

# REAL ESTATE

## From eyesore to renewal, Baptist center coming alive

By LETTICE STUART  
Real Estate writer

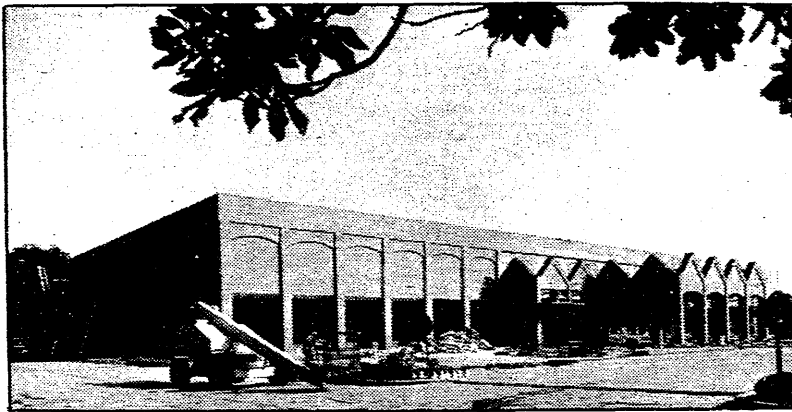
It took about \$2.5 million and several hundred thousand red bricks but you wouldn't recognize the former Gaylord's department store in the 3900 block of Gentilly Boulevard now — it has been transformed into a student center for the Baptist Theological Seminary next door.

The 119,000-square-foot building, occupied by Gaylord's until the department store chain was bought out by Zayre's in 1985, will reopen next month as Hardin Student Center. It is named for a Gadsden, Ala. family that donated \$500,000 toward the building's purchase and renovation.

The seminary bought the two-story structure on 6.5 acres of ground in 1983 for \$3.3 million from Lanasa Property. Gaylord's, which had a lease on the first floor, remained there for the next two years, while the seminary used the second floor for badly needed office space.

The seminary, the world's fourth largest, had already begun a capital drive to raise money to build a new student center when the department store building became available.

It was a perfect opportunity, said Clifford Amos, because the seminary is hemmed in by Gentilly Boulevard, railroad tracks and a power station and had



The seminary's student center has lost the look of a department store.

STAFF PHOTO BY G.E. ARNOLD

no where to grow. Meanwhile, the student body and faculty had grown from 3,000 when the Gentilly Boulevard campus was built to 5,000 today.

The seminary opened in 1917 at Washington Avenue and Camp Street in the Garden District. In 1953, the seminary bought 75 acres of cow pastures and swamp on Gentilly Boulevard and built the existing campus, which has been expanded to 81 acres and now includes tennis courts, an olympic size

swimming pool, health club, day-care center, radio station, clinic, chapel, library, private housing for faculty and staff and student housing complexes. The seminary also owns two apartment complexes for students off-campus.

"We are really a small self-sufficient town," Amos said. The seminary has its own police force, which is trained by the New Orleans Police Department,

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## Grant goes to housing for elderly

By ED ANDERSON  
Staff writer

Ninety-six new dwellings for the elderly and handicapped will be built and 100 old homes in the city's low- and moderate-income areas will be refurbished as the result of a \$15.4 million grant the city and two non-profit agencies recently received.

The grant, awarded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, means planning can get under way for much-needed housing for the elderly, said officials of the Roman Catholic Church's Archdiocese of New Orleans and the Volunteers of America, the agencies that will build the units.

The grant, announced by the office of Rep. Henson Moore, R-La., and its uses break down like this:

► \$11.1 million to the city for rehabilitation of old homes in low- and moderate income neighborhoods, as well as rent subsidies for the poor who occupy them.

Sheila Danzey, Mayor Sidney Barthelemy's executive assistant for human resources, said she is not certain which agency will use the money because it came "out of the blue. It was an unexpected gift."

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## The end: Pine Hills Hotel will be demolished

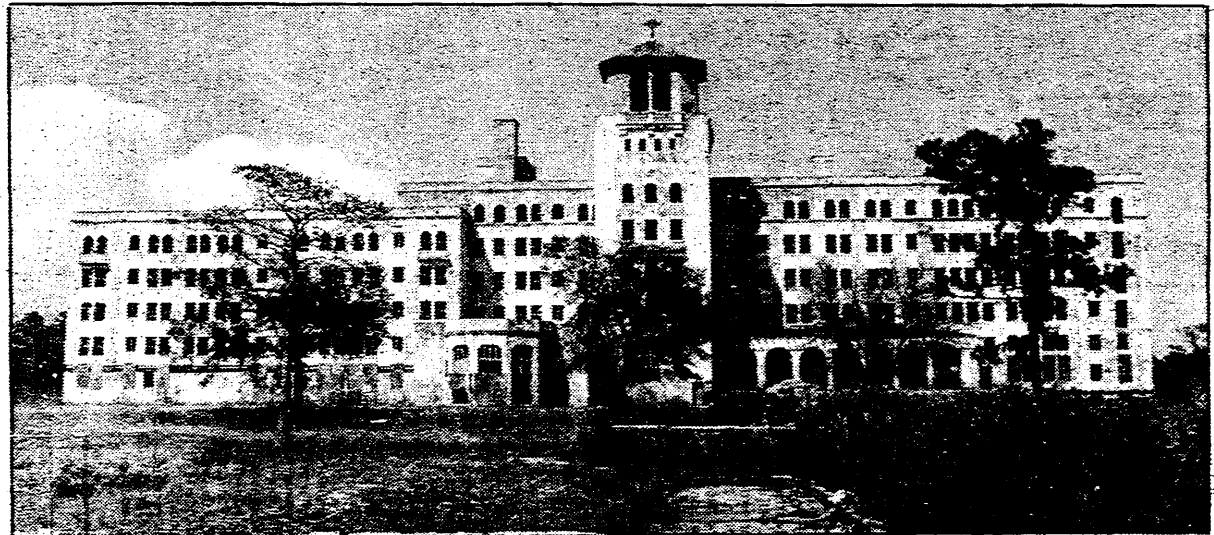
By HELEN SMITH  
Contributing writer

A contract to dismantle the Pine Hills Hotel has been awarded by E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company of DeLisle, Miss.

The hotel sits on 86 acres bought by du Pont in 1984 as a buffer zone for its titanium dioxide manufacturing plant on the north shore of Bay St. Louis.

The contract was given to Kimmons Industrial Services of Pasadena, Texas. Demolition is expected to start before the end of the month, du Pont officials said. The estimated cost is less than \$500,000, and it is expected to take two to three months. Salvage rights belong to Kimmons.

Dave Settle, plant manager for du Pont, said the company decided to dismantle the hotel for safety reasons. He said many people, especially teen-agers, trespass on the property, and the company cannot be liable for their safety. Once, he said, a motorcycle gang used



Vandalism and tall grass are a reminder that the hotel's glamour days are past, in this photo taken in March.

FILE PHOTO BY HELEN SMITH

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