



Western Michigan University  
ScholarWorks at WMU

---

Honors Theses

Lee Honors College

---

4-19-2022

## A Walk Through Western Michigan University's History

Melissa Paduk

Western Michigan University, mpaduk6526@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors\\_theses](https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors_theses)



Part of the Public History Commons

---

### Recommended Citation

Paduk, Melissa, "A Walk Through Western Michigan University's History" (2022). *Honors Theses*. 3566.  
[https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors\\_theses/3566](https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors_theses/3566)

This Honors Thesis-Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Lee Honors College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact [wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu](mailto:wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu).



A Walk Through Western Michigan University's History

Lee Honors College Thesis

Western Michigan University

Melissa Paduk, Spring 2022

## Introduction

Prior to 1900, the State of Michigan was home to three Normal Schools, which included Eastern in Ypsilanti, Central in Mount Pleasant, and Northern in Marquette. These schools were modeled after the French *École Normale*, which specialized in training teachers.<sup>1</sup> However, none of these schools were close enough to provide for the students and future teachers of West Michigan. The need for a more localized school in West Michigan was recognized by Senator W.D. Kelley of Muskegon and Representative Henry B. Vandercook of Grand Rapids, both of whom pushed forward a bill for the creation of a fourth normal school. The bill was approved by Governor Aaron Bliss in 1903, which officially founded the Western State Normal School. After the passing of the bill, roughly 30 towns put their names in the bid for the future school's location. These towns included Allegan, Muskegon, Kalamazoo, Decatur, Three Oaks, Hastings, and Grand Rapids.<sup>2</sup>

The city of Kalamazoo rallied around the cause and was determined to be chosen for the Western State Normal School. The fundraising drive and search for an adequate location was spearheaded by the Kalamazoo Evening Telegraph's Press Club, the Kalamazoo Gazette, Mayor Samuel Folz, and local school board president Nathaniel Stewart. Kalamazoo won the bid for the school on August 28, 1903, which resulted in a new hunt for the perfect location within the city.<sup>3</sup> The land atop Prospect Hill, which was overgrown with vines and trees, was selected for its

---

<sup>1</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>. (Accessed February 17, 2022)

<sup>2</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University* (Kalamazoo, MI: New Issues Press WMU, 1980) XI.

<sup>3</sup> "The Story of Heritage Hall" (Kalamazoo, n.d.) 1.

overlook of the city, and was deeded over by George Holt in early 1904 to begin construction on the new campus.<sup>4</sup>

On April 1, 1904, Western appointed its first principal, Dwight B. Waldo. Prior to this, Waldo served as the principal at the Northern State Normal School in Marquette, as well as a professor at Beloit and Albion Colleges. Waldo oversaw the creation of Western's campus atop Prospect Hill and sought out individuals for the first faculty.<sup>5</sup> The school formally opened on June 27, 1904, with the first summer session of courses being offered at various buildings in downtown Kalamazoo, such as the Methodist Church, Manual Training facilities at Kalamazoo High School, and a building at Kalamazoo College. The first structure on the new campus was the Administration Building, which was completed in 1905, and was used to welcome the first full academic year of students. Roughly 107 students enrolled for the fall term and could expect to pay around \$5 per class, depending on the course type.<sup>6</sup> In 1905, the average salary was between \$200 and \$400 a year, with the average wage being around 22 cents per hour.<sup>7</sup> After the first few years of operation, Waldo's title of principal was officially changed to the president in 1908, in order to reflect the school's growing status as an institution.<sup>8</sup>

Due to its status as a teacher's institution, Western offered extension programs for students looking to earn a life certificate in teaching, in addition to a three-year program and a rural school course of study. These programs depended on whether the student graduated from high school and what their interests were in teaching. Each of the programs required student

---

<sup>4</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953* (Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan College of Education, 1953) 6.

<sup>5</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>7</sup> "Guided Tour Binder" (Kalamazoo, n.d.).

