

TT Photo by Bob Lyon



Ashdown (right) lunching with friends

LOTS IN A NAME

Since he first blew into residence during the '38 hurricane, Prof. Avery Ashdown (Chemistry, Emeritus) has been "Mr. Graduate House." This June the synonym will become official. In a dedication ceremony planned for Alumni Day, Grad House will be renamed Ashdown House by request of the students.

In 1930 Princeton had the only campus residence for graduate students in the country. President Compton wanted to establish one here. Dr. Ashdown, a Greek scholar turned chemist, was then an instructor, and he was nominated as Master. He remembers that Dr. Compton told him about it the day before the Eastman Labs' dedication.

Dr. Ashdown himself lined up the first group of students -- 46 in all -- for Crafts, Nichols and Holman Houses, and in the fall of '33 graduate housing started on East Campus. By the following year, the buildings were filled. In the basement of Crafts, Dr. Ashdown found a room full of broken teapots and cast-offs which he got cleaned out and rigged with a kitchenette. He called it the "Buttery" after his grandmother's pantry in western New York state. Later a faculty visitor congratulated him on his apt choice of title; there was a Buttery at Oxford, also. Still presiding at Grad House Buttery hours, he serves snacks and -- witnesses say -- often does the dishes.

In 1937 MIT purchased the Riverbank Court Hotel, our present Grad House. Prof. Ashdown knew the manager pretty well, because grad students from the Chem. Eng. Practice School took rooms there yearly in January. He was instrumental in obtaining the building, and followed its renovation every step of the way. In particular he recalls the day when MIT took over. Everyone gathered down in the basement to watch the boilers gasp their last. The elevators weren't running. And the last resident to leave was a white-haired lady whom the porters carried downstairs in an armchair.

Grad House got underway with new furniture and equipment and over 400 residents. As

Master, Dr. Ashdown guided beginnings of graduate student government, athletics and social functions which continue today. He retired in '62 and moved to Bexley Hall. Before he left, the students commissioned Gardner Cox of Boston to paint his portrait (he remembers the 14 sittings with pleasure); it hangs in the Grad House Ashdown Lounge.

Dr. Ashdown is still a part of Grad House life. He's there for the breakfast club each morning at 7:30, and usually for lunch and dinner, which he often eats late with the crew.

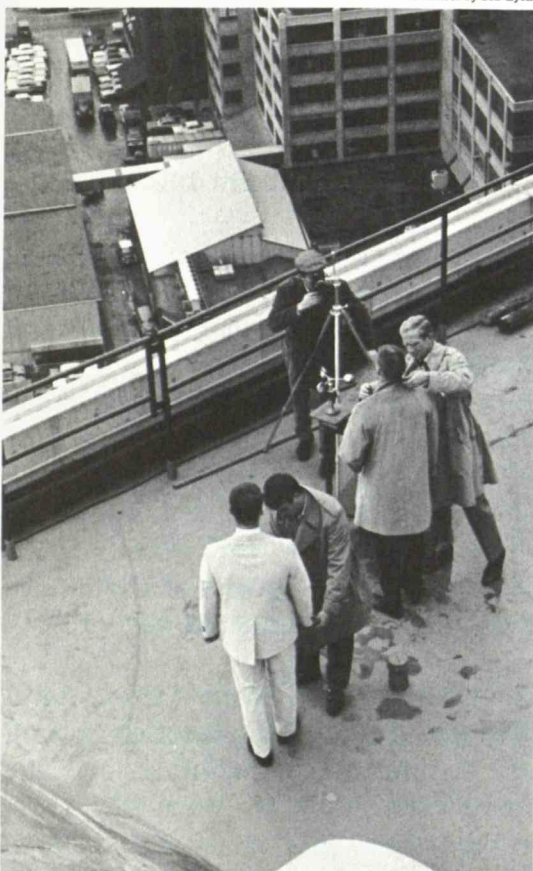
He carries with him a copy of Dr. Compton's statement to alumni in which he spoke of Graduate House as a place where students could live in a scholarly, cultured, friendly atmosphere. Thousands have, thanks to Avery Ashdown.

