Not So Hasty Renovation

The Hasty Pudding Theatricals building at 12 Holyoke Street, owned by Harvard since 2000, is inching toward a badly needed renovation. The Institute of 1770—the umbrella organization for the social club and performing activities associated with the venue—has rented a temporary home at 2 Garden Street, facing Cambridge Common. That move effected, and $100,000 of immediate safety repairs completed at 12 Holyoke, the way is clear for a thorough overhaul of that structure, an important space for student performances. But given the building’s dilapidated state and tight working quarters, and the need to comply with modern safety and access requirements, renovation costs (to restore the front third of the building and raze the rear to make way for a new theater) have ballooned to as much as $25 million—twice the initial estimate. A fund drive will be required before work can begin.

Seeding Stem Cells

Biologist Douglas A. Melton, Cabot professor of the natural sciences (and a leading figure in current sciences planning for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and for Allston development), announced late in October that he had developed 17 new stem-cell lines from embryos provided, with the parents’ consent, by a local fertility clinic. The cell lines were created with support from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and therefore should not be subject to the restraints on federally funded research imposed by President Bush in 2001. Melton, an outspoken advocate of stem-cell research (see “Science and Politics and Stem Cells,” July-August 2001, page 62), plans to disseminate the cells to privately funded researchers this year through a Virginia laboratory and a British government stem-cell facility.

COURTYARD NO MORE: The Biological Laboratories quad has temporarily given way to heavy construction. A subterranean Biological Research Infrastructure (a home for many thousands of transgenic mice used in research) will be built in the excavated space, and then roofed over with a new lawn.

Retooling Public Health

The School of Public Health has formed two academic departments intended to better apply new biological knowledge to disease control, and to affect health across the life span. Simmons professor of genetics and metabolism Gökhan Hotamisligil chairs the department of genetics and complex diseases. Drawing from the former department of cancer-cell biology and from the department of nutrition, the new unit will explore how genetics, the environment, behavior, and nutrition intersect to promote metabolic diseases (diabetes and obesity, for example), cardiovascular diseases, and cancer. Lisa F. Berkman, Cabot professor of public policy, chairs the new department of society, human development, and health. It succeeds the departments of child and maternal health and of health and social behavior, and will focus its research on the social determinants of health from infancy to old age. Areas of inquiry range from infant development to socioeconomic policies to interventions such as tobacco controls and education.

Nota Bene

PH.D. PHUN. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences monthly Bulletin this academic year offers a contest requiring students to identify a campus landmark. Winning entrants receive a cotton canvas tote bag with GSAS logo, outside pocket, and top-closing snap. Most compelling feature: “Holds an entire dissertation.”

Extending gender studies. Reflecting the broadening of the discipline, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has voted to change the name of the committee on degrees in women’s studies to the committee on degrees in studies of women, gender, and sexuality. Profes-
JOHN HARVARD’S JOURNAL

Smallpox search. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases has awarded Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard-affiliated hospitals, and the University of Massachusetts Medical School $15.1 million to fund research on a safer smallpox vaccine. The grant, one of five for new Cooperative Centers for Translational Research on Human Immunology and Biodefense, will support work directed by professor of medicine and principal investigator Ellis L. Reinherz.

MacArthur merits. Three faculty members have won unrestricted MacArthur Fellowships, each worth $500,000 over five years. Jim Yong Kim, M.D. ’86, an assistant professor of medical anthropology and of medicine, is on leave as an adviser to the director general of the World Health Organization, working on HIV-AIDS treatment. Nawal M. Nour, M.D. ’94, M.P.H. ’99, instructor in obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive biology, has founded and directs a Boston clinic for African women who have suffered genital circumcision. Xiaowei Zhuang, an assistant professor of chemistry and chemical biology, studies the behavior of individual molecules and viruses.

Crimson first. Three women will lead the Harvard Crimson, as Erica K. Jalli, Elisabeth S. Theodore, and Ashley B.T. Ma, all ’05, were elected, respectively, president, managing editor, and business manager, effective in late January.

Anthro administrator. The new director of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology is William L. Fash Jr., Bowditch professor of Central American and Mexican archaeology and ethnology. He succeeds Rubie Watson, who stepped down on December 31 to resume teaching and research as senior lecturer on anthropology and curator of comparative ethnography at the museum.

Honored humanists. The 10 winners of the 2003 National Humanities Medal included Joan Ganz Cooney, ARD ’75, a Sesame Street creator; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Ph.D. ’74, historian and professor of the humanities at Emory University; Frank M. Snowden, Ph.D. ’84, professor of classics emeritus at Howard University; and novelist, short-story writer, and critic John Updike ’54, Litt.D. ’92.

Real-estate expert. As the University continues a building boom—creating new housing, research facilities, and faculty offices—James W. Gray has been appointed associate vice president for real estate. He comes to Harvard after a decade’s work at Duke Realty Corporation in property management, leasing, development, and construction. Last January, the Harvard Planning and Real Estate organization was split into Harvard Real Estate Services, which Gray directs, and Harvard Planning-Allston Initiative. The change reflects the differing responsibilities associated with current projects and property holdings on the Cambridge and Boston campuses, and with the planning effort focused on developing Allston acreage.


UP ON THE ROOF: Harvard Business School has installed photovoltaic panels atop Shad Hall, the first such use of solar power to generate electricity at the University. The 192 panels can produce up to 36 kilowatts of power. Daniel Cook and Brian D. Robertson, both candidates for the M.B.A. degree this spring and co-presidents of the Sustainable Development Society (a student club), conceived the plan and solicited bids from nine potential vendors to determine specifications and costs. The Massachusetts Technology Cooperative provided a $143,500 grant, and the rest of the $365,300 expense was covered through an interest-free loan from the Harvard University Green Campus Initiative.