. Dr. Hudson continues in 2010 as a life member of the Pepperdine board of regents.

Together, Dr. Hudson and I hired three key companies to head the design and construction. Industry parlance labeled them "design contractor," "project contractor" and "project coordinator."

For design contractor—the master plan architect—we hired William L. Pereira and Associates. Bill Pereira augmented his personal leadership with two top architects who worked full time for two years as members of the team of twelve. Serving under Pereira, Ron Baldwinson and Bud Wilson were the hands-on designers of the campus.

TOPODYNAMICS AND MORAN

When it came to hiring the project coordinator, a pair of hard-nosed CPAs anchoring Pepperdine's board of trustees called the shot. George A. Evans and Robert P. Jones insisted on Topodynamics, Inc. They knew the firm's two principals, Andrew K. Rawn and Robert Wood. Rawn, a six-foot-five, construction-hardened leader, would control major contractors. Wood, his young burr-headed architect partner with a gift for working with people, pulled together loose ends.

Pereira and Topodynamics helped Pepperdine pick the project contractor. We sought a major Southern California company specializing in institutional construction. Rawn and Wood nominated Moran Construction Company, a century-old firm headquartered in Alhambra for which both had worked. Pereira seconded the motion. In January 1969, Pepperdine hired Moran as Malibu campus contractor.

Norvel and I also favored Moran because of our admiration for its chairman, Jack Bernard. He was a Rotarian brother from Los Angeles Club Number Five. Jack and I were also members of an elite business group called



Vice President Hornbaker talks with his good friend Frances Smothers, the benefactor of the beautiful Smothers Theater.



Bill congratulates donors Morris B. and Gladys Pendleton on the Pepperdine Learning Center.

the 100 Club. A mutual admiration society, the club met for cocktails every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room of the California Club to pat one another on the back and exchange war stories. We kept a low profile and printed no membership roster. Our sole stated purpose was social but our 100 meticulously vetted members, including only one academician, quietly helped run the city of Los Angeles.

Pereira respected Moran's record in institutional concrete construction. The two firms worked together to create the campus of the University of California at Irvine. At Malibu, Pereira's fortress-like fireproof buildings demanded the most expensive steel-reinforced concrete, poured in place. All agreed Moran was the company to build them. Bernard delegated the Pepperdine job to Jack Eiden. He moved to Malibu full-time as construction manager. Robert Eldridge led from Alhambra as general director. Ronald Lerg served as project engineer.

Site development came first. That meant moving Malibu mountains! With millions of cubic yards of earth to move, our first down-to-earth decision was selecting earthwork professionals. For two sensitive jobs, we retained James L. Slosson as project geologist and Olen Murray as geological engineer. On January 3, 1969, from among six bidders, Pepperdine awarded the phase one grading contract to Strecker Construction Company. Strecker brought to the team of twelve Superintendent Allen and grading foreman Ace.

All hands on deck, the Malibu campus construction team of twelve was: Banowsky and Hudson for Pepperdine; Rawn and Wood for Topodynamics; Baldwinson and Wilson for Pereira; Slosson and Murray for geology; Allen and Ace for Strecker; and Eiden and Lerg for Moran. The team arranged three construction trailers into a U-shaped command center on the central hilltop. For three years, it met in this "war room" at 7:00 a.m. every Monday morning, rain or shine, to settle fusses and plan the "most beautiful campus in America."

LOCATING SEAVER COLLEGE

Moran's appointment of Jack Eiden was providential. This lean, taciturn leader really built the Malibu campus. Hundreds of hard hats, from scores of companies, helped make the miracle. But as quarterback of the team of twelve, Eiden called the signals. He ran every detail.

He went to work at Pepperdine on January 1, 1969, and committed five years of his life to creating the campus. For three years he worked for Moran. When the campus opened, I put him on Pepperdine's payroll for two more years as director of construction, maintenance, the physical plant, landscaping and security. He knew the campus like the back of his hand. He built it! Jack

Eiden may never receive a Pepperdine honorary doctorate but he deserves one.⁶

However, Eiden's unrelieved headache began when Pepperdine launched earthwork before Pereira could finish his master plan. Loose ends dangled on all sides. The biggest one demanded to be nailed down: precisely where, on the 138 acres, should Seaver College be built? Say what? Yes, looking back over 40 years, the Seaver site seems God ordained—as if it has descended from heaven. But back in the uncharted beginning it was very much up in the air! The untouched land was breathtaking, but it was also a blank canvas.

Many Pepperdiners are probably surprised to learn that most of the team of twelve automatically assumed Seaver College would be built out on the open meadow bordering Pacific Coast Highway. There was ample room. The meadow held 40 of the original 138 acres, larger than the 34-acre Los Angeles campus.

Building in the meadow would have been highly cost effective. Millions of dollars could have been saved by avoiding any attack on the hills and staying out on the existing grade of flat compacted ground. Most people felt it best for Seaver College to nestle down under the hills in the middle of the meadow, displayed gracefully along the highway.

Three of us thought otherwise. The team of twelve split into two camps, one concerned with cost and the other with design. Pereira, Hudson and I opposed Moran, Topodynamics, Strecker, Slosson and Murray. We insisted that Seaver College sit, not down under the hill, but high up on top of it. Our nine colleagues felt pressure to control costs and complete the project on time. But Pereira, Hudson and I felt a different pressure—to produce the most beautiful possible campus regardless of time or costs. Sensing the miraculous moment, we were focused not on costs for the moment but on results for the ages. To lift Seaver College and splay it grandly across the magnificent hills was a daunting and expensive challenge. But Pereira, Hudson and I knew it was right. We won that battle.

LOCATING THE MAIN ENTRANCE

The next big design debate was determining the location of the main campus entrance. Surprisingly, Seaver College earthwork began *before* the main entry site was settled. Like the Seaver College site, the Malibu campus gateway seems today ordained by God. But back in the uncharted beginning the main campus entry was very much up in the air.

The nine leaders who wanted to build in the meadow assumed the location of the entry to be a foregone conclusion. They all agreed it should, of course, be at the new corner intersection connecting Pacific Coast Highway and

GROUND BREAKING



Helen Peppertine, Dean Ronald E. Phillips, Architect William L. Pereira, President Ranowsky, Moran Company Chairman Jack Bernard, Blanche Seaver, Supreme Court Justice Blackman and donor Odell McConnell break ground for the law school.



Chancellor M. Norvel Young imprints his signature forever in the Payson Library cornerstone along with Charles S. Payson and his son, John, a distinguished Peppertine alumnus.



John C. Tyler, Bill, Blanche, Norvel, George W. Elkins, William L. Pereira, Dr. Michael DeBakey and Alice Tyler break ground for Tyler Campus Center.



Mrs. Peppertine, Morris Pendleton, Blanche, Flora Thornton, Odell McConnell and Bill break ground for the Pendleton Learning Center.

another decade, Dr. White added 187 acres. Gifts had brought another 11 acres for today's 830-acre campus.

MOVING MALIBU MOUNTAINS

"Site development" is code for the ugly, essential and often controversial preparation of the ground for construction. On January 13, 1969, Strecker Construction Company moved its fleet of dozers and scrapers to Malibu on flatbed trucks. Huge yellow machines cranked up, crawled off the flatbeds and up the 200-foot central hill. Strecker's challenge was to chop the hill in half, to cut across its wide top where Brock House now stands. To slice straight down to create the Seaver College site. Before the dust would settle, three years later, Pepperdine moved an incredible three-and-one-half million cubic yards of earth.

Timing is everything. The Malibu campus could never be developed today. The massive movement of that much rock and dirt required dynamiting, bulldozing, excavating, scraping, trucking, grading, leveling, compacting and draining ancient ocean mountains untouched by the hand of time. There is no conceivable way, today, that Pepperdine could obtain environmental approvals and state, county and city permits to move that much earth. Back then there was no city of Malibu to monitor us, no California Coastal Commission to stop us. There was only Los Angeles County, and Pepperdine enjoyed aggressive support from the board of supervisors and building department. "Their continuing cooperation," recorded Jack Eiden, "made it all possible." Without a single denial or significant delay, we moved Malibu mountains in a rare window of historic opportunity rapidly being slammed shut forever. Much of the freedom was made possible by the influence of alumnus Kenneth H. Hahn, powerful Los Angeles County supervisor.

The Seaver College site demanded the deepest draconian cut. First came a 70-foot cut to create the finished elevation of Seaver Drive as it rises around the central hill. Next came a 40-foot cut on down to Seaver College. During that first year, just to create the Seaver College site, Strecker moved one million cubic yards from the central hill down into Marie Canyon. Such messy and massive earthwork generated high costs and controversy. Prophets of doom predicted the cost-and-controversy combination would kill the embryonic campus. Pepperdine proved them wrong only by winning an all-out, three-year, touch-and-go dirt war.

Malibu Canyon Road. It took a century to create the corner. Most of the team assumed Pepperdine should seize it for its main campus entry.

When Pepperdine acquired its land in 1968 there was no corner intersection. The isolated center of Malibu enjoyed no connection of its two major thoroughfares. Malibu Canyon Road terminated a half mile east of Pacific Coast Highway. It turned sharply south and dumped all traffic into Malibu Civic Center Way. Pepperdine quickly convinced the county to complete this long overdue traffic improvement. Winning praise from Malibu and San Fernando Valley commuters, we also created, at public expense, the campus southern border and major front intersection.⁹ People assumed Pepperdine also created its campus gateway, complete with traffic lights and turning lanes. Stately corner gates, with maximum visibility and easiest accessibility, could open onto the campus as a four-lane divided boulevard rising graciously under the Cross Theme Tower up to Seaver College. Highly cost effective, it would utilize the existing grade of compacted soil. The idea of a grand intersection entrance excited Norvel. Most of the team of twelve pushed hard for it.

Once again, Pereira, Hudson and I disagreed. We fought to protect the front meadow, free of traffic and clutter, as an unobstructed panorama. We envisioned a subtle side entrance at a new, smaller intersection a half mile up Malibu Canyon Road. Traffic would funnel, virtually unseen, into the campus through the quiet of Winter Canyon. But there was a big cost downside. Winter Canyon cut-and-fill earthwork demanded an extra \$300,000.

We turned again to Mrs. Seaver. Blanche adored erudite bachelor Bill Pereira. The three of us met atop what was becoming the Cross Theme Tower hill. We imagined the campus gateway opening off Malibu Canyon Road and winding up through exotic Winter Canyon. As we confronted the cost problem, Blanche quoted American writer and naturalist Henry David Thoreau: "I am monarch of all I survey!" Her aesthetic eye saw the strength and beauty of the subtle side entrance. She called Richard Seaver. They immediately contributed a special block of Hydril Company stock for the extra site work. Protecting the integrity of the intersection and the beauty of the meadow, we christened the new entrance Seaver Drive.

The Seaver College and main entrance location victories directed me to two other dissentient resolutions. I resolved to forever protect the meadow. It glorified our front yard and harbored us high above the highway and busy beach. Savoring the sweetness of Malibu, I also elevated the acquisition of more land above all else. Sensing the miracle was essentially tied to this mystical place called Malibu, I pushed to get just as much of it as possible while the getting was good. During my tenure, Pepperdine acquired adjoining land, by gift or purchase, until the original 138 acres mushroomed into 632. Within

METICULOUS MALIBU PLANNING



President Banowsky and Vice Chancellor Charles B. Runnels go over design plans with architects William L. Pereira and associates.

STAUFFER CHAPEL

University board member Peter Ratigan assists Mrs. Peppertine, and Board of Trustees Chairman Donald V. Miller, Chancellor Young and Vice President Larry Hornbaker assists Mrs. Seaver in the ground breaking.



For the 1972 Stauffer Chapel dedication, distinguished Seaver College religion professors Dr. Frank Paek and Dr. Tony Ash share the front row with Blanche Seaver, Gay Banowsky and guests.

Earthwork began on January 13, 1969, only a year after land acquisition. There was no time for a grading master plan. We delegated and improvised.

