

Moving on

Rumor has it that the new home of Wheaton’s Communication Office once served as Norton’s first jail. For a group of people who thrive on gallows humor, this little bit of truthiness (thank you, Stephen Colbert) makes us embrace our new digs more tightly.

The college’s Communication Office is the perennial nomad of Norton; in the last quarter century or so, the office has moved from a house on Howard Street to Hebe Hall to Park Hall to 10 Library Square—our newest home. This frequent shuffling says something either about our unimportance or our flexible response to the college’s changing needs. We like to think it’s the latter.

Actually, we know it. Wheaton College, like any self-respecting institution of higher education, expects and welcomes change, whether it’s a graduating class of students, the introduction of new staff or faculty, or even a move to a new office. When the college first suggested the move to us last fall, my colleagues and I in Communications were hesitant. Park Hall is choice property on campus and higher education—like real estate—is often about location, location, location. Besides being the college’s administration building, Park Hall entertains a steady stream of students, staff and faculty, all of them wandering the halls and anxious to tell a story. Pennies from heaven, as they say. Library Square, a gorgeous location, is somewhat removed from the main campus, and we wondered how the move would change the way we do business. It didn’t take long to find out.



10 Library Square

- **The property originally belonged to the Wheaton family.**
- **Eliza Baylies Wheaton sold the property in the 1870s to George E. Makepeace, who then sold it to Norton’s first police chief, Ben Scanlan, who might have used the house as Norton’s first jail.**
- **A plaque on the house dates it at 1832, predating the founding of the Wheaton Female Seminary; the Norton Historical Society dates the house at 1865-75.**
- **The house, with its large, attached barn/hall, hosted meetings and dances as Norton’s Grange Hall around the turn on the 20th century.**
- **For much of the 20th century, the front of the home was a residence while the back section—the old barn—housed commercial space: an antiques store, a women’s clothing store and a seamstress shop.**
- **Wheaton purchased the property in 2004 and renovated it for office space in 2006.**

Historical information courtesy of Ruth Goold '53 (Norton Historical Society) and Sandy Zommer '90 (Wheaton Archives).

In the past two months since the move, I’ve worked outside of my office more often than ever before. The new space is great—I wouldn’t trade it for our old offices—but the desire to stay connected to the main part of campus forces me to seek out wider opportunities across campus. That’s always been a big part of my job, but now I pursue it with a new fervor.

The same can be said about other change initiative across

campus. From the two newly created offices of Health and Wellness and Spirituality, Service and Social Responsibility to the President’s Advisory Committee on Inclusive Excellence, the Wheaton campus is searching for better ways to do what it’s always done well—educating young leaders to become agents of change. This issue of the *Quarterly* is, in particular, packed with such stories. Student-scholars anticipate

their new lives as Fulbright or Watson recipients (page 4); others wrestle with the lingering questions of American identity after a trip abroad (page 24). Our alums, of course, are out there seeking change as well. From the drag strips of Pomona (page 18) to the seats of power in Washington, D.C. (page 26), Wheaton people are reinventing themselves and their worlds.

Yes, change is afoot. Stay tuned. **Q**