



by Blythe Roveland-Brenton, Ph.D. '00G

The post-war period witnessed unprecedented movement from the inner cities to the suburbs and St. John's University's new location on the Hillcrest campus, Jamaica, was poised to accommodate this population surge.

Though the marbled halls, the sun-lit rooms and the very stones and mortar of Lewis Avenue's College Hall contributed to the fashioning of the St. John's student, 1955 marked her last days.

With the expansion of the Queens campus, and the enormous growth of the student body, St. John's would soon become one of the largest Catholic universities in the country. In little more than a decade, student enrollments nearly doubled from 6,856 during academic year 1954/55 to 13,125 in the fall of 1965.

For the next three decades, new programs, colleges and divisions continued to be added (such as the Junior College in 1962, now the College of Professional Studies), ambitious building campaigns were launched and additional campuses on Staten Island and in Rome were established.

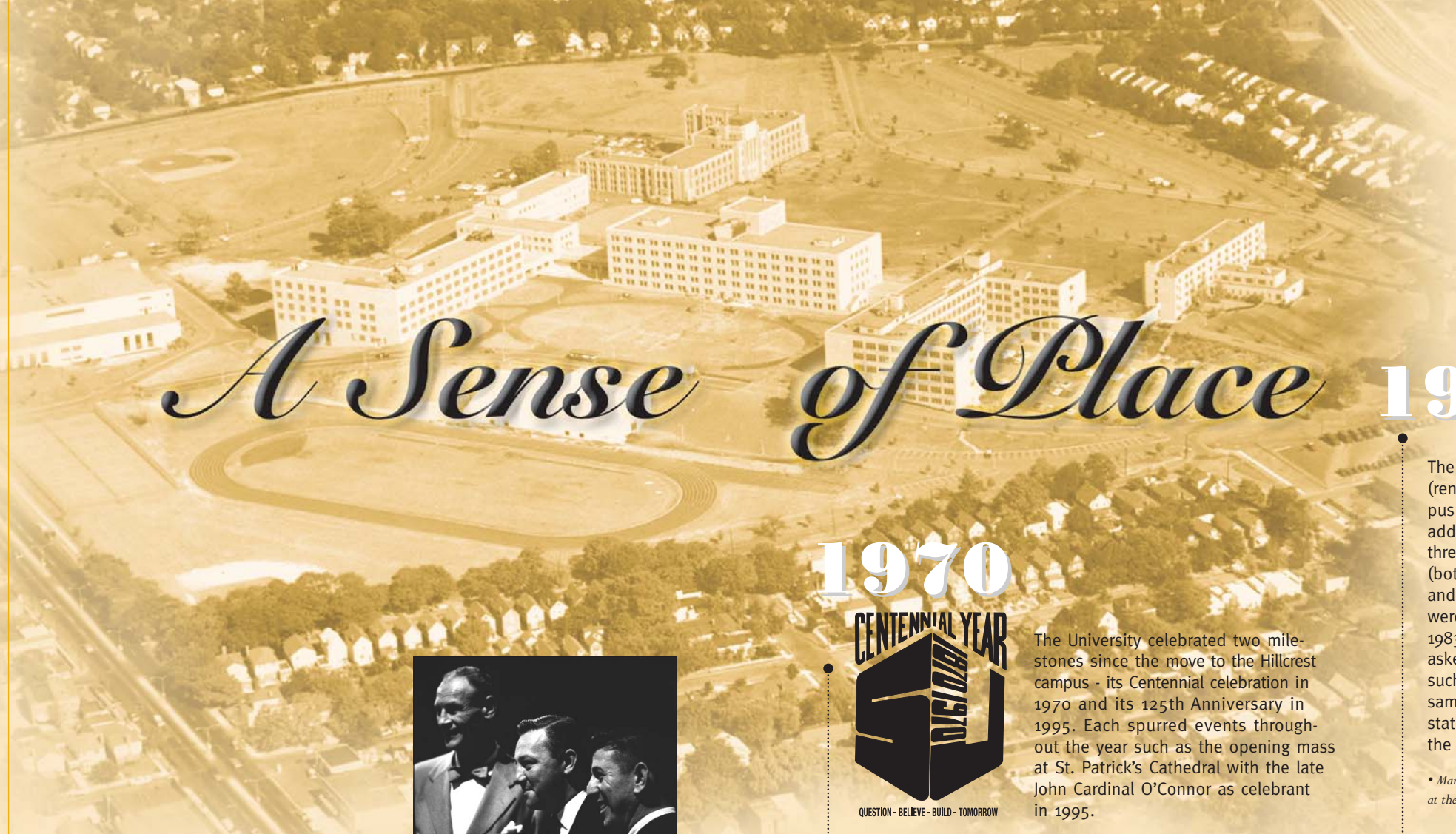
Since the 1990s, the University has made a commitment to providing its students and faculty the benefits of advances in computer technology and the Internet.