We daily charted our course while bulldozing at full speed, one cut ahead of the ecological police. With no overall plan, Eiden led the frenzied scramble to stay one legal scoop ahead of Strecker's onrushing machines. As the machines dug deeper into the mountains, Eiden pushed harder for geologist Slosson and engineer Murray to produce faster piecemeal plans. Then, the ink barely dry, Eiden pushed them through the permitting process with the help of his building department friends. On a few days, we produced a partial grading plan and rushed it to the county for approval as we were making the cut it approved.

"Those maddening Pepperdine machines," complained one official Eiden friend, "are chewing out ahead of our permits!"¹⁰⁰ Adam Smith, the eighteenth-century Scottish economist, popularized the term "invisible hand" to illustrate the impact of self-interest on free enterprise. We watched the "invisible hand" at work every day as the campus contours took voluptuous shape. We thought God was directing our daily decisions. With the perspective of 40 years, the probability of divine presence seems to me more intriguing than ever.

With daily improvisation, the cubic yardage of moving earth increased exponentially. Some of us on the team of twelve pushed to escalate volume. Most urged restraint to avoid going broke, getting sued or starting a landslide. Our aggressive side, driving to make all of the hay we could while the sun shone, won the dirt fights.

Pepperdine quickly acquired, in additional acreage, all of the Marie Canyon drainage from the mountains to the coast highway. This enabled Strecker to move the million cubic yards from the Seaver College site and compact it down into Marie Canyon. To accomplish this, Eiden built an earthen dam at the top of Marie Canyon. Dubbed the "upper debris basin," it served during construction as a glittering mountain drainage lake. Later, it provided a stable for campus horses. Currently, it serves as a parking lot for trucks and buses. But President Andrew K. Benton has drawn plans for its ultimate incarnation as a world-class intercollegiate soccer stadium.

Eiden buried a ten-foot-diameter drain pipe deep under Marie Canyon. Rainwater ran easily off the mountains, into the upper debris basin and down to the ocean. The drainage system transformed Marie Canyon into a massive dry receptacle for dirt from the Seaver College site. Hundreds of tons of earth, compacted according to code, were pushed and trucked less than 200 yards into Marie Canyon, deep beneath the eventual athletics, housing and other facilities. We minimized Malibu opposition by prohibiting dusty dump trucks loaded with dirt from wobbling off campus onto the sacrosanct Pacific Coast Highway. The orderly operation to cut the hills and fill the canyons

kept all dirt on site. Pepperdine developed the Malibu campus without hauling a single shovel of dirt away from the site.

Master builder Eiden was an aspiring novelist taking night courses in creative writing at UCLA. His personal diary is a rich source of Malibu miracle minutia and construction detail. He wrote that I pushed unmercifully to create the Seaver College site. "For weeks, Dr. Banowsky daily donned boots and jeans to take his command position atop the central hill." Eiden didn't appreciate "the intrusion and contradictory signals to my men. Dr. Banowsky creates tension pressing Strecker to go faster. At our second Monday leadership meeting he contradicted my weekly progress report in front of the whole team. He said he talked with Allen and Ace a day earlier. They informed him fewer men and machines were working than I officially reported. On days Dr. Banowsky shows up," Eiden ordered Allen and Ace, "give me a meticulous count of men and machines. I intend to hand him unassailable numbers."¹⁰¹

Eiden's diary also reported "ridiculous demands about ecology. Dr. Banowsky warned Strecker to protect the natural beauty, above all else. That was a bit much! Those scrapers scoop 20 cubic yards per swipe at hundreds of swipes per day. Here's Dr. Banowsky making speeches to environmentalists and promising to build the campus without disturbing a blade of grass. He pushes me to level every mountain while promising ecologists we're preserving the native flora and fauna. My respect for Dr. Banowsky kept me from saying that the whole site is sagebrush, not trees or grass, and I can't dig a footing, or pour a sidewalk, without destroying all of it!"¹⁰²

Despite his complaints, Eiden and I bonded through years of creative achievement. Jack's job was to lead. Mine was to push. I pushed Slosson and Murray for grading plans; Pereira for building plans; the county for permits; the graders to stay ahead of construction crews; the concrete pours to come on the day after steel installation. I pushed for a sewer solution. I pinned a time-flow chart to my bathroom wall and car dashboard to calculate where we were in comparison to where we ought to be, in order to finish by September 6, 1972.

SLOSSON'S LANDSLIDE FEARS

As the more aggressive dirt moving got underway, project geologist Slosson caught a bad case of bureaucratic cold feet. His caution in preparing and permitting grading plans created costly delays. Slosson specifically feared that the giant cut through the central hill, with massive excavation of unstable alluvial soil, would trigger a major landslide. Slosson feared he could be blamed and perhaps sued.

Slosson, to my utter shock, surreptitiously wrote this to the building department: "A soft soapstone strata, deep beneath the surface of the central ridge, consisting of talc, chlorite and magnetite, renders the entire slope unstable. Any further excavation would be extremely unwise."¹¹ For the first time, panicked county officials momentarily quit cooperating. Pereira, Eiden, Rawn, Wood and Murray screamed in chorus at Dr. Hudson and me, "Your geologist quit certifying permits! Now what do we do?"

What I did was fire Slosson on the spot. His timidity threatened to maroon the Seaver Drive surface 40-feet higher than today's finished elevation. Landslide or not, we had to cut the mountain down. On August 1, 1970, I hired Beach Leighton to replace Slosson. The team of twelve rejoiced in Leighton's arrival, with one reservation. "Leighton has no landslide fears but he's slow as molasses," said Eiden's diary. "How can we accelerate Leighton?"¹²

On a providential tip from Andy Rawn, I discovered the unorthodox, Malibu-based, Mexican-American earthwork genius, Luis Manzano. A charismatic University of Guadalajara-trained geologist, Manzano could look at a mountain and, intuitively, know what to do. A local legend, in the 1960s he designed Malibu West at Trancas where the White, Stivers and Glass families resided. Betty and Walter Glass lived on Manzano Drive for 40 years.

To maintain continuity, Leighton and Murray signed off on county paperwork. But they followed the on-site leadership of maestro Manzano. The earthwork wizard designed, scraped and shaped the entire Malibu campus. Somewhere on campus there should be a sign, "Made by Manzano."

LUIS MANZANO TO THE RESCUE

On Wednesday, June 2, 1971, Pepperdine launched, under Luis Manzano, the second-phase site preparation. Without breaking stride, Manzano cut the controversial central mountain from the spot of Slosson's panic to today's finished perfection. That's not the only mountain Manzano moved. His mightiest volume of earth came from the big upper mountain that Norvel Young christened "the offending ridge." As we stood at the Seaver College site, looking northeast to the top of Marie Canyon, Norvel teased, "Bill, you just hate that offending ridge, don't you?"

I did! The trajectory of the ridge gorged its mass from the peak of the mountain to the bottom of Marie Canyon. It ruined the sweetest mountain views from every perspective on the campus. Worse still, it buried beneath its boulders the entire eventual location of the law school. It eliminated any other construction over its 200-acre expanse.

Worst of all, the offending ridge chopped the crucial campus circular drive into two isolated streets. Manzano had graded Seaver Drive to the east and John Tyler Drive to the west. But he had absolutely no way of connecting them. Both drives dead-ended up against the base of the offending ridge. Manzano moved the ridge to create Huntsinger Circle and join the two drives.

Thus legends emerge. "The president squinted his eyes, scrutinizing the terrain . . . 'Now that's an offensive mountain,' said William S. Banowsky . . . Not a week later, the 'mountain' was gone," chronicled Pepperdine's Patricia Yomantas years later. "He clearly is a man who moved mountains."¹³

Luis Manzano moved the mountain. I merely raised the money to pay for it. The offending ridge created one and one-half million cubic yards of dirt that cost a million dollars to move. I raised the cash and Manzano cut it down.

For a year I worked directly with Manzano, and his two Mexican aides, in his residential three-car-garage office at Big Rock, in Malibu. We squinted at complicated geological survey maps spread out across brightly lit drafting tables. Almost like priests at an altar, Luis and I bowed together over squiggly county maps as he deciphered their complicated codes for me.

In phase one, Strecker moved a million cubic yards to create the Seaver College site. In phase two, Manzano and Kirst moved two and one-half million more to create every other campus nook and cranny: both entrances; streets and parking lots; student, faculty and administrative housing sites; athletics facilities; and finished landscaping. Without Manzano, Pepperdine could not possibly have developed so many Malibu acres or completed the project on time. Without Manzano the campus could not conceivably look as it does today. Three construction professionals contributed most to the finished product of the Malibu miracle: William L. Pereira in design, Luis Manzano in site development and Jack Eiden in brick and mortar.

"If You Have Faith as Small as a Mustard Seed," Norvel headlined the words of Jesus across the *Alumni Voice*. "You can say to this mountain," he quoted further, "Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."¹⁴

KIRST CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

Despite biblical inspiration, when Luis Manzano came on board, the Strecker Construction Company quickly became a problem. Manzano moved so fast to produce plans that Strecker could not keep up the grading pace. The new campus fell dangerously behind the earthwork schedule. With Strecker's

12-month contract expiring, I decided to make a major site development change.

On January 4, 1970, the team of twelve met privately as a team of ten at Moran's Alhambra headquarters. Excluding Strecker's men, Allen and Ace, we opened phase two grading bids from seven other companies. Stunningly, Kirst Construction Company came in \$1 million under the other six. Our leadership team split again, along different lines. Pereira's men now joined Topodynamics and Moran to oppose Kirst. Fearing Kirst's bid was way too low, and that he would go broke, they cited HUD rules for rejecting financially questionable bids.

"Dr. Banowsky," reported Jack Eiden, "You may not have noticed, but Kirst just lost millions on that failed professional basketball team. With a negative net worth, Kirst could go bankrupt and we'll never finish on time."

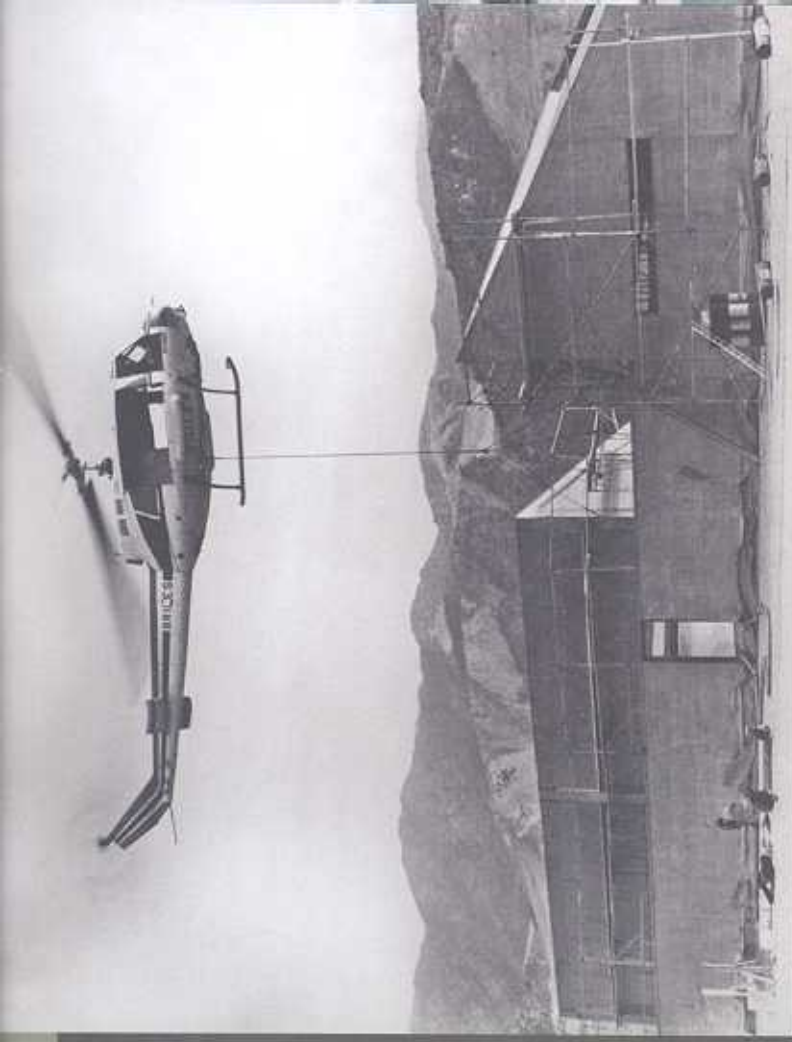
"Yes, I did notice, Jack," I answered. "But did you notice Kirst is bonded by a big insurance company?" Walking around the table, I put my hand on Jack's shoulder. "For a million dollars I'm willing to take the risk. That's lots of money, Jack! It's like turning down a huge donation. I want you to save the million but make Kirst perform." Kirst proved to be a wise risk. He more than doubled the total volume of Strecker's earthwork. In 12 months, Strecker moved a million cubic yards. In 18 months, Kirst moved two and one-half million.