SELECTED SHORT SUBJECTS

Questionnaires were passed out at Open House. In the space for What did you miss that you wanted to see? one young lady wrote, "A boy named Mitch in the freshman class."

Certainly everyone else was here. Thousands swarmed through the buildings, perhaps the biggest crowd to date. A 4 1/2 year old boy toppled into the ship model towing tank, he was so fascinated. According to his MIT father, who scooped him out, most people working there take the plunge at one time or another.

Shortly MIT will be seen by many more people here and abroad. A film crew from the BBC "shot" Open House, including Strobe Lab, and Dr. Edgerton taking pictures of a



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On Green Bldg. roof: high style



TT Photo by John Torode

Prof. Larrabee explained Gemini

Museum of Science screech owl. Footage is for "Horizon," an English TV series. Another man from BBC, Dennis Postle, is prospecting this month for a general film on MIT. He's no stranger here. For several months in '61 he served as visiting graphic designer in the Office of Publications. A film crew will join him in May.

Eminent photographer Gjon Mili, '27, was back on campus, also, taking pictures for a Life Science Library volume on "The Engineer."

And the fashion pages were represented. "Esquire" Magazine's fashion editor, with photographer, got material for a fall back to college issue. Models: MIT students in Esquire clothes. Finally, on Open House morning, "Boston" Magazine posed a young woman in summer dress on the Boat House dock.

SAILOR BEWARE

Shore School got underway on April 20. There will be summer and fall programs, also. All members of the Institute Community can belong; fee is \$6 for students, \$8 for others. Membership cards are available at the Cashier's Office, Room 10-180.

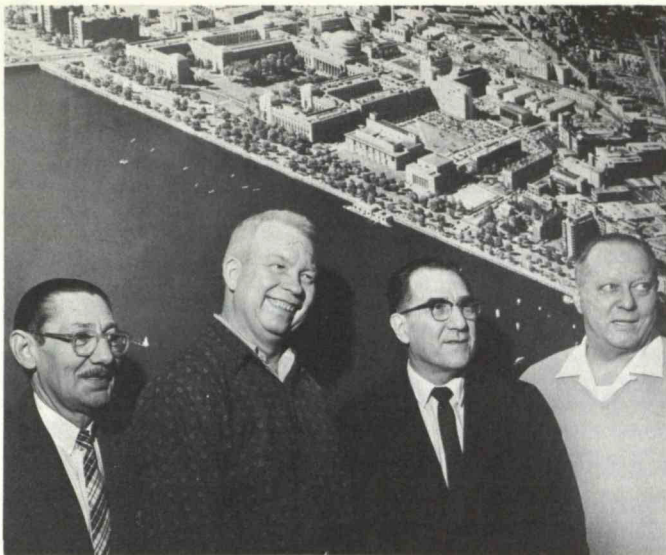
Don't forget your 100-yard swim test certificates from the Pool.

QUARTER CENTURY CREW

Altogether they've served MIT for 100 years. When they officially join the Quarter Century Club on April 29, there'll be a big welcome. This year's meeting of 25-year men will be held in the Grad House Campus Room. Speaker: Dean of Student Affairs Kenneth Wadleigh.

Joining the ranks will be these 4:

John Goss, administrative assistant in purchasing for the Aerophysics Lab in Bldg. W-91. Starting in Electrical Engineering, John served for many years as a technician. In the Naval Supersonic Lab, he worked on instrumentation for models tested in the wind tunnel. He's a former member of the city council of his hometown, Peabody, Mass.



(Left to right) Turner, Griffiths, Radocchia, Goss

When Kenneth Griffiths came to MIT, he was a machinist; first in EE, then in the Dynamic Analysis Control Lab. Now he's an instrument maker in the Mech. Eng. shop in Bldg. 31. On summer weekends in Falmouth he's skipper of a Chris Craft, also reaching its 25-year spot.