<sup>8</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, 1.

teaching experience or residences as part of the curriculum, which would later become a cornerstone of Western's campus life. Within the first 20 years, Western began offering four-year degrees in addition to the two-year programs which would continue to be offered until the 1960s. The number of programs offered also kept pace with campus growth, expanding from 78 courses to 580 within the first 30 years.<sup>9</sup> Due to this exponential growth within its first few decades, the Western State Normal School officially became the Western State Teachers College on May 12, 1927.<sup>10</sup>

Western continued under the direction of President Waldo until the mid-1930s when he began to decline in health. In 1936, Paul V. Sangren was sworn in as president of the institution.<sup>11</sup> While Waldo had spearheaded the development of the original campus, President Sangren focused on the expansion of Western, which included securing additional land away from Prospect Hill. On May 20, 1941, the name of the institution was changed once again from the Western State Teachers College to the Western Michigan College of Education. In 1944, Anna Karsten Kanley, the mother of Western alumnus William Kanley, gifted \$75,000 from her son's estate for the development of the campus.<sup>12</sup> This gift, in addition to \$75,000 provided by the State of Michigan legislature, allowed the institution to purchase land across Stadium Drive that would be home to the new West Campus.<sup>13</sup> President Sangren's first priority upon securing this land was the construction of residence halls for students and additional classroom spaces. As

---

<sup>9</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>12</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>13</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, 24.

this campus continued to develop over the latter half of the 1900s and early 2000s, it became known as Western's Main Campus.<sup>14</sup>

As a result of campus and curriculum expansion, Western Michigan College of Education became Western Michigan College in 1955.<sup>15</sup> This status lasted roughly two years before the Michigan legislature signed a bill in February of 1957 to officially give the current name of Western Michigan University.<sup>16</sup> Today, the university offers a multitude of programs for students outside of education and continues to develop both the Main Campus and its original home atop Prospect Hill.

### **Prospect Hill/Davis Field**

Before the creation of the Western State Normal School, the land on which the campus would develop was used for a much different purpose. The hilltop was acquired in the 1880s by George Holt and was marked by grapevines, pear trees, and various sledding courses and footpaths. The future site of Michigan's fourth normal school was originally utilized as the Prospect Hill Vineyards, which gave it the name Prospect Hill.<sup>17</sup> Due in part to its steep sides and large sandpit on the north end, the vineyard fell into disrepair and soon became an eyesore for the Kalamazoo community.<sup>18</sup> During this time, the legislature was being introduced to create a new normal school in west Michigan, followed by the hunt for the school's new home.

Once the bill to officially establish the Western State Normal School was signed by Governor Aaron Bliss in May of 1903, the State Board of Education began the selection process

---

<sup>14</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, 18.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, XI.

<sup>17</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century* (Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University, 2003) 2.

<sup>18</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 6.

for the school's location. Over thirty communities, including Decatur, Grand Rapids, Three Oaks, and Muskegon, put their names in the bid. Shortly after the city of Kalamazoo was chosen, Prospect Hill was selected as the new home for the school.<sup>19</sup> In March of 1904, the land was officially deeded over to the State Board of Education and work began on the Administration Building in May of that same year.<sup>20</sup> Multiple architects and planners were commissioned by Western to put together their design ideas for the new campus, most notably being the Olmsted Brothers of Massachusetts and Ernest W. Arnold. The plans designed by the Olmsted Brothers, however, were not implemented due to the lack of funds, and E.W. Arnold was chosen as the architect for the new campus.<sup>21</sup>

The land atop Prospect Hill underwent many transformations while it became the home of Western State Normal School. As new buildings were being constructed, new elements were added to make transportation up the hill easier for students and faculty. This included a wooden staircase that stretched from Davis Street to the steps of the Administration Building, which was built by President Waldo and other faculty.<sup>22</sup> An incline railroad was also built on the hill's northeastern side to help transport personnel up from the surrounding neighborhoods.<sup>23</sup> In addition to the physical changes, Prospect Hill also became known as the "Normal Hill", in reference to the new Normal School. Changes were also happening in the field located at the base of the hill, which is now known as Davis Field.<sup>24</sup> Around 1905, clay tennis courts were erected around the Normal Hill, which allowed students to take part in more extracurricular

---

<sup>19</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, XI.

<sup>20</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 6.