CONSTRUCTING THE BUILDINGS

In March 1971, Pereira produced final working plans for the founding circle of Seaver College buildings: Huntsinger Academic Center, Pendleton Learning Center, Payson Library, Tyler Campus Center, Murehison Science Center and Elkins Auditorium. Pereira's contract also included 16 residence buildings for 800 students, but those plans were not yet ready for bidding.

The government indemnified local banks to loan interim cash for construction provided Pepperdine adhered to HUD regulations. Accordingly, Pepperdine delivered Pereira's working drawings to a dozen union trade rooms throughout Southern California. An astonishing total of 200 bids arrived from framing, concrete, electrical, plumbing, air conditioning, glazing, flooring, finishing and other companies. On March 1, 1971, a crowd of construction managers met at Moran's Alhambra plan room to open and read the bids. HUD rules required awarding to lowest bidders, without negotiation, so contractors and subs took their best shots.

For the first six big buildings, our team predetermined a budget limit of \$6 million. If bids exceeded that, Pereira would have to redesign. We held our breath. Lost time for redesign would jeopardize the deadline. Happily, those first buildings came in 5 percent below our limit. Construction commenced



POURED CONCRETE AND STEEL

In 1971, helicopters were employed to deliver material and equipment to the construction site. Below, the beautiful Seave Bridge is under construction just beneath the Mullin Town Square.



on Monday, April 12, 1971, with a ground breaking ceremony featuring famed space scientist Wernher von Braun. I announced that “the Phase I construction will cost approximately \$26,600,000.”¹⁰

As construction continued, the landslide ghosts of terminated geologist James Slosson returned to haunt us. In addition to landslide concerns, California is earthquake country and a major fault runs offshore along Malibu. Ordinary earthquake anxieties, combined with Slosson’s landslide predictions, spooked our structural engineer, Dick Snyder, of Brandom and Johnson Company. To reassure the building department, Snyder dictated that buildings around Seaver College be constructed on 40-foot-deep, steel-reinforced concrete piles, far deeper than customary foundations. Snyder’s overkill added time and expense. But he got the county on our case and we had no choice.

As luck would have it, the drilling hit hard rock in the first ten feet. The bits jammed. Explosive experts were then lowered in buckets and set dynamite charges to clear the blockages. But their explosions only fractured big boulders into wedging pieces, creating greater drill problems. Eventually, boulders as big as dump trucks were pulverized and removed. But that left huge holes requiring tons of concrete refill.

“Those first big buildings surrounding Seaver College,” predicted Eiden’s diary, “will remain unmoved even when the big one comes. Centuries from now, when the buildings are long gone, archeologists will still decipher their size and shape from that deep underground acropolis of pile columns.”¹¹

MORLEY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

The enormous concrete volume made Morley Construction Company’s work critical. For that first circle of six buildings, Morley pumped and poured 350,000 cubic yards of concrete. But Morley’s young foreman was a mixed blessing. Happily, he drove men and machines for maximum daily pours. Sadly, he ignored warnings and created two serious concrete blowouts.

The blowouts came because the foreman installed his concrete forms with too few walers. The walers were long bolts connected horizontally through flat plywood panels to opposing panels. That created the force for holding everything in place against the mounting pressure of rising concrete. The higher the walls—and some of ours were very high—the greater the pressure against the plywood forms at the bottom. The daring young foreman bolted in too few walers. Two massive concrete blowouts splintered forms and splattered concrete everywhere.

The second blowout prompted a rare job-site visit by William L. Pereira. “He arrived royally in his limousine,” wrote Eiden, “and swept into the

FIRESTONE FIELDHOUSE COMING ALIVE



In 1972, with school in Malibu already open, Firestone Fieldhouse sprints toward its 1973 completion. In the foreground dust, the Raleigh-Runnels Memorial Pool has not yet begun.

trailer, black cape flowing, lecturing everybody in sight. He warned me that, as master architect, he would not be associated with shoddy construction and demanded a personal inspection of both shattered walls. Pereira seemed satisfied with our blowout repair.⁸⁷

In its third month, construction moved into high gear. "At its zenith, 1,500 men and women worked on Pepperdine's project. In addition to 1,000 job site personnel, another 400 worked in off-site material assembly and supply and 100 more in design and engineering," calculated Eiden.⁸⁸

The complexity of the tight timetable led me to retain Mark Johnson of Management Consultants in San Diego as a "critical path scheduler." Johnson conducted weekly campus exercises with the team of twelve to detect bottlenecks and blockages. Like cars on a crowded freeway, if one sub-contractor slowed, others backed up. If one broke down, all stopped. Any delay jeopardized the schedule. Johnson criticized Pepperdine's contracts for failing to mandate automatic penalties for slowdowns and breakdowns. Eiden, Hudson and I compensated by preaching to the contractors that, if Pepperdine failed to occupy on schedule, default suits for tuition refund, faculty reimbursement and other damages would follow. Our preaching, and Johnson's professional expertise, kept the schedule.

"GREATEST CAMPUS FIRESTORM"

Slosson's dreaded landslide never came. But what did come was a truly historic episode in Malibu's seemingly annually reoccurring natural disasters. On Friday, September 25, 1970, the "greatest of twentieth-century Southern California firestorms" blazed toward our campus in "perfect fire weather (drought conditions, 100-degree heat, three percent humidity and an 85-mile-per-hour Santa Ana wind)."⁸⁹ The Eagles 1970s rock band memorialized the winds blowing "down across the desert through the canyons of the coast to the Malibu."⁹⁰

The fire, coalescing with several blazes in the San Fernando Valley, "ultimately took ten lives and charred 403 homes, including a ranch owned by Governor Ronald Reagan. Firefighters said the cedar-shake roofs 'popped like popcorn' as a 20-mile wall of flames roared across the ridge line of the Santa Monica [and across our campus] toward the sea. With the asphalt on [Pacific Coast Highway] ablaze and all escape routes cut off, terrified residents . . . took refuge in the nearby lagoon."⁹¹

Fortunately, there was little on the campus to be burned. But evacuating workers worried about Kirst's equipment. With no time to load it onto flatbeds, what would keep raging flames from igniting the vulnerable fuel-loaded machines?



Beverly Stauffer speaks inspirationally, at the 1972 dedication of Stauffer Chapel, which she christened "the little chapel on the hill."



The 1964 Republican candidate for president of the United States, Senator Barry Goldwater, assists Bill Blanche and Lawrence Welk in the Tyler Campus Center dedication.

The fire department urged Kirst's men to drive their machines into what they hoped would be a safe haven in the meadow. For 12 sweltering hours, the workers cleared the meadow brush into a wide circle and shoved an earthen berm around it. Eiden colorfully described the "caravan of scrapers crawling down from the central hill into the meadow's safe circle [like] a parade of steel dinosaurs replicating a race from some prehistoric lava flow."²³ The circular barricade worked. The voracious fires roared through, scorching every foot of the empty campus, but no fuel tanks ignited.

But then came the flood. With the arrival of rainy season, for five days and nights a torrent pounded Peppertine's blackened hills. And with the rains came the mud slides. Entire mountain walls collapsed, where they annually fail, along Pacific Coast Highway and the Malibu Canyon Road. Those of us driving to the campus encountered days of detours and hours of delay.

Most terrifyingly, the torrential rains threatened the denuded campus with massive flooding and mud slides because of the potential failure of the freshly formed earthen dam. It now held back an engorged lake of rainwater overflowing the new Marie Canyon upper debris basin. The unstable dirt wall of the hurriedly erected dam was under severe pressure. If it failed, Marie Canyon would be devastatingly flooded. All of the summer's site work of countless compacted slopes and pads would be swept away to the ocean.

The makeshift basin, designed to control normal rainfall, accommodated the gradual release of moderate amounts of water. Water routinely percolated through a round standpipe down through the ten-foot Marie Canyon drain to the ocean. But the standpipe, not designed to withstand a deluge, had multiple drainage holes clogged with trashy debris and brush. Tremendous water pressure pushed against the back of the dirt dam, and overflowed its top.

Working around the clock, Jack Eiden loaded three workers into a rubber raft to clear the drainage and clean lake debris. Their inflatable boat was intermittently rocked by strong suction as the cleared standpipe drains pulled the water out beneath them. Meanwhile, dozers and trucks evacuated tons of silt and muck from the lake's swollen banks. For a full week it was touch and go. Like the fire fortress in the meadow, the shaky Marie Canyon dam also held.

THE STUDENT HOUSING HEADACHE

A last big headache developed over construction costs for student housing. Peppertine did not desire a cozy Malibu Mediterranean village dominated by institutionalized dormitories. Watching the failure of the Los Angeles campus as a residential college, I personally challenged Pereira to produce

"innovative and intimate family residences irresistibly attractive to young people."²⁴ We provided prime space under the hillside adjacent to Seaver College, facing west toward the Point Dume sunset, for Pereira to put 20 houses of 50 occupants each. The Malibu campus would be anchored with a thousand happy residential students.²⁵

Pereira designed world-class student housing, but the bids came in at twice the budgeted maximum. Heading into the home stretch, we were completely broke and had totally exhausted our government-guaranteed borrowing options. We fixed a desperate limit of \$200,000 per house, \$4 million total. But the bids came back at \$400,000 per house, \$8 million total.

HUD rules permitted bid rejection for financial exigency. We alerted the government and rejected the bids. For the first time, we also rejected Pereira's plans. Pereira had insisted upon duplication in the housing of his academic building plans, with institutional-grade concrete and steel construction. When Peppertine demanded redesign, Pereira reluctantly compromised from institutional to commercial quality. When Pereira's revised plans still exceeded budget, Andy Rawn and Bob Wood delivered us from despondence. Their recommendations demonstrated the Topodynamics Malibu miracle contribution.

Vetoing not only institutional but also commercial construction, Topodynamics insisted on common residential housing quality. This meant ordinary wooden-platform frame apartment buildings with minimum concrete foundations and no window eyebrows, double-paned glass, oversized openings, solid-core doors or institutional hardware. Topodynamics next insisted Pereira be ordered to redesign for ordinary housing and, if he hesitated, be replaced. Then Topodynamics pushed for Norwood and DeLong, a construction firm specializing in ordinary housing, to be the contractor. They concluded that Moran, without housing experience, could not meet budget. Finally, Topodynamics urged private financing to permit Peppertine to avoid bid risks while handling the job to Norwood and DeLong.

Grudgingly, Pereira redesigned the student residences. Norwood and DeLong constructed on time and within budget. Aside from a few student fists punched through hollow-core doors, and bukkies being shoved through Masonite wardrobes, the housing has served honorably through the years.

RALEIGH RUNNELS MEMORIAL POOL

If we were broke, and couldn't borrow, where did we find \$4 million for housing? Once again, we found it in Mrs. Frank R. Seaver's Hydril stock portfolio.

In addition to permanently endowing the campus, Mrs. Seaver also totally subsidized its construction. She funded the crucial infrastructure such as the Winter Canyon entrance, major roads, minor walkways, bridges, courtyards, parking lots and fountains. Together, Blanche Seaver and Dick Scaife paid for virtually all site development.