Robert Radocchia, manager of Walker Memorial and its dining service, had chefs in his own family; his father-in-law was at Walker when he first came. He now gets letters from former student staffers all over the world. A past master of the Richard C. Maclaurin Masonic Lodge, he has worked often with MIT's DeMolay chapter.

As groundsman on Briggs Field, Al Turner says he never saw a meet. Later he was a night cleaner and janitor. Since 1942 he's been assigned to the swimming pool, responsible for checking its chlorine and pH content daily and keeping its pumps and fans shipshape.

BOOK SALE

The MIT Press is offering a limited number of books to the MIT Community at 60% off list price. For 4 days only, April 26-30, the collection will be available at Press new quarters in Daggett, E-19, Room 720. Bibliophiles who have questions may call Mary Swaney, ext. 5251, or just show up for the sale.

PLASMA à GO-GO

Prof. James W. Mar (Aero. & Astro), "past chairman" of the Blood Drive, thanks donors and workers alike for its success. As busy as medical personnel during the effort were the Matrons volunteers. Over 80 ladies, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Benjamin Averbach, registered and escorted donors and served refreshments. This year, also, there were many more student helpers than ever before.

CU ACCOUNTS AUDITED

The MIT Credit Union accounts ending in 4 and 5 have been audited and verified as of March 31, 1965. Joseph Cullinan, chairman of the CU Supervisory Committee, urges members to return the confirmation notices as soon as possible. If your account number ends in 4 or 5 and you have not received a confirmation notice, please contact Mr. Cullinan at the Payroll Office, Bldg. E-19, Room 515, or ext. 4491. Federal regulations require that CU accounts be audited periodically, and the Supervisory Committee does a group each quarter.

PLEASE DON'T EAT THE RHUBARB BLADES

Who'd suspect lily of the valley, poinsettia, larkspur, fox-glove, rhododendron, azalea, buttercup or even the lowly jimson weed of being dangerous? They can be, if eaten.

According to John J. Kingsbury, in his book, "Poisonous Plants of the United States and Canada," over 700 species of plants are known to have caused death or illness. If you're a plant and flower fancier, chances are that some of your prize possessions are poisonous.

Since they'll chew most anything, children seem to be especially susceptible to plant poisoning. (12,000 a year is the U.S. Public Health statistic.) Many adults, also, have a habit of chewing innocuous looking blades of grass or leaves of common plants.

The National Safety Council has prepared a list of 38 common, poisonous plants. If you'd like a copy, call the Safety Office, exts. 736, 5246 or 7886 at Lincoln and leave your name and room number.

PERISHABLE

Ordinary household refrigerators should not be used to store flammable liquids such as ether, acetone, alcohols, etc. Refrigerators have various electrically-operated devices within their cooling chambers which create electrical arcs. When arcing takes place, confined vapors of the flammable liquids, if mixed with air in proper proportions, may explode violently. Specific ignition sources are automatic temperature controls, defrosters, butter compartment controls and electric lights. Some mechanical types of door latches may spark when doors are opened or closed.

This hazard can increase if electrical power is lost for any length of time. Temperature may rise, causing flammable vapors to be more readily emitted. When power returns, an explosive vapor-air mixture may be present.

If you are thinking of purchasing a refrigerator for storing flammable liquids, either consider one that's explosion-proof and listed by the Underwriters Laboratories, or arrange to have a household type altered by Physical Plant personnel. They will run the capillary tube from the cooling compartment to thermostatic controls mounted on the outside, then disconnect and remove all live wires and switches inside which control lights, butter chambers, etc.