<sup>21</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

<sup>22</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 18.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

activities.<sup>25</sup> These courts were utilized from this time until the Summer of 1990 when they were removed to create a football practice field that is still used today.<sup>26</sup>

Over the last few decades, East Campus and Prospect Hill have undergone multiple changes that reflect the transformations going on within the university. Although the Olmsted Brothers' landscape plans, which included a vista overlook and garden paths, were not chosen for the original campus design due to the lack of funds, some elements were implemented during the early 2010s renovations of East Campus. These renovations include the transformation of the Administration Building to the new Heritage Hall, which serves as the WMU Alumni Center. The grounds surrounding the new building draw inspiration from the original Olmsted plans with the sidewalk paths and vista overlooking downtown Kalamazoo.<sup>27</sup>

### **Heritage Hall/Gymnasium**

The first building that was constructed for the Western State Normal School was the Administration Building. While the Normal School was officially founded in 1903, the first structure was not completed until 1905 due to delays in obtaining the property deed and the construction timeline.<sup>28</sup> Various architects and contractors were commissioned for their ideas but ultimately architect Ernest W. Arnold was chosen for the construction of the Administration Building, with the help of Rickman and Sons Construction and contractor Albert White.<sup>29</sup> The two-story brick building was constructed in the classical revival architectural style that included a Greek-inspired portico with classical columns that overlooked downtown Kalamazoo.

---

<sup>25</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 62.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

<sup>27</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

<sup>28</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 7.

<sup>29</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

Contrasting masonry was also added around the building to give the look of additional columns and the roofline was decorated with an ornamental balustrade with a central cupola. The columned entrance on the east side of the building featured Romanesque arched windows over the main doors that could be seen from the street at the base of Prospect Hill. Being the first building constructed on the new campus, it created a home and centralized location for the school.<sup>30</sup>

Prior to the construction of the Administration Building, classes through the Normal School were held in various buildings throughout the city of Kalamazoo, such as the Kalamazoo County Courthouse and the Vine Street School.<sup>31</sup> The new building atop Prospect Hill, measuring around 35,000 square feet, included spaces for twelve classrooms, administrative offices, recitation rooms, and an auditorium with 400 seats.<sup>32</sup> After a few years, two classrooms were transformed into a library and a reading room, which held around 2,000 volumes by the beginning of the school's third year.<sup>33</sup> Although the Administration Building met the needs of the Normal School, President Waldo continued his plans to expand the campus and create more space for students.

In 1905, over \$60,000 was appropriated for the construction of a new gymnasium and an additional \$12,000 for new recitation rooms. The contract for the new structure was awarded to E.W. Arnold, the same architect who had spearheaded the construction of the Administration Building, in 1907 and the building was completed in 1908. This new structure was constructed as

---

<sup>30</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 16-17.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-13.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>33</sup> "Anna French Recalls First Library: 'A Happy Place in Which to Work,'" *Western Michigan College News Magazine*, 1955, 13 edition, sec. 2, 13.

an addition to the Administration Building and was designed to blend in with the original architectural style. Also constructed out of brick, the two-story gymnasium featured a columned portico and ornamental molding, as well as an arched window over the main entrance. At almost 40,000 square feet, it provided room for offices, an expanded library, and a state-of-the-art gym, which included showers, a swimming pool, a running track, and batting cages.<sup>34</sup> As new buildings were constructed on campus, spaces in the original building started to become reutilized as more departments were moved.

With the construction of North Hall in 1924, the library was moved from the space in the Administration Building to its newly expanded home, which allowed for more volumes to be collected and used by students.<sup>35</sup> In a similar way, the gym attached to the Administration Building also underwent transformations of its own. This addition served the entire student body both as a gymnasium and as a social activities space until 1925 when it was designated as the Ladies' Gymnasium. This was due to the construction of the Oakland Gym, which would be utilized as the Men's Gymnasium until the early 2000s.<sup>36</sup> Another transformation that took place was the change in name from the Administration Building to the Education Building in 1952, which was due to the newly constructed Seibert Administration Building on what is now Western's Main Campus. Due to the rapid changes taking place on campus during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Education Building continued to change names and purposes until the late 1960s.<sup>37</sup> In 1964, the building was known as the Education Building University High Gymnasium/University Elementary School until 1967 when it was renamed East Hall.<sup>38</sup> Aside

---

<sup>34</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>35</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 103.

<sup>36</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

<sup>37</sup> "Buildings and Grounds - Undergraduate Catalog" (Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University, 1968).

