

New book chronicles transformation of UR

Work looks at how the school grew into a force in region and research

By NATE DOUGHERTY

The University of Rochester has grown from a small undergraduate institution in the 19th century to one of the region's largest economic drivers. That growth is being chronicled in a book published by the university.

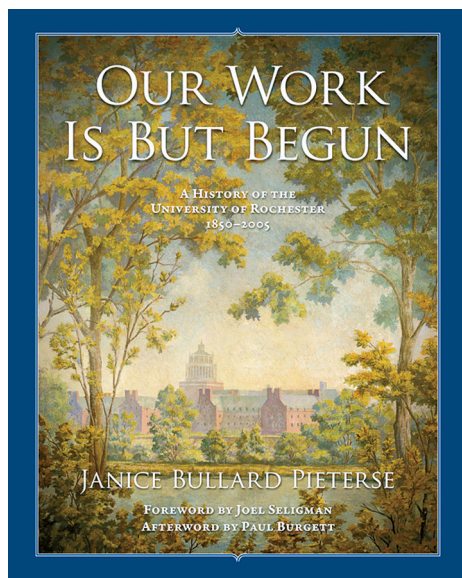
Published by the University of Rochester Press, "Our Work Is But Begun: A History of the University of Rochester, 1850-2005," examines the university's growth against the broader context of American higher education.

Written by Janice Bullard Pieterse, the book looks at the contributions of George Eastman as the university grew into a graduate institution and national leader in research.

UR officials said the book is an important addition to the rich written history of the university. It covers through the presidency of Thomas Jackson, chronicling the university's history and growth in a way that had not been done before, officials said.

"This book is a much, much needed addition to the history of the university," said Paul Burgett, the university vice president and senior adviser to the president, who also wrote the book's afterword. "It's very well done and very accessible.

"She focused the book around the presidencies, telling the story without just regurgitating what's already been written. She's embroidered the book with interest-



ing sidebars that will appeal to different constituencies like athletics or fraternities and sororities."

Pieterse, a former Rochester Business Journal reporter, said it would have been impossible to tell the comprehensive history of the university, so she decided to focus on major accomplishments split up between different presidential tenures.

"There was no way we could include absolutely everything, so I decided to focus on the major initiatives from each president," she said, noting the book was the result of an entire team that included President Joel Seligman, who wrote the foreword.

The book focuses on several areas of the university's growth, including what at the time of its founding was considered a radical departure from university traditions.

Since its inception the university offered two educational tracks, one that followed

the traditional bachelor of arts curriculum focusing on classical students and a revolutionary bachelor of science that omitted the study of Greek or Latin. Officials said this was a radical departure for the mid-19th century.

The book also delves into the history of women at the university. After several women's groups began lobbying the university in the 1880s, trustees agreed to admit women if \$50,000 could be raised toward the goal. When the campaign fell short, Susan B. Anthony pledged her own life insurance, allowing 33 women to matriculate in 1900.

Sports are another feature, including the university's first intercollegiate football game against Cornell in 1889, a contest UR lost 106-0. The history follows through to other triumphs, including the 1986 women's soccer team that won the NCAA Division III national championship.

The legacy of George Eastman is also covered, with a study of his philanthropy that allowed for the creation of the medical school, Eastman School of Music and the dental clinic, which today is known as the Eastman Institute of Oral Health. His gifts to the university totaled \$51 million, which UR officials note equals roughly \$800 million by today's standards.

To tell the story of UR's history, the book pulled from deep within the university's archives, said Melissa Mead, the university's archivist. In doing so the book has been able to tell the university's history in a way never done before, she added.

"We made a conscious effort to show pictures that people hadn't seen before," Mead said. "I think this really brings out history up to date and brings a big picture that we hadn't quite had before."

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