Mrs. Seaver also fully, or partially, matched named donors of several buildings. When Mr. Murchison defaulted on his commitment, Mrs. Seaver gave \$2 million for the science center. When Mr. Tyler's pledge was deferred for 27 years, Mrs. Seaver built the campus center. (In 1971, Mr. Tyler executed a charitable remainder trust of Farmer's Insurance Company stock. When he died in 1973, Mrs. Tyler challenged his will to exclude Pepperdine. She lost in court. Subsequently, when she died in 1998, Pepperdine finally received \$3.5 million. But, back in 1971, it was Mrs. Seaver's \$3 million that built Tyler Campus Center.) Ultimately, Blanche Seaver contributed to Elkins Auditorium, Stauffer Chapel, the Brock House, Firestone Fieldhouse and the Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool.

The unsurpassed Olympic-sized swimming pool honored the late son of Charles and Amy Jo Runnels. Raleigh Neal Runnels was a tenth-grade honor student at Palisades High School, excelling in football, baseball, cross country and track, just as the Malibu campus was breaking ground. He enrolled as the first founding 1972 freshman and counted the days for school to start. Sadly, he was never able to realize his Malibu campus dream. On July 1, 1972, eight weeks before school began, he lost his valiant two-year fight against cancer. It was shattering.

Norvel and I conducted the memorial service. Three days later, we walked beside the Firestone Fieldhouse, in construction dust, with Charles and Amy Jo and Blanche and Richard Seaver. Blanche adored Raleigh. To insure his memory, she committed \$650,000 on the spot while Morris B. Pendleton and others added \$300,000 more. It became "the only Malibu facility to be paid for before it got built," as Charlie Runnels occasionally brags. The Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool was eventually seen and experienced by hundreds of millions around the world as the water polo venue for the 1984 Olympics. Scores of names grace the campus with a beautiful story behind each one. But I take joy in remembering this one and only Malibu miracle use of the word "memorial."

Raleigh Runnels didn't make it for the Malibu opening. But 860 other students did report for duty to the founding faculty for the first classes on Wednesday, September 6, 1972.

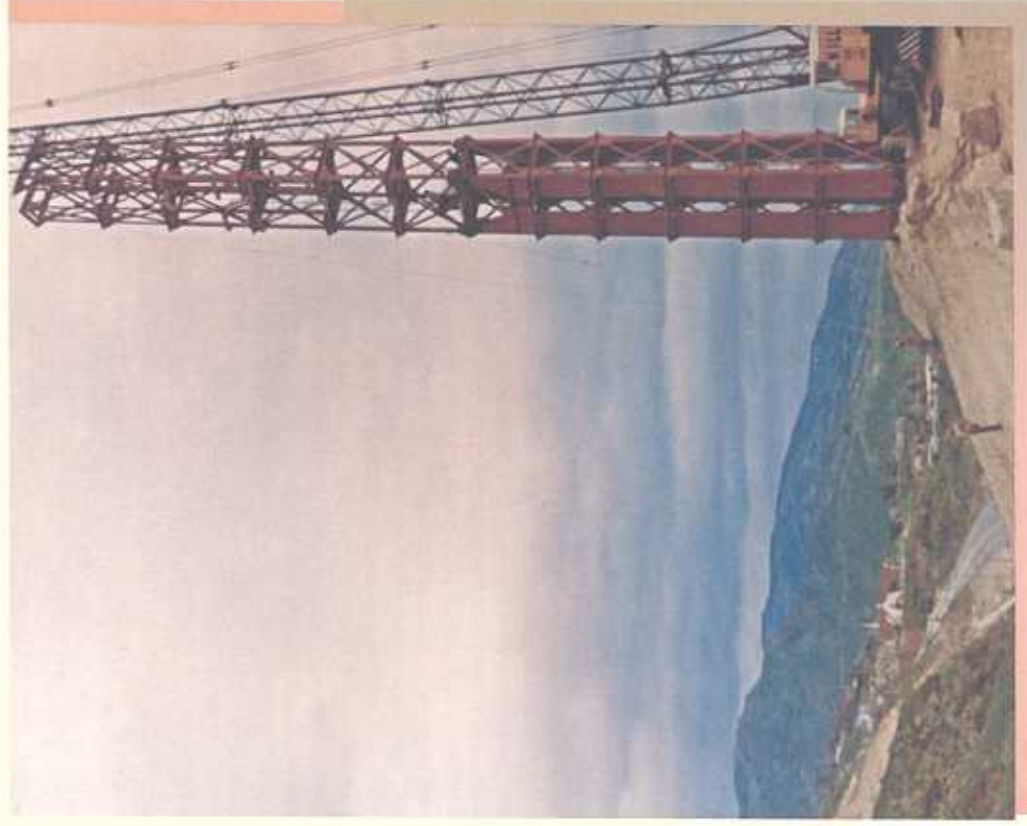


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6. *Malibu Times*, January 26, 1971.
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15. Mike Pollock, "Von Braun Lauds Science in Pepperdine Ceremonies: 500 Attend Ground Breaking at Malibu; Honor Paid to Principal Donors," *Van Nuys (California) News*, April 15, 1971, 1.
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"Pepperdine's plans for a 125-foot tower, atop its most prominent mountain 350 feet above sea level, with a lighted 50-foot-high indentation of the cross of Christ, will offend many Malibu residents."

ALVIN S. KAUFER

Malibu Homeowners' Association, 1972



"IT'S NO OIL DERRICK!"

The steel fabrication for the Cross Theme Tower that defines Pepperdine University architecturally was erected over one frantic weekend in late May 1972, only one-half step ahead of Malibu protestors.

THE THEME TOWER CONTROVERSY

The Bible calls the cross "an offensive stumbling block" and that's the way it seemed to some Malibu neighbors when Pepperdine built its Cross Theme Tower.

This is the story of the Malibu miracle's 40-year fight to build and defend the Theme Tower that defines Pepperdine architecturally. All battles of my presidency, but this one, ended decades ago. This one won't go away. Four decades later irate e-mails come from students, unborn at the time of the original controversy, but disgusted with me for "turning off the cross lights—forever." I plead innocent to the "forever" charge.

Master architect William L. Pereira completed the working drawings for the Theme Tower in March 1972. A tough two years later, May 7, 1974, the completed tower was dedicated. Through the years, just as one chief opponent, Alvin S. Kauffer, predicted, it has offended many Malibu residents. But it has thrilled many more and the good fight keeps on fighting.

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE"

The battle broke out in 1972 when shocked neighbors living in the celebrity Malibu Colony beachfront community below the campus saw Pereira's tower plans. Their response was, "It will be an intrusive sectarian symbol, a brightly lit ecological offense towering over our homes at night." After figuratively, and perhaps sometimes literally, choking in three years of silence on Pepperdine construction dust, the big cross was the last straw for some neighbors. April 1, 1972, the Malibu Homeowners' Association filed for a temporary restraining order in California state court. If successful, it would delay or even derail the Theme Tower.

Sensing imminent danger, I cut a quick deal with the Malibu Homeowners' Association to get the tower built. The purely personal, one-sentence verbal statement empowered Pepperdine to build the tower without hindrance. In the bitter pill for Pepperdine generations to swallow, I agreed "not to light the cross at night *during my presidency*."¹¹

I proposed a temporary "during my presidency" gesture to get the tower built. Somehow, that statement was transmuted into permanent Pepperdine policy. The truth about the tower got garbled. Some students suspected me of making an outer darkness deal with the devil, citing as sad proof decades of darkness since my presidency. "To get the tower built, Banowsky turned off the lights forever," they said. Occasionally at Pepperdine, all heaven breaks loose as some disheartened students march forth chanting: "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."¹²

OBELISK VERSUS CROSS

Winding the clock back a bit, the Theme Tower controversy didn't begin among our neighbors. A preliminary bout broke out between the architect, Bill Pereira, and me; it was the only design dispute our close partnership permitted. Pereira and I were in such close agreement on design that our colleagues deferred to "the two Bills." But what happens when the two Bills can't decide? Pereira and I were irreconcilably committed to incompatibly different visions for the tower. The conflict was simple. I wanted the traditional cross. Pereira wanted the classical obelisk.

We agreed on other details. As for location, it must indeed "rise from atop the most prominent mountain, anchoring the central Seaver Drive entrance and commanding the coastline for miles around." We agreed on its 125-foot height. "The famous cross soaring over Rio is 125 feet tall and that's the perfect height for us," said Pereira matter of factly.¹³ But at that point, our gentleman's agreement ended.

Pereira owed his Pepperdine job to my intervention. Norvel Young pushed hard for Pereira's ex-partner, Charles Luckman, to be the campus master architect. Pereira appreciated my total support. We grew close. The beauty of the Malibu campus reflects the chemistry of our companionship. We had only one design disagreement. It was this architectural doozy, this head-on collision between the obelisk and the cross, two anciently revered religious symbols.

THREE BANOWSKY BOYS

At the 1971 ground breaking for the Cross, Theme Tower, three Banowsky boys led the way. Bill Jr. directs on the left. On the right, Britton and David hold aloft the Pereira tower rendering.



Since the 1968 Malibu land gift I had dreamed of anchoring Pepperdine to the cross of Christ as the symbol of Pepperdine's core mission commitment. There was never a cross of any kind on the old campus. But now we were perfecting everything. With several crosses already adorning the hills around Los Angeles, I dreamed of lifting up in the Malibu hills the tallest Southern California cross of all. I envisioned, of course, the traditional cross of Christ with a rigid upright beam traversed by a perfectly matching horizontal bar.

But Pereira dreamed of building the more innocuous religious symbol that soared above Egyptian, Greek and Roman cities of antiquity. Fabled architects usually arrive for work with artistic visions already ensconced in their minds, and Pereira arrived at Pepperdine loving the obelisk so much he felt foreordained to build one on our campus. A simple monolithic pillar tapering into a sharp pyramid at the top, it was the Washington Monument all over again. Pepperdine University would enshrine the cross of Christ as its timeless symbol only by first defeating Pereira's hallowed obelisk.

Pereira yearned to build his Pepperdine obelisk before I knew what one was. He praised it as the vertical complement to his horizontal buildings. He praised its shape and height and glorious history. I answered that the cross complemented his buildings in ideal verticality and height with a more glorious history.

Pereira loved the cross, too. He resisted its architectural exploitation. A practicing Italian Catholic who wore a gold cross dangling round his neck, Pereira said, "Bill, I hate this commercialization."

With the cross and obelisk locked into a collision course, I leveled with Pereira. "Bill, everybody's voted. Nobody wants the Washington Monument on our campus."

The head-shaking Pereira countered, "Bill, I took my own vote. I don't want a huge literal cross of Christ on my professional reputation."

"Bill," I said, "an obelisk is too trite for a theme."

"Bill," Pereira said, "nothing's more trite than the cross."

SOMETHING SYMBOLIC

Pereira, a big man in spirit, astonished me by magnanimously terminating the Theme Tower debate. Deferring to my love for the cross he unconditionally surrendered his obelisk—almost.

"OK, Bill," he concluded. "I'm going to design a cross. But I'm not sure yet what it ought to look like. Let me play with it a few days. There's hostility to a literal cross. I'd like to soften it up around the edges. If I can't come up with something symbolic, my friends in the Colony may go berserk!"

"Symbolic" sounded "New Age" to me, and I shuddered. I wanted the literal cross, not some fuzzed-up version. Reassuring me, Pereira went to work doing what he did best.

The triumphant call came at 5:30 a.m. on April Fool's Day—Saturday, April 1, 1972. "Bill, I've found it!" Pereira's call woke Gay and me. He had worked for three days in his bathrobe to create the now-celebrated Pereira compromise. In inspirational simplicity, Pereira produced a tapering tower with neither pyramidal top nor crossing horizontal bar. It was actually two towers joined by the cross. Each tower, vertical on the inside, tapered on the outside to a soaring pyramidal top. It was a stylized obelisk split down the center and connected by the cross of Christ. The 125-foot tower featured a 50-foot indentation of the cross subtly highlighted with tiles and lights. A masterful merging of the classic symbol with the Christian cross, Pereira's design quickly became Pepperdine's global signature.

