



Ro Reeves lives quietly now, in a comfortable, spacious home in North Omaha, sporting a yawning brick fireplace, elegantly etched windows built and installed by her late husband, Joe, and walls bedecked with paintings and framed photographs.

For a still sprightly woman who recently celebrated her 98th birthday, the family photos are perhaps not much of a surprise. One tends to accumulate such things during the course of so long a life. But one collage is especially notable, for it displays photos depicting Reeves' 36 years of service to Creighton University, during which she served 24 years as executive assistant to five Creighton presidents.

Reeves first stood watch in 1962 during the presidency of the Rev. Henry W. Linn, SJ, and retired in 1986 during the presidency of the Rev. Michael G. Morrison, SJ. In between she served the Rev. Clement Schneider, SJ, during a short acting presidency in 1969; the Rev. Joseph J. Labaj, SJ, from 1970 to 1978; and the Rev. Matthew E. Creighton, SJ, from 1978 to 1981.

"They were all wonderful men," Reeves says. "I never had a bad boss."

The years between 1962 and 1986 were an era of historic growth for Creighton University and did much to shape the modern campus. A freestanding College of Nursing was established, St. Joseph Hospital was purchased and the Boyne School of Dentistry opened. The era saw the opening of the Ahmanson Law Center and construction of many buildings, including a new St. Joseph Hospital, Criss III, the Kiewit Fitness Center, numerous residence halls and the Carl M. Reinert, SJ Alumni Memorial Library.

And yet, Reeves said, nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

"I probably never really thought of it as growth in those days," she says. "You just went through day to day and worked to make things happen."

Reeves is a lifelong Omahan who attended St. Bernard's Catholic School in Benson and St. John's High School, which has since passed into history. She was born in 1922. Her husband served as an Air Force navigator during World War II before they both settled in Omaha, where Joe earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from Creighton (BS'55, MBA'67) and they raised their daughter, Mary Beth Reeves, BA'67.

As retirement neared, Reeves consulted with Fr. Morrison about creating an organization for retired Creighton University faculty and staff as a way of staying in touch with each other and with developments at the University. With Fr. Morrison's blessing, Creighton Graybackers was formed and with well over 150 members still exists and can be found at www.graybackers.org where The Graytonian newsletter is published.

"We just felt, you know, that we were close all the years that we worked and we wanted to have some kind of association in our retirement," she says.

Judging by the approximately 50 birthday cards she received this summer, and the parade of flowers, that closeness has been maintained.

But time passes.

"My time at Creighton gets further and further away all the time," she says. "There are all new people there now, and new Jesuits, but I remember the old days, and all those good people. I enjoyed my years there — every single minute."