Sustainability: Sustained for 150+ Years!

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photo by Lew Grobe
Brickmaking, 1880s

Bottom photo: 066 – 1883. Main Quadrangle with what became known as the Old Stone House, the first permanent structure on the present Saint John’s site, shown at far left. Between the Stone House and the Quadrangle is the “south wing,” rebuilt as a three story structure after the cyclone of 1927. (Ascheman collection caption)
Wood for fuel, 1889

012 – February 1889. In the early days the Quadrangle and other buildings had to be heated with wood burning stoves. Here huge quantities of cord wood are being sledded across a frozen Lake Sagatagan to provide heat for the campus community. (Ascheman collection caption)
Logs piled ca. 1913
013b – Circa 1913. Logging west of the Main Quadrangle. Saint John’s Abbey, through its land management program and Arboretum, continues to manage its forests in a sustainable manner and was certified as well-managed by the Forest Stewardship Council through SmartWood. (Ascheman collection caption)
Original power plant, 1888

118 – 1888. The original power plant. The huge stacks of cord wood used to heat facilities prove that biomass fuels are not something new. In 2006, the present day power plant heats all buildings on the main campus while producing about a quarter of the electricity consumed. (Ascheman collection caption)
Flynnville and Watab dam

155 – 1915. Flynnville and Watab dam. A home was built on the north shore of the Watab (now often referred to as Stumpf Lake) for Coach Edward Flynn. Around this house arose the famous hamlet of Flynnville – later called Flynnville. (Ascheman collection caption)
011 – Late 1800s. Br. Julius Terfehr operates the Saint John’s sawmill. Most of the timber used in construction of the Main Quadrangle was harvested from the woods and milled for construction on the premises. Br. Julius later became a founding monk of St. Maur’s Priory in Kentucky. (Ascheman collection caption)
Abbey Woodworking Shop

Grazing cows

196 – Pre-1874. Are the cows out or were they allowed campus-wide access? (Ascheman collection caption)
016 – Circa 1890. Construction of the first brick barn. During most of its first century, Saint John's remained self-sufficient for milk, meat, and vegetables. (Ascheman collection caption)

Typed on back of photo (and visible!): "While the first brick barn was building [sic] in 1890."
Barn after the 1894 tornado

018 – 1927 Dairy barn after the fire of 1927. June 1894. The 1894 cyclone destroyed the dairy barn and severely damaged several other campus buildings. (Ascheman collection caption)
Barn reconstructed after the 1894 tornado

017 – Unknown. Brick barn after reconstruction from the XXXX. (Ascheman collection caption)
Barn with Joe Hall
(no date) Joe Hall, in the distance, was built in 1899.
Barn after the 1927 fire

020 – June 1894. The 1894 cyclone destroyed the dairy barn and severely damaged several other campus buildings. (Ascheman collection caption) – 1927 Dairy barn after the fire of 1927.
Barn rebuilt again, after the fire

015 – Unknown. Here the dairy barn undergoes reconstruction following the tornado of 1894 fire of 1927. It was located near the present day location of Sexton Commons. The Abbey sustained its dairy herd until 1958. (Ascheman collection caption)
Barns and silo
019 – 1930s. Barns and silo. Saint John’s dairy herd was known for .... (Ascheman collection caption)
021 – Early 50s. Br. William “Willie” Borgerding feeding dairy herd calves. “Willie” later became a popular night watchman and a source of used furniture for student rooms. The students honored him by giving the Sexton Commons’ pub his name – Brother Willie’s Pub. (Ascheman collection caption)
Chickens

195 – Unknown. Un-identified brother feeding the chickens. (Ascheman collection caption)
Groundbreaking, 1908

131 – 1908. An early “ground breaking” at Saint John’s – hard work for both man and beast. Many unmarried lay employees lived in Joe Hall, as a bunkhouse, and married employees oftentimes lived in Flynntown, along Fruit Farm Road. (Ascheman collection caption) [I think this was really for the football field, which was “constructed” in 1908...]

Groundbreaking, 1908: no gold shovels!
Blacksmith shop, ca. 1894

002 – Circa 1894. Blacksmith Br. Gregory Rosenhammer kept carts and buggies running smoothly. The blacksmith shop occupied the space currently used by Abbey Woodworking, and today the vehicle maintenance shop is on the west edge of campus. (Ascheman collection caption)
Blacksmith shop, ca. 1940s

192 – Unknown. Br. Patrick Sullivan (1921-2005). Having served in the air force, Br. Pat is seen here working in the blacksmith shop. He later served as an electrician, and still later as a general handy man for Benilde-Saint Margaret High School while that school was administrated by Saint John’s. (Ascheman collection caption)
West Union Farm, 1881-1901

West Union – “outsourcing” the farm work, 40 miles away
Greenhouse, 1910

025 – 1910. Greenhouse. The steeple and cross atop Saint Francis House (then St. Francis convent) can be seen in the background. (Ascheman collection caption)
Greenhouse, 1916
026 – 1916. Greenhouse with Wimmer Hall (the original Library) in the left background. (Ascheman collection caption)
Greenhouse, 1927

Greenhouse interior

022 – Unknown. Former greenhouse conservatory located at the present day entrance to The Liturgical Press. (Ascheman collection caption)
Monastic garden; cabbage
Grapes and apples

Br. Dietrich and Br. Sean with grapes

Picking apples in the Abbey orchard
Fish Hatchery on Stumpf Lake

151 – 1912. Fish Hatchery on Stumpf Lake. From their arrival, the monks of Saint John’s Abbey have remained committed to the precious plant and animal life in the surrounding woodland and lakes. The fish hatchery was established in 1905 on the eastern bank of the Watab. (Ascheman collection caption)
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Re-using Joe Hall

112 – 1992. Saint Joseph Hall moving west to make room for Sexton Commons, already under construction in lower left. Originally a carriage house, “Joe Hall” later served as a bunk house for lay workers, still later as graduate student housing, and presently as undergraduate housing. (Ascheman collection caption)
St. John’s cemetery: Dust to dust