In 1967 "a large spacious site north of East University Parkway and west of 900 East Street was selected for the construction of three Auxiliary Services Buildings. Plans were prepared by the architectural firm Holland, McGill, and Pasker of Salt Lake City. The construction contract was awarded to Iverson Construction Company, also of Salt Lake City. Since their completion, these facilities have served the various departments using them well, greatly improving their efficiency." Hatch, A. (2005). A Pictorial History of Physical Facilities. Provo, Utah: University Press.

So began the 48-year life of the Auxiliary Maintenance Building (AXMB) and the Auxiliary Laundry (AXLB) buildings. Through additions, upgrades, and improvements, through administrators, employees, and countless student staffers, these buildings have truly filled the measure of their creation.

In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' efforts to better train the ever-increasing number of missionaries who visit the Provo Missionary Training Center, an expansion of its facilities was needed to receive this multitude of new elders and sisters. This expansion requires the dispositioning of these two long-standing BYU sentinels of service.

With a very short design and construction schedule of only 18 months for the replacement buildings needed to house the maintenance and laundry services, this effort began in earnest at the beginning of 2014 with plans for the two buildings which would in turn replace and occupy Quad #7 of the Wymount Terrace Married Student Housing complex.

The new buildings enclose 100,000 square feet with 13,000,000 pounds of concrete, brick, cinder block, and roofing materials as described in nearly 3,000 pages of drawings and specifications. This information was created, reviewed, revised, and approved by 50 design committee members. It further has involved hundreds of builders, vendors, and BYU shops' staff to coalesce this information into the two newest and best examples of BYU craftsmanship.
I’ve always believed it’s best to be overly busy than to not have enough to do. My experience at Church HQ had been a whirlwind of activity. When I started with the Church in early 1983 many countries were just opening up to the preaching of the gospel so my international assignments guaranteed a time of unprecedented meetinghouse construction. Over just a few years’ time span I oversaw the construction of over 300 chapels in 27 countries. Later, when I was involved in temple construction, during the time of President Hinckley’s challenge to have 100 operating temples by the end of the year 2000, I had the privilege of heading up the construction of 26 temples across 12 countries. This preceded three years of go-go-go service as a mission president in Chile. When I was offered the position at BYU shortly after our return from Chile, over a decade ago, I initially wondered if there was enough work to keep me, and Physical Facilities, completely engaged in the years to follow. So much for wondering! As I move about campus this summer, it’s easy to recognize we have plenty to keep us busy both now and into the foreseeable future. More and more I feel blessed to be involved in such a great work, at such a significant time, in such an incredible place as BYU.

Physical Facilities

Ole M. Smith - AAVP
Physical Facilities

Shop Highlight
Mechanical Engineering

Our shop highlight this month is for the Utilities, Maintenance, and Engineering Department. This department is part of the Planning Department and provides engineering support for their architects and interior designers. In addition, they are responsible for all utilities for new construction, renovation, and replacement projects. The Utilities Director, Paul Greenwood, is a licensed mechanical engineer. The rest of the department consists of two additional mechanical engineers, two electrical engineers, two civil engineers, the Air Conditioning Shop, and the Central Heating and Chilled Water Plants. The civil engineers are responsible for mapping and maintenance of all exterior utility piping and campus infrastructure. The mechanical engineers are responsible for all building HVAC systems, exterior chilled water, high temperature water, and gas piping in addition to interior piping systems. The electrical engineers are responsible for all of the campus electrical infrastructure and lighting. The Air Conditioning Shop maintains all of the campus chilled water systems and building temperature controls. The Central Heating Plant maintains all of the high temperature hot water system in addition to building heating and domestic hot water generation.

What is the purpose and why would BYU want to replace the Laundry Building and the Auxiliary Maintenance Building rather than outsource or absorb into like services? It is not a big secret that changes are a part of life and that we must adapt to change or it will leave us behind. However at BYU, especially in Physical Facilities, there is a feeling of “Teamwork/Wolf-packing” that prevails and lends to an even greater purpose at work - the feeling of “Family”. With that said, we have to look at and understand that familial relationships never were intended to be perfect or without conflict. Each of us are different with differing goals, agendas, and hopes. This is true with each area, shop and individual that works here in Physical Facilities. That is what makes us successful and allows us to be so diversified in our areas of expertise. Just as family conflicts or challenges happen, we learn to work things out. We work through family challenges because we understand that brothers or sisters do not go away, and you need each other, despite the differences that exists. I feel the same about the areas we have within Physical Facilities - together we make a whole. That is not to imply that difficulties don’t arise or won’t, but rather, together we know we can and will make things work and, generally, because of our diversity, it will be to the highest of standards.

Are there or will there be naysayers who, as they read this article, will laugh and scoff? Of course the answer is a resounding yes, but it is up to us to help them change and see the vision that together what we offer together is so much better than what we are if we stand alone.