In postlogue, Pereira acquiesced to my love of the cross without forsaking his obelisk. He kept on searching for the perfect place to put it. He soon found it. Within months William L. Pereira and Associates designed the world-famous Transamerica Tower, its pyramidal obelisk jutting out high above the city of San Francisco skyline.

Today, jutting out high above the Malibu skyline, is Pereira's obelisk-like Cross Theme Tower. You'd think, after four decades, the molting it caused

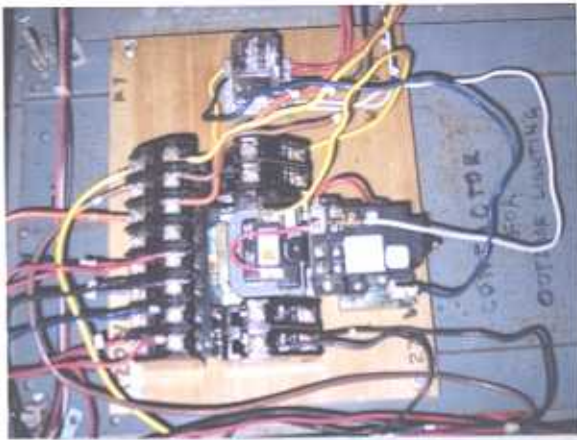
going up would have died down, maybe even reached a statute of limitations. But, conceived in conflict and born in pain, the fight lives on. It episodically flares. The *Los Angeles Times* headlined a recent flare-up, "Support for Lighted Cross Rekindles an Old Debate." It's an old debate filled with hogwash.

"THE CROSS WILL NEVER SHINE"

"In 1973, when the tower was completed," the *Los Angeles Times* printed, without proof, "then Pepperdine president William S. Banowsky promised Malibu residents that the cross would never shine as originally planned. It now stands, not as a beacon, but as a landmark with only the sound of electric bells chiming every half hour." Hogwash.

The *Los Angeles Times* account missed, by a full year, the date of the community showdown that cut the deal to build the tower. The showdown did not come "in 1973 when the tower was completed," as the *Los Angeles Times* said. The showdown came in March 1972, so that tower construction could begin. The newspaper produced no evidence of me ever saying, "the cross will never shine as originally planned." I never said it. Some said, most

WIRED FOR LIGHTS!"



Forty years after its construction came incontrovertible proof that the Cross Theme tower was originally wired to be lit. In 2009, Pepperline student Paul Volcheff took these actual photographs of the wiring inside the tower itself.

lately, that the deal I cut left all wiring for lights out of the tower construction. These very recent images prove them wrong.

Idealistic students have now come to believe that I agreed to turn the lights off forever. They counterattack against the darkness. They flash the Peppertine seal—its brightly lit beams of heavenly light emanating from the cross—on their computer websites, their coffee mugs and their T-shirts. In 1972 I commissioned Bill Henegar to create the official university seal. “The radiating lines from the Theme Tower,” explained Henegar, “were not intended to symbolize the spirituality of the physical tower itself but the spiritual influence of the Peppertine people.”¹⁶ The Peppertine people now prick the press to produce tower hogwash. “In fact,” said President Andrew K. Benton, “student efforts to light the cross pop up about every three months.”¹⁷

After 40 years of marriage, the Malibu community accords its university high respect. It was not always so. Peppertine was not invited to town by boosters building a bigger Malibu. Peppertine certainly enjoyed, from the earliest hour, the brilliant support of Malibu pioneers Judge John J. Merrick, Frank Morgan Sr., Pierce Sherman, Jack Carrodi, Reverend Walter Gerber, James Praino, Dr. Herbert Snow and others. But, except for one exclusive family’s land gift, Peppertine arrived uninvited and under widespread suspicion. “The values and character of the campus do not mesh that well with those of the community,” concluded the academic observers of the day. Since the days of silent movies, Malibu meant serenity, privacy, no more cars on the highway, and no more construction in the hills. Malibuites threw no Peppertine welcoming party. When they saw what we were up to, suspicion turned to resistance. They saw bulldozing of coastal land, decapitation of ocean hills, dynamiting of rock and soil, obliteration of trails for hiking and riding. They saw, where mountains stood sentinel for centuries, sudden open spaces being filled with man-made things. The final offense was the asphalt flowing to cover the ugly cuts so cars could claim the hills.

For ecologically traumatized Malibuites, the tower added to the environmental war a battle of “political correctness.” Since 1954 the San Diego city council has been in and out of federal court to save the 43-foot cross atop Mt. Soledad. In 2004 the Los Angeles County board of supervisors abandoned the gold cross that adorned the county’s seal for a half century. In 2006 the president of William and Mary College caught holy hades for diminishing the place of the chapel cross “out of respect for our many students who are Jews, Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists.” The Christian students and alumni told him “to put it back where it belongs.” So it goes for the emblem of suffering and shame.¹⁷

Pereira did, indeed, come up “with something softer, something symbolic,” as he said. But it failed to placate his “friends in the Colony.” They

first understood its full size, shape and symbolism on March 4, 1972, when Peppertine had to first go public before the Regional Planning Commission in Long Beach. We did our homework and, on an 11-0 favorable vote, we proceeded on to the county supervisors’ Friday public meeting to pick up the permit. We anticipated, of course, the usual Peppertine 3-2 vote. That’s when some of Pereira’s Colony friends did, indeed, finally “go berserk.”

ALVIN KAUFER AND MARCA HELFRICK

It was a messy early-1970s open neighborhood fight. “Rumors still persist,” the *Graphic* awkwardly speculated, “that Barbra Streisand is to blame for complaining about the lights.”¹⁸ Finally, in 2006, the *Los Angeles Times* got on track. It correctly commemorated Alvin S. Kaufers as “the prominent Malibu attorney who spearheaded the original fight against the theme tower in the 1970s.”¹⁹

Kaufers took up the fight “because of the offense to a substantial number of Malibu residents of a big cross looking out over the coastline.” Kaufers candidly confessed to the *Graphic*: “I don’t object to the cross symbol itself. I don’t mind the small cross on the hill across the street between Webster School and Our Lady of Malibu church. But this large cross out on the campus hill on the big tower will be a real serious imposition for some people.”²⁰

Kaufers strengthened his hand by recruiting community leader Marca Helfrick to serve as co-chair of the organization to defeat the tower. Marca, president of the Malibu Homeowners’ Association, had been my personal friend. “Helfrick’s homeowners’ group,” reported the *Graphic*, “had worked closely as Dr. Banowsky’s advisory council.”²¹

For the tower fight Marca defected to Kaufers. The separate reasons these two leaders listed for opposing the tower mirrored the two community complaints. For Kaufers, a Jewish Democrat, it was the cross, as we have seen. For Helfrick, a Protestant Republican, it was aesthetic. “The tower was out of context with the surrounding countryside,” she grumbled to the *Graphic*. “The tower was supposed to be ‘nested in the hills,’ not jutting out from them!”²²

MALIBU LEADER ZIFFREN

Paul Ziffren of Ziffren and Ziffren, a downtown Los Angeles firm, was another unique community leader. Paul, my Malibu-Colony Jewish friend, kept me informed on community activities and attitudes. Prior to the incorporation of the city of Malibu, the Malibu Chamber of Commerce was the highest civic authority. Paul and I were fellow directors. We bonded locally but

also filled similar political positions nationally. Paul was the Democratic National Committeeman from California. I was the Republican National Committeeman from California.

Paul's wife, Mickey, and Gay were close friends. All four of us traveled together as guests of Israel for ten days in the Holy Land. When Republican patron Asa Call died, Democrat patron Paul served as a pallbearer. "Dear Paul," I scribbled in a note, "Seeing you as Asa's pallbearer reminded me again how much you constantly do to break down religious and political barriers. Sincerely, Bill."

On weekends, Paul and I walked and talked along the Colony beach. "Bill," he warned me with every huffing, sandy step, "there's a growing group going public against the tower. They're searching for some sympathetic state judge to hear their case and grant a temporary restraining order to halt construction." Thanks to Paul Ziffren's covert coaching, Pepperdine eased quietly out ahead of the restraining order, quickly secured the permit and immediately constructed the tower.

But that begs the question as to how Pepperdine achieved such political development dominance. How did Pepperdine so readily prevail against such formidable odds? How did Pepperdine surf through 36 months of unfettered regulatory freedom to build its Malibu campus without any denial or delay? The short answer is that for a miraculous four-year window of opportunity—1969 through 1972—Pepperdine formed a dynamic partnership with the building department of Los Angeles County. We had the law on our side.

MALIBU POLITICAL MAGIC

Pepperdine built its campus in a Malibu power vacuum. The coastal area had not yet been incorporated into a city. The "non-city" of Malibu was almost like an exciting taste of the old Wild West. Malibu had been "an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County" forever. Cityhood did not come until 1990; therefore, Pepperdine faced no municipal construction politics but, instead, looked only to Los Angeles County for essential approvals.

In addition to the local vacuum, Pepperdine's political fortunes doubled with the second California vacuum, created by the absence of any statewide coastline control. The newly created California Coastal Commission assumed environmental regulatory control of the campus a mere 60 days after the campus opened in 1972. Pepperdine built its campus in a governing gap without any interference from either the non-city-of-Malibu or the nonexistent California Coastal Commission. Built at the far edge of the county, above local but below state power, there were no municipal watchdogs

BEAUTIFUL AND BRIGHTLY LIT

The Cross Theme Tower holds the commanding position above the world-famous Malibu Movie Colony. The twinkling lights of the Colony Beach are seen on the right side of the tower.

and no California cops. The Malibu miracle was a miracle of unfettered construction freedom.

In the unincorporated Malibu area, construction of any kind was supervised by "the County of Los Angeles, Department of Building and Safety, Coleman W. Jenkins, Superintendent." Mr. Jenkins and his people facilitated Pepperdine's project, from start to finish, by approving permits and executing inspections without the advice or consent of anybody but their supervisory superiors. Construction codes in those pro-growth days tended to enable rather than restrict. "These county codes are enforced," as Jack Eiden put it, "by good-ole-boy-bureaucrats with little interest in preserving possums and none in protecting tree huggers."⁵⁹ Hard-hat conservative Democrats who ran construction in the county loved Pepperdine, and Pepperdine loved them. For 36 months, in a heavenly marriage, the county approved hundreds of separate Pepperdine permits one at a time and denied none.

The building department reported straight up to the powerful board of five elected Los Angeles County supervisors. Any construction controversy unsettled at the departmental level was simply bounced forward for resolution at the regular Friday public meeting of the supervisors. Approval of any contested issue required but three supervisory votes. During the months of Malibu campus construction, the building department officials had disagreed among themselves on but three minor construction issues. Those little issues were quickly approved by three-to-two supervisory votes. For all practical purposes, from 1968 through 1972, Pepperdine could build whatever it pleased, whenever it pleased.

SUPERVISOR KENNY HAHN

Pepperdine controlled the construction of its Malibu campus because of its unique influence with the Los Angeles County board of supervisors. A win took three votes and there was absolutely nothing nefarious about it. Three supervisors loved Pepperdine with passionate support. Warren Dorn, of the First Supervisorial District, was a Reagan Republican and Norvel Young's good friend for 40 years. My friend, Burton Chase, was a Reagan Republican who represented the Fourth District, including "the unincorporated area of Malibu."

The third guarantor of Pepperdine's Los Angeles County political power was a partisan Democrat. He automatically lined up with his two Democrat colleagues, Supervisor Bonelli and Supervisor Debs, to defeat beleaguered Republicans Chase and Dorn. He automatically lined up, that is, unless it was a Pepperdine vote. This moderate Democrat was the dear and faithful Pepperdine alumnus, Supervisor Kenneth H. Hahn. He always voted with

Chase and Dorn when it came to a concern for Pepperdine.⁶⁰ As Kenny's charismatic daughter Janice put it, "Daddy's the Pepperdine poster boy!"

