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Sheridan Coliseum: Letter, to various people, from Nita M. Landrum

Nita M. Landrum

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NITA M. LANDRUM
4712 West Sixth Street
Topeka, KS 66606

October, 1985

Dear Friends:

I was very pleased to be asked by President "Jerry" Tomanek to write you, as one of my long-time friends, about the exciting campaign for funds to renovate Sheridan Coliseum on the FHSU campus. So far the campaign is progressing very well indeed. I find it thrilling and hope that my efforts will prompt you to join in support of its funding.

Sheridan Coliseum, the grand, dignified old building that most of us remember and love, is to be renovated and made into a beautiful Performing Arts Center that will also house student services and administrative offices. This plan will take lots of money, of course. The Sheridan Coliseum renovation project has been approved by the Board of Regents, and the project cost is approximately \$6.2 million. The State Legislature has challenged the University to raise \$2 million of the total through private funds.

Currently the old arena in Sheridan is an empty shell. The Music Department moved to Malloy Hall, the department of Physical Education and the basketball games are now in Gross Coliseum, and other departments have moved to new Rarick Hall. At the same time, Fort Hays State lacks a medium-sized facility for cultural and educational events. Malloy Hall houses a 300 seat theatre, and Gross Memorial has a 9,500 seat arena. You can see that Sheridan with 1,200 seats would be just the right size for many events and presentations. It staggers the imagination to think of all the wonderful programs that could be brought to this new, modern facility for all of western Kansas to enjoy.

Appalling as it sounds, the first thought of the engineers and architects was to condemn Sheridan to the wrecking ball, but we who know FHSU alumni best were sure that you would never let that happen. A study showed that the building is structurally sound—so planning began to renovate it into a beautiful, functional building—saving it from destruction and furnishing the University with a much-needed facility at the same time.

If you are like most of us, the mention of Sheridan Coliseum gives rise to a multitude of memories. Living within a block of it for fifty years, recalling when, at one time or another, many of the campus departments were housed within its walls—remembering, too, the wonderful and varied activities and concerts which took place there gives me a feeling of perfect nostalgia.

If you have not yet been personally contacted or have not yet made up your mind about the support you wish to give, think about it and act on your impulse now. The campaign is on and progressing nicely.

You might wish to join in sponsoring a special alumni project now underway—a project which, if you are interested, is set up to have your name, your family name, or the name of a loved one (as a memorial) neatly engraved on a brass plate, affixed permanently to one of the 1,200 seats in the new auditorium. Your gift for each memorialized seat should be \$500. Designate as many seats as you wish. I am confident you will remember your alma mater to the best of your ability.

The enclosed pamphlet is for your use. Please fill out the form completely and mail it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. Let me assure you that your support, whatever the amount, is vital to the completion of the project.

I wish you well and I'm glad that I could greet you and write about such an exciting project as these plans for Sheridan Coliseum. I hope you will seriously consider participating in this worthwhile undertaking.

My very best to you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nita M. Landrum". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid.

Nita M. Landrum

Enclosures

P.S. I am living at the Topeka Presbyterian Manor, and I love to hear from Fort Hays State friends and to see them when they visit Topeka. One daughter lives in Topeka, and the other lives in suburban Kansas City.