

A remembrance of UCSC past

Ex-Chancellor McHenry says the intimate atmosphere is gone

By STEVE SHENDER

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SANTA CRUZ — According to former UC Santa Cruz Chancellor Dean McHenry, UCSC might not produce a Kathy Sullivan today.

The intimate, interdisciplinary atmosphere which led to the 1973 Cowell College graduate's conversion from humanities to earth sciences and set her on the path to becoming the first American woman to walk in space barely exists anymore at the campus. UCSC's founding chancellor mourns the loss of that intimacy the way a father might ache for a prodigal child.

UC Santa Cruz isn't quite the place McHenry and former UC President Clark Kerr had in mind when they founded the campus in 1965.

UCSC, McHenry said, was supposed to be a collection of small colleges, modeled on England's Oxford and Cambridge and the best of America's liberal arts schools, where faculty members from all disciplines would mingle freely with each other and their students.

"We talked about having these islands of semi-autonomous colleges which would combine the intimacy of a small college with the resources of a large university," said McHenry. Instead, he said, UCSC has fallen prey to "narrow departmentalism."

"There are strict boundaries (between departments). People don't get into anybody else's preserve," said the university on a hill's first chancellor, who will join Cowell College Provost Emeritus Page Smith, Crown College Provost Emeritus Kenneth Thimann, and the Rev. Herbert Schmidt, former director of the Lutheran

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Campus Ministry, for a panel discussion Sunday about the "way USCS was supposed to be."

McHenry ascribes the rise of "departmentalism" at UCSC mainly to the severing of faculty members' economic ties to the campus' eight colleges. When UCSC was founded, professors' salaries were split 50-50 between the colleges and the faculty members' departments. Later, the departments assumed all of the salary burden. That move snapped faculty ties to the individual colleges, McHenry said.

"I always thought the faculty should be distributed evenly, with all disciplines represented in all the colleges," said McHenry. "Then sometime in the mid-'70s, the piano started to play and the musical chairs began."

"The faculty marched around and around and when they sat down they were in different chairs."

When the music stopped, McHenry said, the colleges were no longer heterogeneous, but divided by disciplines.

Other hard realities intruded on McHenry's and Kerr's original vision.

Declining enrollments, the penny-pinching ways of Gov. Brown, and a report that California was overloaded with engineering schools, combined to nip in the bud plans for curricular expansion at UCSC.

Plans to expand the university catalogue to include practically oriented

course offerings in engineering, business and medical sciences were put on hold, leaving UCSC with a truncated academic program.

"In the end, we got confined to letters and arts and sciences," said McHenry. "That was a big blow."

UCSC, currently trying to pick up where the hazards of finance and politics forced it to leave off in the mid- to late-'70s, has "nothing to be ashamed of," the former chancellor said.

"It's just that this is a lopsided institution academically, because we don't have the ballast of professional schools."

"If we had some applied fields," said McHenry, with a trace of wistfulness in his voice, "we wouldn't have nearly as much of the unanimity of thought in political matters."

While McHenry would like to see UCSC expand its academic reach, he doesn't necessarily want to see it grow in size.

Original plans for the UC Santa Cruz campus called for an eventual enrollment of 27,500 students. That was later scaled back to 15,000. "But there's nothing wrong with 7,000," McHenry said.

"A big enrollment doesn't necessarily make a good institution."

Can UCSC ever fully realize the vision McHenry and Kerr had for it 20 years ago?

Probably not.

But McHenry still harbors hopes that it might once more become the semi-col-

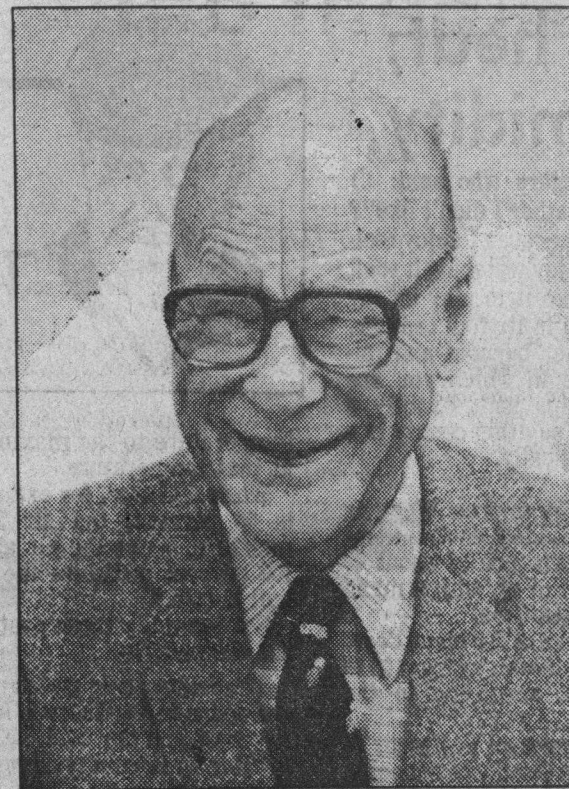
legial kind of place he left it when he retired 10 years ago. Then, he said, "college-taught" courses still accounted for about 20 percent of the campus' curriculum (as opposed to about 5 percent today).

"That would have been all right," he said. "I would have been happy if it had stayed that way."

McHenry, Smith, Schmidt and Thimann will talk at length about the way UCSC was and the way it ought to be at 5:30 p.m. Sunday at the First Congregational Church, 900 High St.

The panel discussion, which will be preceded by a reception at 4:30 p.m. and followed by a dinner at 7 p.m., will be moderated by UCSC Dean of Admissions Richard Moll.

Admission to the event is \$20 to the general public, and \$15 for seniors and full-time students. For more information and reservations, call the United Campus Christian Ministry at 426-6242 or 426-2010.



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