<sup>38</sup> "East Hall Date," East Hall Date, 2015.

from the numerous name changes, East Hall continued to serve the campus as a teaching facility until the 1990s, when it was utilized for art studios by students and faculty, as well as the University Archives. This name change to East Hall lasted until the renovations of the mid-2010s when the structure was renovated as the Alumni Center and named Heritage Hall.<sup>39</sup>

In 2015, the WMU Board of Trustees voted to change the name of East Hall to reflect the new Alumni Center. The remodel of East Hall resulted in new spaces for a ballroom, library, café, and various conference rooms, as well as the Office for Development and Alumni Relations. It was renovated by Tower Pinkster and The Christman Company while using the historical preservation company of Hopkins Burns Design Studio and is around 53,000 square feet. The gymnasium addition, however, was demolished and only the original Administration Building was used to create the new alumni space.<sup>40</sup>

## **Training School**

Soon after the opening of the gymnasium addition in 1908, over \$60,000 was appropriated by the state legislature for a new structure to be built on Western's campus.<sup>41</sup> This building, which would not be attached to the Administration Building, would house classrooms and office spaces for the Training School.<sup>42</sup> The contract for the new school was awarded to Ernest W. Arnold in August of 1908 and work began in 1909.<sup>43</sup> Between the founding of the Western State Normal School and the construction of the Training School, teaching classes took place in city school buildings before being moved to their new home atop Prospect Hill.<sup>44</sup> The

---

<sup>39</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

<sup>40</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

<sup>41</sup> The cost of this building equals approximately \$1,875,025.09 in 2022, as stated by the CPI Inflation Calculator <https://www.officialdata.org/us/inflation/1908?amount=60000>

<sup>42</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 24.

<sup>43</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," n.d.

<sup>44</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, XI.

building was officially opened in Fall 1909 and, with over 35,000 square feet, had accommodations for kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>45</sup> The classrooms were organized around a central rotunda on both floors that allowed for interactions between faculty and students, which was modeled after the ideas of education philosopher and reformer, John Dewey.<sup>46</sup> Not only did the new school building provide more space for Western's expansion, but it also provided a space for teaching experience for the education students.

As a Normal School, Western offered three programs for students to become teachers, which included a life certificate program, a three-year certificate program, and a rural school course program. The life certificate program would allow students to earn their certificate to teach for life and required two years of instruction if the student had graduated from high school. The three-year program included one calendar year of residence for those who graduated from high school and would allow recipients to teach for three years. Lastly, the rural school course only required the student to graduate from 8<sup>th</sup> grade and complete seven terms of work at Western. Since having an internship or student teaching experience was a requirement of the curriculum, having a Training School on campus was very beneficial to Western students and allowed them to get professional teaching experience.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to classroom space, the Training School was also utilized as a cafeteria, which was located in the basement. This space was overseen by Grace Moore, who would prepare the food at her home and bring it to the school via horse-drawn hack. During World War I, the cafeteria was converted into a mess hall for the Student Army Training Corps trainees.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary,"

<sup>46</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>47</sup> Leo C. Stine, *Western - A Twentieth Century University*, 2.

<sup>48</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 35.

When first constructed, the Training School was separate from the Administration Building, an arrangement that remained in place until the late 1940s. However, in 1948, an annex was constructed that connected the two floors of both buildings. This space, which totaled just over 2,600 square feet, included offices for the Training School administration and replaced the uncovered bridge that had existed prior. After this addition, the Training School, the Administration Building, and the gymnasium were finally joined together.<sup>49</sup>

Due to the renovations to East Campus during the early 2010s, the Training School building was demolished, and the site is now being used as a parking lot for Heritage Hall.<sup>50</sup>

### **East Campus Walkway**

As Western's campus continued to expand in the early 1900s, more avenues were explored to help students and faculty reach the buildings atop Prospect Hill. At this time, there were no residence halls or housing facilities that had been constructed by the college to house personnel. This remained the case until 1938 when the first dormitory for women and union building was built on campus. Due to this, students and faculty had to reside in the neighborhoods surrounding the Teacher's College, most notably along Davis Street.<sup>51</sup> During this time, methods of transportation were fairly limited and the trek up the side of Prospect Hill was only remediated with footpaths and faculty-constructed staircases. In 1908, however, President Waldo recognized the concerns of students and faculty climbing the steep steps,

---

<sup>49</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 4.

