

Happy Birthday

(ALTGELD HALL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS)

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Members of the mathematics department and friends of the University gathered Monday to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Altgeld Hall.

The attendees first listened to speeches from David Garner, the assistant director for facility planning and management, who spoke on "The History and Architecture of Altgeld Hall," and Michael Gorman, dean of library services, California State University, Fresno, whose speech was entitled "Concentric Circles: Society, Learning, Libraries and Cata-

logging." They then moved to the math library in room 216 of Altgeld for a reception.

According to Librarian Margaret Lewis, Melvil Dewey, the originator of the Dewey Decimal System, was present at the original dedication ceremony and Gorman, an expert in library sciences, was invited to the anniversary in honor of that.

Altgeld Hall was built in 1897 to house the University's library. It was named after John Peter Altgeld, a former governor whose "interest in the common man" led him to organize the funding to build the library, according to Garner.

Garner said that Alt-

geld was "important to the University of Illinois because he made a conscious decision to serve as the John D. Rockefeller of our University."

Nathan Ricker and James White, both graduates of the University and members of the architecture faculty at the time, designed the building which Garner described as "modern Romanesque." Their design was a compromise between the German castellated style that Altgeld preferred and adaptations of buildings they admired, Garner explained. The tower, for example, is styled after the Pittsburgh County Courthouse and Jail. The rotunda is modeled after the Berlin Royal Poly-



technikum at which Ricker had studied.

"The rotunda used to be a grand, dignified space," said Garner. "We have really done injustice to that space."

The building underwent additions in 1914,

1919, 1926 and 1956, which accounts for its legendarily confusing layout. It served as the College of Law from 1927 to 1955 when it became the home of the department of mathematics.