The current Mission Statement, approved by the Board of Trustees on March 15, 1999, reaffirms St. John's University's place as Catholic, Vincentian and metropolitan and situates it within local and global contexts.

This is the third in a three-part series that celebrates a century of St. John's in honor of its 130th birthday this year.

- Blythe Roveland-Brenton is St. John's Interim University Archivist.

Sources: University Archives



A Sense of Place 1983



The Law School moved permanently to Fromkes Hall (renamed Belson Hall in 1995) on the Queens campus and opened for classes in 1972. Finley Hall was added in 1994. Among its alumni can be counted three governors - Hugh Carey '51L, Mario Cuomo '56L (both NY) and George Deukmejian '52L (CA). Cuomo and Deukmejian were elected the same year and were honored in a special convocation in October 1983. In his address, Gov. Deukmejian stated, "I was asked how it came to pass that two individuals of such different political philosophies could, on the same day, be elected Governors of the two best states in the nation!...It's because we both went to the best law school in the nation!"

• Mario Cuomo, Esq., President Rev. Cahill and George Deukmejian, Esq. (from l.) at the 1983 convocation.

1970



QUESTION - BELIEVE - BUILD - TOMORROW

The University celebrated two milestones since the move to the Hillcrest campus - its Centennial celebration in 1970 and its 125th Anniversary in 1995. Each spurred events throughout the year such as the opening mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral with the late John Cardinal O'Connor as celebrant in 1995.



1964

Fans saw their last men's basketball home game in DeGray gymnasium on Lewis Avenue in 1956. By 1961, the team had a new home in Alumni Hall. Upon Joe Lapchick's retirement in 1965, Lou Carnesecca began his first of two coaching stints at the University. Women's basketball had its triumphs as well (BIG EAST champions in 1983 and 1984), as have other men's teams like the NCAA champion soccer team (1996).

• Joe Lapchick, Jack Kaiser, and Lou Carnesecca (from l.) at Madison Square Garden.

Since its modest beginnings, St. John's saw a steady stream of construction projects. Though Brooklyn's Schermerhorn St. location was used by the Law School until 1972, other campuses began to develop including Staten Island's Notre Dame College in 1971 and the Graduate Center in Rome in 1995.



1971

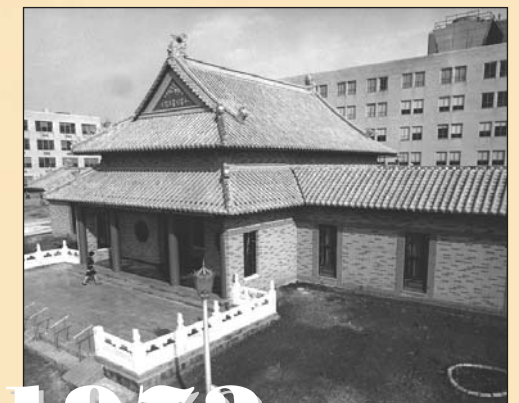
• (From l.) University President (1965-1989), The Very Rev. Cahill, C.M., Academic Vice President of SI and Dean of Notre Dame College Dr. Carl Robusto, Administrative Vice President of SI Campus Rev. Joseph Ganley, C.M. and Director of Libraries Rev. Robert Cawley, C.M. at the groundbreaking for Staten Island's new library in 1971.

1955



Deviations from normal college life, such as the "Duck Walk Parade," highlight freshman hazing week.

• First in parade is Mike Darnowski '59C followed by Sal Antanasio and George Ferrari '58C, '60G.



1973

The traditional curriculum was broadened to encompass an international focus. The Center of Asian Studies, founded in 1959, acquired a new home when Sun Yat Sen Hall was completed in 1973. The building, named to honor the founder of the Republic of China, was designed to resemble a typical palace found in the Forbidden City.

• Sun Yat Sen Hall circa 1973.