<sup>50</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>51</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

especially in the winter months, and decided to investigate the idea of constructing a railroad to serve the campus populations as another mode of transportation.<sup>52</sup>

In 1908, President Waldo confirmed the construction of the railroad and allocated \$3,500 for its construction. The double-track railway was built at the northeast corner of Prospect Hill and stretched down to Davis Street with two stairways on either side. The railroad consisted of two cars that moved opposite each other, with one rising up the hill as the other descended.<sup>53</sup> Although they moved opposite, both cars were operated by a stationary electric motor that was situated at the top of the slope. During the railroad's existence, there were only two conductors that operated the motor, William Champion and Alfred Colvin.<sup>54</sup> The railroad officially opened in 1908 and instantly became a focal point for campus personnel and the greater Kalamazoo community.<sup>55</sup>

During its years of service, the railroad went by many names, such as the Western State Normal Railroad, Toonerville Trolley, and the Normal Railroad. This new construction served as an alternative to the wooden 150-step climb or the route along Asylum Avenue, which is now known as Oakland Drive. Students living in the Davis neighborhood and other areas around campus took advantage of the new transportation, which resulted in a peak use of around 2,280 people a day.<sup>56</sup> On a typical day, a trip on the trolley would take around one minute, which resulted in roughly fifty trips per hour, and could accommodate up to 16 passengers in each car

---

<sup>52</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 23.

<sup>53</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 19.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>55</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 23.

<sup>56</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

via bench seating. Rides on the trolley were free of charge, except when first-year students were taxed by the upperclassmen.<sup>57</sup>

The Western State Normal Railroad was a prominent feature of Western's campus until the late 1940s when it began to need repairs, which totaled around \$5,000. In addition to the needed repairs, the trolley's use was also starting to dwindle with the construction of residence halls on campus and the increasing number of automobiles.<sup>58</sup> More students moved into the on-campus housing which resulted in a decreasing need to travel up and down the hill. Due to these factors, the railroad was officially closed in 1949. In 1951, the tracks were torn up and the cars were sold for scrap.<sup>59</sup> The site of the trolley and staircases was renovated and is now known as the East Campus Walkway, which is still being utilized as a staircase to connect the top of Prospect Hill with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Although the Toonerville Trolley's existence at Western's campus ended in 1949, the memories and legacy of the railroad continued for generations after its closure. While preparing for the university's centennial celebration in 2003, four engineering students decided to use their senior project to pay homage to the Normal Railroad by building a replica of one of the cars. This task proved quite difficult as none of the original blueprints or construction plans had survived. The students, Jeff Clausen, Corey Hendrix, Aron Murphy, and Brian VanderPloeg, utilized photographs, written descriptions, and the only surviving trolley bench in order to construct the replica. Once completed, the trolley car was unveiled at the Western Michigan University Alumni Association-sponsored breakfast and later displayed in front of the Bernhard Center on the Main Campus. This replica represented the importance of the railroad to Western's

---

<sup>57</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 22.

<sup>58</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 23.

<sup>59</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 22.

students and history, as well as the status that it held across the country. The Western State Normal Railroad was classified and officially registered as a railroad, which made it the only known incline railroad in the history of the state of Michigan. It was featured in newspapers from Chicago to Detroit during its peak use and could be the only railroad that has ever been owned or operated by a college or university. Aside from its role in Michigan history, the memories of the trolley still serve as a reminder of Western's first years atop Prospect Hill and provides insight into student life during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>60</sup>

### **North Hall**

The third building constructed atop Prospect Hill was the Library Building, which is now known as North Hall. Prior to its construction, Western's library was housed first in the original Administration Building before being moved to the gymnasium addition in 1908. As the Normal School continued to grow, so did the number of books being collected, and a new space was soon required.<sup>61</sup> Under the supervision of architects Henry H. Turner and Victor E. Thebaud, ground was officially broken in May 1923 at the north end of Western's campus. The building, at just under 34,000 square feet, incorporated some exterior design elements of the Administration and Science Buildings.<sup>62</sup> The main entrance was located on the south side and was detailed with a classical stone portico that surrounded the arched doors. The columns, however, were smaller than those on the Administration Building but still tied in with the classical influences.<sup>63</sup> The library was built into the side of the small hill on the north end and included a clock displayed above the main entrance, as well as prominent vertical bands of contrasting masonry that

---

<sup>60</sup> "The Western Trolley Replica Display," Map case 12, drawer 2, Zhang Legacy Collections Center, Kalamazoo, MI

<sup>61</sup> Diekema/Hamann Architects Incorporated, "Building Audit of North Hall" (Kalamazoo, MI, 1996).

