When Dean Glenn Hopkins entered Ventress Hall to go into the office on a November Sunday afternoon, he didn't expect to find anyone there to greet him and he certainly didn't expect to find what did greet him — about 6 inches of water on the first floor of the historic building on the campus of the University of Mississippi.

The building, built in 1889, had its water pipes in the attic. The Thursday before, a leak had caused some concern and maintenance crews were called in. “They stopped the leak at that point,” Hopkins said Wednesday, sitting in his office inside the newly renovated Ventress Hall. “The pipe broke sometime after that and the water had been running for about 48 hours.”

The ceilings were bowing down, about to cave in. The wooden floors were soaked and swollen, as well as several walls where the water ran down. The College of Liberal Arts was moved into Lester Hall so repairs could be made.

That was in November 2011 and renovations didn't begin until last summer. Two weeks ago, Hopkins and his staff were able to move back home.

“It’s great to be back in the center of campus and where we have enough room for our staff and a conference room at our disposal,” Hopkins said.

His office on the second floor was repainted but escaped any major damage. Most of the heavy damage was on the first floor and in the attic. The biggest job during construction was to move all of the water pipes out of the attic and into the basement so what happened in 2011 would never happen again.

Other work included the repair and painting of the walls, doing the ceilings and floors, rebuilding the elevator and adding additional office space on the second floor.

Part of the challenge for the construction crew was to meet the standards of renovations of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.
Hamblett’s ‘Dreams and Visions’ collection on display at University Museum

A selection of artworks by Oxford painter Thresa Hamblett, from her ‘Dreams and Visions’ collection, is on display at the University of Mississippi Museum through Nov. 2.

Romain 1905 in Lafayette County, now located in Oxford. Hamblett lived her adult life in Oxford. She began teaching at the age of 55 and continued until she was 85. She painted on her own dreams and regarded as a testament to her faith, “Dreams and Visions” was commissioned by the University of Mississippi Museum, which was later purchased by the student, Mary Faith Brunson, a 1940 Ole Miss graduate.

The Ministry of Tourism is offering a new Traveling Trunk based on Miss graduate. The University Museum is fortunate to have been bequeathed so many pieces as a testament to her faith, her own dreams and regarded her death in 1977. Based on the County community of Paris, the works.

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