Kenny Hahn grew up in the First Christian Church near Pepperdine's Los Angeles campus. His widowed mother, with seven sons, couldn't afford tuition. Kenny paid his way through Pepperdine raking leaves and cleaning toilets. After 1944 graduation and naval officer service, he returned to teach at Pepperdine. He was soon elected youngest city councilman in Los Angeles history. Then he was elected youngest supervisor in Los Angeles County history and served his mostly African-American Second Supervisorial District for 40 years. His brother, Gordon, and daughter, Janice, also served on the city council. His son, James K. Hahn, with undergraduate and law degrees from Pepperdine, served from 2000 to 2005 as the mayor of Los Angeles. The whole Hahn family, always at the heart of Los Angeles public service, was also at the heart of the Malibu miracle.

Interestingly, Pepperdine's fortuitous partnership with Los Angeles County was forged in the friendship of two of the miracle's main men—Kenneth H. Hahn and Frank Roger Seaver. Astonishingly, Mr. Seaver preceded Mr. Hahn as an elected Los Angeles County supervisor by half a century. At the age of 29 in 1912, Frank was elected to the county office Kenny now held. Frank Seaver was now Kenny Hahn's most fabled constituent and the two former naval officers grew close.

"Back at Pomona College," reminisced Frank in 1960, "the great Theodore Roosevelt spoke on campus. He inspired me to try for a career in politics. Well, I tried. I ran for the state legislature. I was defeated. Then I ran for the Board of Freeholders of Los Angeles County, what we now call the supervisors. I was elected. We drafted the county charter. It's still in use today and amended very little."⁶¹

In 1958 Kenny appointed Frank Seaver, the lone surviving Los Angeles County founder, to lead the Citizens' Charter Revision Committee. After meeting eight months with no charter changes, the committee commended Frank's founding authorship and adjourned. Four years later in 1962, on the county's fiftieth anniversary, Hahn honored Mr. and Mrs. Seaver with a caravan of vintage 1912 open cars touring from the Seaver home at Chester Place to the Los Angeles County Hall of Administration. Kenny soon encouraged Frank to make his first modest Pepperdine gift. "Kenny's responsible for Mr. Seaver's early interest," reported Archivist Smythe. "Kenny influenced him to remember Pepperdine modestly in his 1964 will. That later helped to inspire Mrs. Seaver to give her entire fortune."⁶² At the Malibu ceremony to commence construction in April of 1971, Supervisor Hahn, along with pioneering space scientist Wernher von Braun, was a principal speaker.

Even with Kenny in Pepperdine's corner, the Cross Theme Tower fight turned ugly. On those three previously contested building permits Pepperdine played the Hahn trump card three straight times, three biting defections from his Democrat duty that angered many Malibuites. "This time," warned friend Ziffren, "they'll make Hahn eat his trump card. They plan to bypass Hahn and the county board altogether and go into state court for a temporary restraining order. They want to halt construction and buy precious time to beat the tower permanently."²²

A temporary restraining order was the silver bullet Pepperdine dreaded. Relatively easy to obtain, it halted work while lawyers scrambled for a permanent injunction. An injunction would require Pepperdine to spend months, if not years, overcoming an avalanche of brand-new environmental laws.

It was time for political diplomacy. On Monday, May 15, 1972, Norvel Young and I picked up Pepperdine Spanish professor Bill Stivers. The three of us drove to downtown Los Angeles for a meeting in Supervisor Hahn's office. Bill Stivers, Kenny's best friend, served from 1952 to 1962 as Kenny's chief deputy. Bill knew where the bodies were buried. If Norvel and I expected a difficult meeting with Kenny we took Bill with us. Harry Marlow, another proud Pepperdine product, who replaced Stivers as Hahn's chief deputy, escorted us into the inner office. Ever-ebullient Supervisor Hahn sat all us old Pepperdiners down around his conference table to plan Theme Tower strategy.

"Kenny, we've got to get our tower built before our opponents can talk some friendly judge into giving them a restraining order," I opened. "And we're down now to a few days."

"Well, Bill, I can call Warren and Burton today and nail down three votes for the tower on Friday's agenda," replied Kenny. "But obviously, that would be a big tactical mistake. When we approve it the Malibu people will see it and shoot and kill it before you guys can get it built. You say it's a fast job? Great. This is one of the very fastest jobs when we must both simultaneously approve it while also building it. So just how soon can you boys start?"

"Kenny, we're building it right now!" I blurted. "At this very moment, the total prefabrication is being finished out at the Riverside Steel Company. Next week we're trucking all of the parts and pieces to Malibu after midnight. The prefabrication will be screened from passers-by. It will be stowed on Seaver Drive as it bends through Winter Canyon behind the tower hill. The parts and pieces will be assembled on the ground into 12 sections. The sections will go up fast, in one day, one section bolted on top of another all the way to the very top. In five days it'll be covered with a thick masonry finish and look just like all of Pereira's other buildings only be hollow inside."

"You don't mean it!" Kenny said, shaking his head admiringly.

"Yeah, we do mean it, Kenny!" affirmed Norvel. "It's Pereira's ingeniously lightweight design, real strong, maintenance free and absolutely beautiful. Most crucially, it'll go up real fast."

"Well then," enthused Kenny, "let's get it up!"

"To get out ahead of the restraining order," I revealed, "we've got to go next weekend. Kenny, can you put the Theme Tower on the supervisors' agenda a week from Friday? If so, at midnight on that very same Friday we'll truck the prefabrication from Riverside to Malibu and work all weekend under floodlights to send it up 125 feet. Once the frame's up we'll perfect the tile, the masonry and the lighting at leisure."

"OK, boys," concluded Kenny with a broad smile and slap of the conference table. "It's a done deal!"

NO LIGHTS OR LITIGATION

As Norvel Young and Bill Stivers headed for the door, I lingered for a final favor. "Kenny, I'm sorry but I have a shocker for you. We can't erect the tower until we can first excavate and pour several tons of concrete to install the underground foundation. It must go down 20 feet deep before we can move the steel on top of it. But, Kenny," I said, gulping hard, "we've got no foundation permit. We didn't want to start a war by advertising a request for the foundation permit on your public agenda. The foundation permit is now set for your agenda a week from Friday, right alongside the tower permit itself. But, obviously, we can't wait that long to lay the foundation. Kenny, we've got to start digging it today."

"No problem, Bill," Kenny replied. "Go right ahead. The supervisors often initiate big projects with 'foundation only' permits when the building itself must yet be permitted. I'll file the paperwork and nobody'll notice 'til the tower goes up. By then you'll have in hand both of your legal permits that the board will approve a week from Friday, one for the foundation and one for the tower."

The foundation went down quickly on Wednesday. On Friday, May 26, 1972, by two separate three-to-two votes, the supervisors approved both the foundation installation and the tower construction. Assembly and erection of the fabrication went without a hitch. Climaxing a tranquil Malibu weekend, Monday's sun rose over the Santa Monica Mountains at 6:47 a.m., illuminating the prefabricated steel. Standing in stark 125-foot-tall nakedness, as Pereira predicted, it did roughly resemble a poor man's Eiffel Tower.

MALIBU COMMUNITY SHOWDOWN

The phone woke Gay and me at 5:00 a.m. Monday morning. Paul Ziffren was up early to warn us that our neighbors, with steel in their faces, plotted maximum revenge. "Bill, they'll be filing the first lawsuit against you today," he said. "They're demanding the dismantling of the steel fabrication, charging it was bootlegged into Malibu illegally over the weekend to evade appropriate governmental jurisdiction. This is Monday, Bill. It's possible they'll have a temporary restraining order by Friday. You'll countersue, of course, but it'll take six months to get your campus back on track, if ever."

Paul paused. The phone fell silent. I felt sick. I could picture on Pepperdine's main hill an ugly unfinished frame, rusting for months—or years—in shameful remembrance of bitter defeat. "OK, Paul, you've got my attention. Tell me what to do," I answered.

"Meet with them, Bill," Paul shot back. "Some of these people may not like you, but they respect you. There's nothing like talking. Get together with the whole group, face-to-face, as soon as possible."

"Paul," I pushed back. "When can 'as soon as possible' be?"

"Three days," he replied. "I'll get a big crowd together for a community meeting at the Malibu Civic Center at 7:30 Wednesday evening. You and I can meet Wednesday afternoon to prepare."

When Wednesday came, Paul and I talked for two hours. His promotion and organization of the meeting had gone well and he expected a big crowd. He described some key personalities expected to attend and anticipated for me some of their key questions. It was then, for the first time, that the question of lights on the cross was put forth. Paul spent ten minutes telling me to get ready to make a quick deal with the community to keep the lights turned off in the cross at night, "for a while." It didn't sound like a big deal. "OK, Paul," I agreed as we walked together across the Brock House bridge. "I'll see you down below at the Civic Center in a couple hours."

With neither notes nor aides, I went alone to the meeting. A hundred people filled the room, for two hours of sometimes harsh criticism and many questions. Mostly, I just listened. Finally, from the far-right corner came the quintessential question for which Paul had prepared me.

"President Banowsky, if we were willing to drop litigation would you be willing not to light the cross at night?"

I paused. I looked around. There were no reporters or tape recorders. No recording secretary compiled any minutes or notes of the meeting. I put nothing in writing before, during or after the meeting. All discussion was purely extemporaneous, off-the-cuff, no notes, nothing. No media stories were ever filed about anything with respect to that meeting.

So there I stood in front of our community, thinking: "He who hesitates is lost." I stood there knowing that if we slowed construction we would be stopped. If we were stopped we might never get started again. On the other hand, we could build the tower with my personal decision "not to light it at night during my presidency." I felt called to get the tower built—not to get it lit. I didn't have the authority to create long-term policy and I didn't consult the board. I called no faculty meeting. "My successors," I naively imagined, "could freely light the cross later."

"Yes!" I answered loudly. "I agree not to light the cross at night *during my presidency.*"

The meeting was instantly over; it was a wise and safe way to conclude bitter community controversy and construct the tower. "Banowsky's promise," the *Graphic* reported, "satisfied the surrounding property owners who had complained that the cross was a religious imposition to the people who live here."²³ The property owners were satisfied. The lights were not lit. Both armies retreated from the battlefield. All guns fell silent except for occasional potshots exchanged with Pepperdine students. As mute evidence that the lights were not forever extinguished, Pepperdine built its tower with the Pereira-designed lighting system intact. The Morrow Meadows Corporation won the electrical bid and installed the lights.

According to the university's public information office, the tower lights have been turned on from time to time at the pleasure of the administration. "Some years after the building of the tower," said Lyric Hassler, Pepperdine senior public relations advisor, "and after senior administration of the university had changed around a bit, and new individuals took on new posts, the university began to light the tower."²⁴ If so, it soon went dark again but Hassler insists it has been lit.

ALVIN AND MARCA EVER AFTER

"The enthusiasm of students is sweet, it is thoughtful and it reflects the great joy of my work. But should we light the tower?" President Benton probes with consummate balance. "I still don't know. Is our message conveyed clearer? I don't think it takes a neon-lit cross to strengthen our outreach."²⁵

Frankly, President Benton, I don't think so either. Sensitivities in our neighborhood matter more than lights on our campus. After all these years I argue not that the cross *should* be lit, only that it *could* be lit.

Do you remember Alvin Kaufner and Marca Helfrick, who met in 1972 when they partnered to oppose the tower? Well, guess what? They married at the ocean a year later in 1973, and lived in Malibu bliss for 30 years, until

Alvin's 2005 death. About the fight, the classy Marca conceded to the campus newspaper, "I don't think I'd do all that over again."