<sup>62</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 2.

<sup>63</sup> Diekema/Hamann Architects Incorporated, "Building Audit of North Hall"

emphasized the building's horizontal nature. The location of the library cemented the formation of the central quad atop Prospect Hill, which would soon become the heart of the Western State Normal School.<sup>64</sup>

Since the building was built into the hillside, it appeared from the front to only have two stories, when in fact it had three. One of the most prominent features of this structure was the two-story reading room which could house up to 300 researchers at once. This grand space was decorated with arched windows, vaulted ceilings, and decorative pilasters, as well as paintings and other artworks from Albert M. Todd, the founder of the A.M. Todd Company. These paintings would ultimately become the foundation of Western's permanent collection of art.<sup>65</sup> One of the most well-known features of the reading room is the limestone fireplace, which weighed just over seven tons.<sup>66</sup> Aside from the library space, the building was also home to staff workrooms, classrooms, lecture rooms, and other spaces to store library materials.<sup>67</sup> This building was constructed to hold up to 100,000 volumes for the library, which allowed the collections and school to expand until the mid-1900s.<sup>68</sup>

In 1954, the collections started to outgrow the Library Building and a new library was constructed on the West Campus in 1958. With more spaces available in the new Waldo Library, the original library building was renovated to become the College of Business. One of the biggest changes was the infilling of a second floor in the reading room to create more spaces for offices and classrooms. In 1966, the building was officially renamed North Hall.<sup>69</sup> The building

---

<sup>64</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

<sup>67</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 28.

<sup>68</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>69</sup> Miller-Davis Company (Kalamazoo, MI, n.d.).

was still partially utilized as a branch library, as it contained the College of Business' collections, and continued to be used for classes until the 1990s.<sup>70</sup> When the new College of Business complex was constructed on what is now Western's Main Campus, the building on East Campus became home to various administrative offices, as well as the Psychology and Math departments.<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, however, these departments soon moved into their new facilities on the Main Campus and the building fell into disrepair.

In 2013, Western's administration formed a new plan for the space atop Prospect Hill which resulted in North Hall being demolished. A few elements of the building were saved from destruction, such as some of the marble from the original stairways and the southern façade that used to be the main entrance. This structure now serves as a backdrop for photos and still displays the name North Hall above the old entrance. The limestone fireplace that was the centerpiece in the original reading room was also salvaged from demolition and is now located in one of the conference rooms in Heritage Hall. This grand fireplace is also accompanied by its original stanchions and screen, where it continues to serve as a reminder of North Hall and its magnificent reading room.<sup>72</sup>

## **West Hall**

Nearly ten years after the construction of the Administration Building, plans began to form for a second building atop Prospect Hill. In 1913, the State Board of Education allocated \$75,000 for a new science building, with an additional \$10,000 being set aside for equipment. The contract was awarded to Ernest W. Arnold, the same architect who had designed Western's

---

<sup>70</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>71</sup> "Same Doorway -- New Tenant," *WMU News Magazine*, 1959, Vol. 17, #1.

<sup>72</sup> "Guided Tour Binder"

original structure, in November of that year, and the building was completed in 1915. Due to its location on the west side of the hill, the Science Building was the first structure on campus that was not able to be seen from downtown Kalamazoo.<sup>73</sup> E.W. Arnold designed the structure to mimic the design of the Administration Building and gymnasium addition. The exterior was constructed with classically detailed brickwork with a terracotta portico. Similar to the Administration Building, the Science Building featured arched windows over the main entrance and contrasting masonry to give the look of additional columns. The building also features an ornamental balustrade that extends around the roofline.<sup>74</sup>