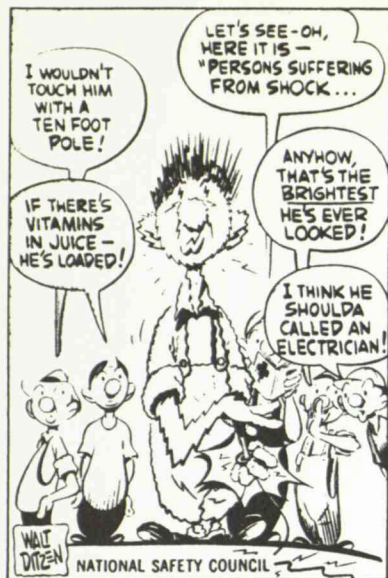
Chemicals and food should not be stored in the same refrigerator.

An added note for people who are abandoning or storing refrigerators or freezers: the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare has prepared a booklet on how to prevent child entrapment in household refrigerators. It is available for five cents by writing for Public Health Service Publication No. 1258, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

ST Photo by Bob Lyon



Wary gardeners. Lillian Giuliana (left), Genevieve O'Hehir (Biology).



DOUBLE OR NOTHING

Supplying portable electrical tools for home and industrial use has become a large and vigorous business. In the maze of metal-cased portable drills, circular saws, sanding machines, reciprocating tools and "what-nots," there's a relatively recent innovation -- the so-called, double-insulated, "shock-proof" portable tool. Realizing that many portable tool users neglect to attach ground wires anyway, some manufacturers have been pushing double-insulated tools as a substitute. Their stand, and it may have some merit, is that extra insulation will reduce shock potential if regular insulation fails. But this may only delay the need for a ground wire. It seems that ground wire is a must so long as insulation deteriorates and tools are subject to mishandling, and conductive metal parts can come in contact with the person using them.

Here are some hazards: Drilling or cutting into a live wire concealed in a wall, or into extension cords; failure or deterioration of motor insulation or of component insulation such as switches, lead wires, power cord and brush holders; coating of insulation material with conductive dusts or moisture.

The big question is, "How long will it be before a double-insulated tool requires a ground wire?" Before you reach into your pocket to pay a premium price for one, you may wish to read "Double Insulation for Portable Tools -- Safe or Lethal," written by David N. Summerfield and published in the February 1965 issue of "Insulation."

PERCHLORIC ACID

Perchloric acid, HClO_4 -- of which reagent grade 70-72% is the most common -- acts as a strong non-oxidizing acid at ordinary temperatures. In contact with ordinary combustibles and most organics, this material is rendered highly flammable when dried out and is susceptible to spontaneous ignition and explosion upon heating, impact or friction. It may also react with a variety of chemicals, such as metallic bismuth, acetic acid, diethyl ether, hydroiodic acid, sodium iodide, wood charcoal, etc. to cause fires or explosions. At elevated temperatures (320°F), perchloric acid acts as a strong dehydrating and oxidizing agent which, in contact with combustibles, can cause fire or explosion.

Anhydrous perchloric acid, formed by reaction between perchloric acid and dehydrating agents such as concentrated sulfuric acid and phosphorous pentoxide, is extremely unstable at room temperatures. It will undergo violent spontaneous combustion. And in contact with oxidizable materials, it will explode at once.

If perchloric acid is to be evaporated, the operation should be carried out in a special fume hood equipped with a water spray in the exhaust duct to scrub out vapor. Heating should be done in heat-resistant beakers, flasks or test tubes utilizing hot plates, electrical mantles, steam baths or sand bath heat transmitters, never oil baths. Unions in apparatus should be glass to glass, not rubber; and stopcock greases, including silicone types, should not be used. Perchloric acid reactions should be run behind lab safety shields, and rubber gloves, aprons and safety glasses worn for personal protection. Transfer from one container to another should be done over a sink, and spills should be washed immediately with water, not picked up with sawdust or other combustible absorbents.

Perchloric acid should be stored in glass, stone or ceramic containers with screw caps, separate from combustibles. Small amounts kept in fume hoods should be placed in glass trays big enough to catch spillage. In bulk, original bottles should be stored in glass containers padded with glass wool and kept away from excessive heat. Don't allow the acid to freeze (4°F).