I'm tempted to answer, "Yes, Marca. I don't think I'd do all that over again either." But then, again, "I really wanted it there at the time," as I told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1976. "I wanted people to know the kind of place this is."²⁶



1. Matthew 11:6; Luke 7:23; Romans 9:33; 1 Corinthians 1:23; Galatians 5:11.
2. Paul Ziffren, personal letter to the author, June 16, 1972. The Banowsky Papers.
3. No media or other authorities have called once to question me about the veracity of that statement that has stood unchallenged. My promise was limited to my presidency period.
4. Kaitlin Flynn, personal interview with the author, January 6, 2008. The Banowsky Papers.
5. Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV).
6. William L. Pereira, personal memorandum to the author, March 14, 1971. The Banowsky Papers.
7. Bill Henegar and Jerry Rushford, *Forever Young: The Life and Times of M. Norvel Young and Helen M. Young* (Nashville: 21st Century Christian, 1999), 206.
8. Lynn Doan, *Los Angeles Times*, July 1, 2006, 12.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Bill Henegar, personal letter to the author, February 1, 2009. The Banowsky Papers.
11. Lynn Doan, *Los Angeles Times*, July 1, 2006, 12.
12. George S. Gibson, *National Review*, October 24, 2006, 21.
13. Kaitlin Flynn, "Tower Remains Dark; Debate Persists," *Pepperdine Graphic*, April 2, 1973, 1.
14. Chris Parker, "Theme Tower Controversy Cools," *Pepperdine Graphic*, April 2, 1973, 1.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. William S. Banowsky, personal letter to Paul Ziffren, July 19, 1978. The Banowsky Papers.
18. Jack Eiden, *The Eiden Papers*, March 20, 1973. The Banowsky Papers.
19. Pepperdine conferred an honorary doctor of laws degree on Hahn on October 1, 1971. Kenneth Hahn served as a Los Angeles County supervisor for 40 years, from 1952 until 1992. He died October 12, 1997. Burton W. Chase served from 1953 until 1973 and Warren M. Dorn served from 1956 until 1973. Chase was replaced by James A. Heaps and Dorn by Baxter Ward. "Los Angeles Board of Supervisors," Wikipedia Web site, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Angeles_County_Board_of_Supervisors (accessed September 20, 2009).
20. Jane Werner Watson, *The Seaver Story*, (Claremont, CA: Pomona College Press, 1960), 21-22.
21. James Smythe, personal interview with the author, August 5, 2005. The Banowsky Papers.
22. See note 2 above.
23. See note 15 above.
24. Lyric Hassler, e-mail to Kaitlin Flynn, March 4, 2007.
25. See note 8 above.
26. Bill Trombley, "Pepperdine Torn by Dissension," *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1976, 12.

THE MALIBU SEWER WARS

"The Coastal Commission declared the appeal to reverse Pepperdine's sewer permit 'untimely and void' by 15 minutes. That kept the county from closing the campus as 'a health hazard.'"

JOSEPH L. BENTLEY

Attorney, Latham and Watkins, 1972



SOUNDS OF SILENCE

Surveying Seaver College, from the Brock House deck, Blanche and Bill enjoy a quiet Malibu sunset. They may also be saying a little prayer that the sewage disposal crisis will not close the campus.

After the Cross Theme Tower controversy, Pepperdine faced one final Malibu campus construction fight. But it was a big one.

Campus completion got caught in the crossfire of the 100-year war to keep a public sewer system of any kind whatsoever out of Malibu forever!

"NO SEWER HERE!"

Today, Malibu is probably the most sophisticated place left on the planet without any public sewage disposal system, and that's no accident. A century of vigilance guaranteed it. Malibuites were among America's earliest environmentalists. Fifty years before ecologists became ubiquitous, Malibuites were national no-growth leaders. The 1950s popularized handwritten Pacific Coast Highway signs from Santa Monica to Oxnard proclaiming: *Small is Beautiful! Less is More! Not in My Backyard! No Sewer Here!*

By the late 1960s, when Pepperdine built its campus, "prohibition of a Malibu public sewer had become a left-coast extreme but highly effective anti-development strategy." The entrenched anti-development policy required residences and businesses along the 27-mile Malibu coast-line to install private cesspools or septic tanks. It was a desperate strategy. Septic tanks clogged, cesspools overflowed, smelly trucks pumping thousands of toilets hindered highway traffic. Nonetheless, Malibuites preferred the disadvantages of no public sewer to the disasters of population growth, construction dust or highway traffic. The sewer wars continue today. In 2009, the California Coastal Commission filed suit to coerce the city of Malibu to construct a public sewer. This will be a ten-year battle. But, way back in the late 1960s, what would Pepperdine possibly do to install a campus sewer system by September 6, 1972?

We have seen, in 1968, the site-selection fight that broke out over the exorbitant cost of Malibu development, with Norvel and me on one side and the board of trustees on the other. The monumental site-preparation

costs panicked the trustees into voting unanimously to reject the Adamson offer of Malibu land. "The 15 members of the board of trustees finally met to decide the future direction of undergraduate study at Pepperdine. After much discussion," recorded Henegar and Rushford, "they decided to decline the offer of the Malibu property." In addition to the absence of any sewer, trustees believed that "the College simply did not have the money to invest in moving the thousands of tons of earth to build on the hillsides."³³

Norvel and I worked with the board to raise \$3 million. We captured the Malibu land and readily connected the emerging campus to gas, water and electricity. Fresh water, for instance, went in wonderfully. William L. Pereira designed, and Chicago Bridge and Iron Company built, a two-million-gallon reservoir atop the highest campus mountain. Fresh water was continuously pumped up from the coast highway. It kept the reservoir full and it flowed down, under perfect pressure, to serve the entire campus. The water solution proved perfect. Any sewer solution seemed hopeless.

KENNY TO THE RESCUE

In May 1971, Norvel and I sought sewer counsel from Los Angeles County supervisor Kenneth H. Hahn. As earlier stated, for all sensitive meetings Norvel and I included Kenny's best friend and former chief deputy, Bill Stivers.

"Kenny," I opened, as the four of us settled in around his conference table. "After all our Malibu progress we've run into an insurmountable problem. We have no sewer and no way to get one. School opens in less than a year. We'll never get a certificate of occupancy. We can't flush our commodes. Kenny, tell us what to do."

"OK, boys," Kenny consoled. "The county's way ahead of you. We're announcing our modern Malibu sewer system next month. Congratulations, your timing's perfect!" Norvel, Bill Stivers and I floated out of Kenny's office on sewer cloud number nine. But within weeks came the official public announcement: "To solve the sewer problem Los Angeles County will construct a modern sewage disposal system throughout all of Malibu. The bonds to authorize funds for sewer construction will require a majority vote of Malibu residents on election day, November 4, 1971."³⁴

Pepperdine was ecstatic. The public sewer, perfectly timed to solve the last problem, was the answer to Pepperdine prayers. Then came the election-day shock. The Malibu voters, in no mood to answer Pepperdine's prayers, buried the sewer referendum in a landslide. That was only shock number one. "No Sewer Here" had triumphed once again.

Pepperdine turned, desperately, to plan two.

TRUCKING TO TAPIA

Prior to pinning all its hope on the public referendum, Pepperdine agreed to joint-venture, if necessary, a shared private sewer system with the adjacent housing developer, Alcoa. The Alcoa option suddenly accelerated as Pepperdine shifted its sewer hopes from politics to free enterprise. Then came shock number two. Three weeks following the failed public referendum Alcoa horrified Pepperdine by abruptly withdrawing from the joint-venture sewer agreement. Alcoa's planned custom houses, also facing fierce community opposition, were selling slowly. "We have decided to wait a little longer on our shared sewer system," tersely wrote Alcoa's lawyer.³⁵ But Pepperdine couldn't wait and, therefore, turned to plan three.

Diving deeply into Malibu's hallowed tradition, for two months we wrestled with the draconian solution of constructing 26 scattered septic tanks to serve separate campus bathrooms and kitchens. The more we examined that option the more bizarre it grew. We couldn't build and pump and truck sewage from 26 scattered septic tanks in constant need of repair. What, then, could we do? We turned to plan four.

Robert Wood, the young Topodynamics architect and engineer on our construction team of twelve, came up with the sewer solution. If Pepperdine couldn't build its own system, Wood shrewdly sensed, it could rent some space on some existing Los Angeles County system. Wood surveyed the vicinity. He quickly found his answer. It was a large public facility only five miles away at Tapia Park.

The Tapia Treatment Plant of Las Virgenes Water District was situated near the top of the Santa Monica Mountains sloping eastward. It served, principally, the Conejo Valley cities of Agoura and Calabasas. This location positioned Tapia Treatment Plant to be fed and fueled by a large lake formed from five converging creeks. The ultra-modern plant was designed to transform all raw sewage into "virtually pure reclaimed effluent water."³⁶

Guided by Supervisor Hahn, with assistance from Supervisor Burton Chase whose district included Tapia Plant, Bob Wood and I began serious sessions with county sewer chiefs and the Tapia plant manager. We ended up with an expensive public-private deal enabled only by the personal leadership of Supervisor Chase and Supervisor Hahn.

The Tapia Plant agreed to receive by truck, and to treat by the ton, all Malibu campus sewage. Pepperdine agreed to pay a pricy monthly tonnage fee; we also agreed to return all of the reclaimed effluent back down to the campus. "For every one gallon of sewage trucked from Pepperdine to Tapia one gallon of treated effluent will be trucked from Tapia to Pepperdine,"

read the agreement.⁷ The county stringently rationed the amount of effluent allowed to flow from the Tapia Plant down Malibu Creek past Pepperdine into the Pacific Ocean at the Malibu Lagoon and Surfrider Beach.

RECLAIMED EFFLUENT

The political issue had little to do with treating raw sewage and everything to do with disposing of wastewater. Although Tapia's reclaimed water was touted as "virtually pure," at the end of its short ride down the mountain were the precious beaches of the Pacific. Agoura and Calabasas already generated the maximum amount of reclaimed water permitted by the county to flow down Malibu Creek. Where else could Pepperdine's treated tertiary go?

When the Pepperdine to Tapia sewer deal went public, it drew fire from the Colony big guns. Detractors attacked the desperate solution at its weakest point. They blasted, not the amount of sewage to be treated, but the amount of wastewater to be generated. "You're sure not going to send your wastewater down Malibu Creek," cried the Colony. "So, just where else do you guys plan to put it?" The only possible Pepperdine solution to the effluent quandary boiled down to trucking every drop of reclaimed water back down to campus.

We struggled with the idea of a two-way, ten-mile round-trip trucking solution. Trucks transporting sewage five miles up would be cleaned, refilled and turned around to carry effluent five miles back down. That mandated acquisition of a fleet of sewer trucks and construction of a high-tech collection and pumping station. After three months, Pepperdine abandoned the sewer trucking option as unsanitary, if not insane. But from frustration sprang salvation. Once again, Pepperdine's savior was burr-headed Bob Wood. The Topodynamics leader showed us plan five.

"DON'T TRUCK! PUMP!"

"Bill," Bob joyfully phoned. "I've got great news. I've been talking to the Tapia people. They say we were wise to abandon the trucking plan. But you know what they said we should do?" I could almost see Bob's eyes lighting up. But I had no idea what the Tapia people said we should do.

"Well," Bob enlightened me, "they said we should build our own pipeline. They said that we could just pump all of our sewage up to Tapia!"

To make a long story short, that's what Pepperdine did. But if trucking was a nightmare, pumping was no piece of cake. Pushing and twisting raw sewage 24 hours a day, seven days a week, five winding miles uphill along

a rugged, heavily traveled and environmentally scrutinized public road produced unimagined headaches.

Headache number one was the expensive installation of two six-inch-diameter pipelines, side by side in the ditch along five miles of Malibu Canyon Road. Kirst Construction Company won the bid and built the pipelines. Initiating down at the campus, the outgoing delivery pipeline pushed sewage up to Tapia. The incoming return pipeline flushed it back down to campus, in the form of reclaimed effluent.

The Kirst crews crawled on their bellies for two months, in narrow ditches only inches from endless Malibu Canyon traffic. They cut through rock, excavated the ditch and installed the pipelines. They backfilled and landscaped the trenches according to county code. Kirst connected Pepperdine to Tapia and commodes could finally be flushed.

