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Hampton Dunn
ARTISTIC RINGLING BUILT HOME, NOW HOUSING NEW COLLEGE

By HAMPTON DUNN

SARASOTA --- Charles Ringling was of a more conservative temperament than others among the seven famous Ringling Brothers. He devoted his energy to the business and artistic elements of the Circus, carrying on the advertising and helping create music for the show.

When his brother John settled here, Charles acquired property to the north of John’s estate and built for his wife, Edith, a marble palace. Charles lived in it only a year before his death in 1926. The widow raised their two children and the family enjoyed the spacious home through the years until her death in 1953.

Today, this handsome building houses New College, an unique approach to higher education, which moved in 1962. The house is now converted so that the second floor serves as the library, student seminar rooms, language laboratory, faculty and staff offices. The first floor is used to provide dining facilities for the students, classroom facilities and student body assembly.

The Music Room is equipped with a pipe organ and piano which were used in the Ringling days by this musically talented family. The piano, it is said, was flown down to Sarasota by Ford tri-motored plan for a house concert at which Mme. Schumann Heink appeared. The music stand was used by Fritz Kreisler.

Throughout the building are magnificent pieces of furniture. In the Reception Hall is Mrs. Ringling’s Church Pew, a 15th Century piece; there’s also a Renaissance Cabinet in the hall. The house was designed by Clas, Shepard and Clas of Milwaukee.