



M O M E N T S

Where were you? What were you doing?
How did you first hear the news?

These are snapshots frozen in time, moments or events that captured our attention, if only for a short while. And some happened before any of us were even around, but yet we know the stories as if we'd witnessed them.

They made us laugh, cry, wonder.

For some, they are bad memories. For others, good ones.

For all, they are reminders of where we live, and how it all came about.



Sterling Hall

Aug. 24, 1970:
A day of change
for the world
as we know it

By PATRICIA SIMMS

Most people in Madison old enough to remember know where they were when a Ford Econoline van exploded outside Sterling Hall on Aug. 24, 1970, killing a young physics researcher and ripping the soul out of anti-war activity.

It was almost 4 a.m. — most folks were in bed, some awakened by what they thought was thunder. Instead, it was a bomb — more than a ton of ammonium nitrate fertilizer soaked in fuel oil. Targeted at the Army Math Research Center, a Defense Department project on the second through fourth floors, the blast decimated the UW-Madison Physics Department in the basement and first floor.

The city had been in the throes of intense protests against the Vietnam War, its diurnal rhythm marked by rallies at noon and tear gas in the night. UW-Madison matched the University of California-Berkeley on the political Richter scale.

The bombing changed what had been edginess to fear.



Officials sift for clues in the rubble after the bombing at the Army Mathematics Research Center at UW.

Bruce Fritz

