



NAME OF BUILDING: Schlosser Residence Hall

DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION: 1965 – 1966; dedicated in 1966

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Historicism/Revivalism: Neo-Eclectic/New Classical

ARCHITECT: John Alfred Hamme (1897 – 1965)

CONTRACTOR: Wohlson and Sons from Lancaster, Pennsylvania

PURPOSE(S)/USE(S): Residence Hall

PERSON(S) FOR WHOM THE BUILDING IS NAMED: Ralph Wiest Schlosser (1886 – 1978)

BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE: Born at Schoeneck in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1886, Ralph W. Schlosser served his community during his youth by volunteering at his local Brethren Church. His activity in the Church continued into his adult years, with his involvement in the Young Men's Christian Association, Rotary International and the Pennsylvania German Society. The theological values he cultivated in these activities transferred into his vision for Elizabethtown College. During all his time at Elizabethtown College, Ralph Schlosser served in almost every role at the College, from professor to administrator. He first began at Elizabethtown College as an Education professor in 1907. He continued teaching in this discipline until 1911, when he completed and received his bachelor's degree from Elizabethtown and Ursinus. After the completion of these degrees, Schlosser proceeded to teach English at the College until 1918. From 1918 to 1921, Ralph Schlosser served as the Vice President of the College in addition to teaching English. Then from 1922 to 1927, he served as the Dean of the College and in 1928, Ralph Schlosser was named the President of Elizabethtown College. His appointment lasted until 1941 when he willfully resigned.

During his time in these roles, Schlosser was always continuing his education and accumulating more degrees. In 1912, he graduated from Ursinus with a master's degree and in 1922, he received another master's degree, but this time from Columbia University. During his presidency at the College, Ralph Schlosser asked for a sabbatical from 1929-1930, so that he could complete his doctoral work in English Literature at Columbia University.

In addition to his teaching and continuing education, Schlosser was determined to be constantly bettering Elizabethtown College. He would involve himself in many projects that would bring prestige to Elizabethtown College. His first project included running an endowment campaign from 1919 to 1920, which ultimately led to college accreditation for Elizabethtown College. During his time as Dean, he handled the academic offerings of the institution. He not only increased the difficulty of the classes offered, but also the diversity of classes offered to students. He also tried to improve the social offerings at the College by pushing Elizabethtown to participate in intercollegiate sports in 1927 and by coaching the dramatics club at the College. In 1930, he was appointed the advisor of the “Candles,” which was a club whose mission was to spread friendship around the College. In 1931, Schlosser encouraged the creation of an orchestra on campus and in 1934, he advised the Forensics Art Club. For a year (1936-1937), Schlosser established a chapter of Tau Kappa Alpha at Elizabethtown College and served as the secretary for the Debating Association of the Colleges of Pennsylvania. As shown, Ralph Schlosser had his hands in almost every activity at Elizabethtown College and helped to cultivate a vibrant social atmosphere for all students.

At the end of Ralph Schlosser’s time at Elizabethtown College, he served as an English teacher and was recognized with many awards. In 1952, he was awarded the Certificate of Distinguished Service from Brotherhood Board of the Church of the Brethren. Then in 1962, he was awarded the honor of President Emeritus of Elizabethtown College. In 1965, Ralph Schlosser received the Conestogan’s Gold Star for his above and beyond service to the College. Lastly, in 1966, the Schlosser Residence for Women was erected and dedicated to Ralph Schlosser for all the contributions he made to Elizabethtown College. His legacy lives on at the institution to this day, as he always tried to live by his own words: “Put your life on the side of those striving to consummate a constructive program for humanity. Dare to do right at any cost. Never flinch when duty calls.”