Headache number two pounded down on the campus end of the line. Pepperdine was required to install an expensive high-tech comminutor. Ugly, smelly and loud, it was a collection tank and pumping station boasting a 100,000 gallons-per-day capacity. McKeand Mechanical Company erected it at the bottom of the campus, near the highway. Campus waste drained down, mostly by gravity flow, into the high-intensity comminutor. It came out pulverized into a slurry of watery particles.

Pumping raw sewage through fragile pipelines in public places produced problems. Blockages, leakages and breakdowns occurred all around the circular system. That triggered the emergency alarm. The emergency alarm system diverted sewage out of the pipeline into the campus emergency holding tank to be hauled to Tapia by a half dozen emergency trucks. It was a tedious business with many emergencies. Sewer officials cautioned constantly against "a drop escaping the pipeline and leaking down through Malibu canyon into the ocean."⁸

Headache number three was that the trucking solution demanded the construction of a large campus holding lake. Jack Eiden, the Moran Company construction foreman, considered the daily effluent a daily burden. "During the heavy fall rains," Eiden wrote, "we simply could not absorb Tapia's daily water delivery back down to the campus. Sometimes our effluent deficit reached one million gallons. Tapia had the draconian option of shutting off the sewage valve at their end of the line if we didn't keep the effluent valve open at our end of the line. It was touch and go."⁹

Right on most things, Eiden was wrong about the wastewater. That daily volume of reclaimed water forever filled the sparkling lake with Malibu miracle landscape blessings. We were planting scores of trees and irrigating hundreds of acres of flowers, plants and grass. We solved Eiden's overflow problem by creating, out in the meadow, a beautiful lake to manage

emergency rain collection along with enough water for seasonal firefighting and unlimited irrigation.

THE RESTRAINING ORDER

Kirst Construction Company launched pipeline construction April 15, 1972, and finished, four months later, August 15, 1972. On August 16, days before the first fall classes started, the Malibu sheriff served Pepperdine with a lawsuit. Filed in state court by the Malibu Homeowners' Association, it condemned "the slapdash Pepperdine sewer connection to Tapia as illegal, unsanitary and contrary to Los Angeles County public health codes." It called for "a temporary restraining order" to halt construction. It named as co-defendants Pepperdine, the Los Angeles County departments of building and sanitation and the five elected county supervisors in "a conspiracy to circumvent the forthcoming California Coastal Commission."¹⁰

The November 3, 1972, Proposition 20 vote to empower the new commission was only 60 days away. If the state court anticipated that victory, and deferred any action on the restraining order, county supervisors would transfer final action on the legality of the Tapia sewer connection over to the new state commission.

The day for school to open, Wednesday, September 6, 1972, neared. Pepperdine was on pins and needles.¹¹ We held our breath, hired top lawyers and "prayed without ceasing" that the county supervisors, the state court and the California Coastal Commission would keep the Tapia sewer connection and Pepperdine classes open.

During these tense hours, Pepperdine raced toward final inspection and receipt of the certificate of occupancy. The big day fell on Labor Day, Monday, September 4, 1972. The makeshift sewer was the toughest but certainly not the only test. During the countdown Pepperdine and the county cross-checked a list of 50 problematic items, large and small. In the final days, finishing touches were applied to the Cross Theme Tower and to student housing. In the final hours the campus infrastructure of paved roads, walkways and parking lots was barely completed.

Sully Miller Company won the infrastructure contract to finish grade and pave the roads, sidewalks and parking lots. Unfortunately, an unrealistic bid put the Sully Miller men under intense time pressure and their frenzied reaction provoked others. Two additional companies labored alongside to complete underground gas and electric connections. In the last days our aggressive workers above interfered with those immobilized below. During the last week Sully Miller machines spewed concrete and asphalt 24 hours

a day, up and down the new mountain streets and out over the parking lots.¹² Throughout the long last night Provost Hudson rode herd on men and machines to assure completion of the central parking lot mere minutes before final inspection.¹³

THE FINAL INSPECTION

At 8:00 a. m., five of us who worked together for three years met as a group for the last time. Jerry Hudson, Jack Eiden and I represented Pepperdine. Donald McAdams and Edward Thompson represented the upper echelon of Los Angeles County public professionalism that had given Pepperdine unstinting support. McAdams supervised the Malibu branch of the Los Angeles County Department of Building and Safety. Thompson was fire marshal of the Los Angeles County Fire Department in Malibu. Both agencies had to approve Pepperdine's certificate of occupancy. For two casual hours, the five of us walked every floor of every building. We enjoyed another hour in a van touring paved streets and lots. All construction trailers banished, we sat in final summit around a polished conference table in Tyler Campus Center. Don McAdams laid out on the table the official Los Angeles County document. He ceremoniously signed and dated it, 11:45 a. m., September 4, 1972.

"Congratulations gentlemen, here's your certificate of occupancy!" beamed McAdams, handing it to me. I passed it to Jerry. He handed it to Jack and Jack put it in his briefcase. It was over and we were in.

"Based on my say-so," expanded McAdams, "Ed Thompson's fire department has also signed off. Congratulations, boys, you're in and you're legal."

The five of us strolled from Tyler Center onto the central plaza of Seaver College. We slowly ascended the broad concrete stairs leading up to the sparkling circular fountain adorning what is now the Mullin Town Square. In the parking lot scores of students scurried with suitcases to new dorm rooms. Surveying the hectic parking lot, I sensed failure to build a high-rise parking structure to serve the whole central area would eventually be a master-plan mistake.

Around the fountain frolicked a dozen magnetic young freshmen in the soft morning sun. All of them ignored five old suits in front of Elkins Auditorium, huddled together under the big coral tree transplanted ten days earlier.

"These kids think you guys are their new teachers," said Hudson with a grin.

"Well, they're sure bright-looking kids," Eiden observed admiringly.

"Yeah, but they look like high-school kids," McAdams said. "Well, that's what they were 'til today," responded Hudson. "But boys with short haircuts and girls in skirts? Sure not what you see around Malibu," pondered Thompson.

"Well," I said gratefully, "from here on out Pepperdine kids and Malibu will seem synonymous."

"HARMONIC CONVERGENCE"

"A harmonic convergence created the Malibu campus," concluded Norman Cousins.¹⁴ Was the *Saturday Review* editor correct? If so, the convergence included the divine harmony of Norvel and me; of the George Evans-inspired Adamson gift; of Blanche and Richard giving together the Seaver fortune; of Pereira's majestic design; of Los Angeles County construction jurisdiction; of the Kenny Hahn trump card; and of the teamwork of academicians and builders. But none of that would have mattered without the miraculous environmental timing.

Pepperdine, less than a half step ahead of California's ecological movement, barely escaped an avalanche of antidevelopment regulation that would have killed the campus. The Malibu campus opened 60 days before the California Coastal Commission was empowered to prohibit it forever. With less red tape than is now required to plant a tree, Pepperdine opened its Malibu campus without filing any California environmental document.

"Over the centuries," I often perorated, "all will see that no better use could have been made of these acres than to become the home of a private university." It is gratifying to know that, over and over, Pepperdine's Malibu campus has been voted most beautiful in America by students in both formal and informal polls.

But just when one thinks it's over, it's only begun. Pepperdine opened its campus, but it had not gotten out of the sewer woods. The tenuous Tapia connection continued under intense litigation. The state court could conceivably condemn it as illegal and close down the campus.

"Don," I said, putting the question to the county's McAdams. "We're worried about that restraining order. We're also worried that with the California Coastal Commission sure to win, they could just come in, condemn our sewer and close the campus."

"That'll all sort itself out," McAdams reassured. "It was positive sign that the judge deferred action on the restraining order until after the passage of Proposition 20. Then the court will certainly transfer jurisdiction over Malibu construction from the county to the coastal commission."

Without waiting for Proposition 20, Pepperdine dodged another unanticipated statewide bullet. On September 18, 1972, the 13th day after campus opening and in preparation for the Proposition 20 victory, the California Supreme Court ruled preemptively to prohibit any developer from initiating any new coastal project before election day.¹⁵

"UNTIMELY AND VOID"

Just as anticipated, on November 6, 1972, the voters empowered the California Coastal Commission. The state court immediately transferred jurisdiction over the legality of the makeshift Pepperdine sewer solution to the new agency. The nine new commissioners held the power to close the campus as a health hazard. Providentially all nine commissioners were Republican friends of ours. They were freshly appointed by Governor Reagan. Mike Deaver, Ed Meese and Lyn Nofziger in the governor's office were especially helpful during the hearing process.

It was a two-round California Coastal Commission process. Round one was November 19, 1972. Pepperdine appeared in Long Beach before the commission's 11-member southern regional division. We won easy approval for the Tapia sewer connection on a ten-to-one vote.

Round two came ten days later, November 29, 1972, in Sacramento, this time before the full commission. Our opponents sent tough lawyers. But it was, ironically, on a legal technicality that Pepperdine prevailed. "The opponent's appeal," recorded historian White, "arrived at the state office fifteen minutes after the deadline and was declared 'Untimely and Void.'"¹⁶

"Untimely and Void" became the postscript for all efforts to defeat the Malibu miracle. After flushing uphill to Tapia for three years, Pepperdine and Alcoa finally joint-ventured, in 1975. We built an ultra-modern sewage disposal facility. The plant is situated on Malibu Country Estates at John Tyler Drive. But its big holding lake sits in the Pepperdine meadow, containing sufficient effluent to serve forever the 830 beautiful but thirsty Malibu acres.



1. *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, was written by E. F. Schumacher and published in 1973 by Harper and Row. Economist Schumacher borrowed the ecological phrase as the title for his philosophical book.
2. Jack Eiden, The Eiden Papers, April 22, 1971. The Banowsky Papers.
3. Bill Henegar and Jerry Rusinford, *Forever Young: The Life and Times of M. Norvel Young and Helen M. Young* (Nashville: 21st Century Christian, 1999), 193.
4. *Los Angeles County Bulletin*, July 2, 1971, 3. The Banowsky Papers.
5. Tobin T. Smithson, personal letter to Joseph L. Bentley, December 15, 1971. The Banowsky Papers.
6. *Los Angeles County Bulletin*, April 16, 1969, 2. The Banowsky Papers.

THE MALIBU MIRACLE

7. Eiden, The Eiden Papers, May 20, 1971. The Banowsky Papers.
8. *Ibid.*, July 22, 1971.
9. *Ibid.*, August 16, 1971.
10. Joseph L. Bentley, personal letter to the author, August 17, 1971. The Banowsky Papers.
11. Classes opened 8:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 6, 1972. At 8:30 a.m., the first faculty meeting was held in Tyler Campus Center fireside room. On Thursday, at 10:00 a.m., the first required chapel was conducted for all students in Elkins Auditorium.
12. Eiden, The Eiden Papers, August 26, 1971. "Sully Miller's comeuppance came when the late August Santa Ana winds lifted their headquarters trailer like a huge box kite, flipped it over, and pancaked it top down in the central parking lot. Dr. Banowsky had called them that arrogant company with a testicular hold on our campus completion. Dr. Banowsky was delighted." The Banowsky Papers.
13. Jerry Rushford, ed., *Crest of a Golden Wave: Pepperdine University, 1937-1987* (Malibu: Pepperdine University Press, 1987), 163.
14. Norman Cousins, personal letter to M. Norvel Young, January 24, 1975. The Banowsky Papers.
15. *Malibu Times*, September 25, 1972, 1.
16. Rushford, *Golden Wave*, 163. "The school was barely open when a series of legal developments occurred which, had they happened earlier, would have prevented, or at least seriously injured, the project. Only two weeks after operations began, the California Supreme Court issued a decision that could have delayed all building pending the preparation of lengthy environmental reports. The Los Angeles County General Plan adopted in 1973, could have adversely affected the building of the school if it had been adopted a few months earlier before the permits were issued. Certainly Proposition 20 creating the California Coastal Commission, exactly sixty days after the campus opened, would have halted all plans for the new campus had it come any earlier."