Built with over 42,000 square feet, the three-story building was designated as the home for the natural sciences department and included classrooms, lecture halls, and laboratories. Once opened, it was utilized by the departments of psychology, biology, chemistry, botany, and physics, as well as a greenhouse located on the southern end for use by the various programs.<sup>75</sup> In the Psychology Department, Professor Roger Ulrich taught his classes about ecologically sensitive practices, which included refurbishing oak chairs from North Hall to be used in West Hall classrooms and laboratory spaces, as well as the Lake Village farming community. By refinishing these chairs, Ulrich and his students were able to preserve small aspects of Western's history while also giving them new life.<sup>76</sup> This building also became the temporary home for the school's Health Service Center, Department of Business Information Systems, and Speech Correction Clinic before they were moved over to the Health and Personnel Building in the 1940s. As Western continued to transform and more buildings were constructed, the Science

---

<sup>73</sup> James O. Knauss, *History of Western State Teachers College 1904-1929* (Kalamazoo, MI: Western State Teachers College, 1929) 31.

<sup>74</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>75</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 37.

<sup>76</sup> "Professor Saves Furniture of University's Past," *Western Herald*, March 20, 1997, p. 3.

Building slowly became a middle ground for many different departments during the moving process and was later renamed due to its changing use.<sup>77</sup>

Due to its location on the west side of Prospect Hill, the Science Building was renamed West Hall and formed the central quad, with the Administration Building and North Hall on the other two sides. During the first few decades of the Western State Normal School, this centralized area was the heart of campus and the place where students interacted between classes. After falling out of use due to the various new constructions and upgraded plans for East Campus, West Hall was demolished in 2013. The former site of the building, however, was not reutilized and the area now serves as a green space.<sup>78</sup>

### **Upholstery Shop**

At the same time as the Science Building's construction, another structure was being built just down the hill on Oakland Drive. In 1914, the contract was awarded to architect Ernest W. Arnold for the construction of a heating plant that would power the new Science Building, as well as the other structures located on Prospect Hill. Completed in 1915, the two-story brick structure took inspiration from the classical revival architectural style and featured a terra cotta cornice with stone coping. The building also included steel sash windows and a flat roof.<sup>79</sup> Due to its purpose as the heating plant, a tunnel was also constructed to house the pipes that ran between the Heating Plant and the Science Building. Since the tunnel went up through the hillside, another smaller structure was built to connect the two sections and allowed maintenance workers to traverse the tunnel. This building's purpose has changed many times since its

---

<sup>77</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> "East Campus Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1978), Section 7, p.5.

construction in 1915, due to the evolution of Western's needs and the availability of space for various departments.<sup>80</sup>

The Heating Plant provided the school with heat through steam radiators until the 1920s when the State began providing the central heating for both the Western State Normal School and the Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital.<sup>81</sup> After this switch, the building was renamed the Garage and the space was reutilized for garage quarters, which lasted until the mid-1950s. At this time, the building was reutilized again for electronics classrooms for the Department of Engineering and was named the Electronics Building. The structure served in this capacity for roughly ten years before being transformed once again for the Department of Safety and Security, which lasted until 1970.<sup>82</sup> For around 35 years, the building was known as the Upholstery Shop and was used as a workshop for recovering furniture by Western faculty, including Bart L. Leatherman, Robert G. Swinehart, and Peggy J. Swinehart. In 2006, the building was renamed the Industrial Design Building and is now known by either this name or as the Upholstery Shop. Despite the demolition of West Hall in 2013, this building, along with the tunnel structure, was left intact.<sup>83</sup>

### **Waldo's Boulder/Eddie's Lane**

One of the oldest buildings that became a part of Western's campus was the Eames Mill, which was located near the intersection of Oakland Drive and Stadium Drive. This building dates back to the 1840s when it was built by Lovett Eames, who came to Kalamazoo from New York

---

<sup>80</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> "Buildings and Grounds - Undergraduate Catalog" (Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University, 1968).

<sup>83</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

in 1834.<sup>84</sup> Eames, who was an active machinist, bought the land in 1845 which included a three-acre pond. Shortly after purchasing the land, Eames built the mill to provide waterpower and to serve as a workshop for wagon wheels, wooden water pipes, and hub and spoke machines. Unfortunately, Eames was killed in an explosion and the land was inherited by his grandson, Gardner Eames. The mill sat vacant between 1915 and 1916 before it was purchased by Western's president, Dwight B. Waldo, in November of 1916.<sup>85</sup> The building was transformed during World War I to be used for manual arts classes before being used for courses in the industrial arts, which included a machine shop.<sup>86</sup> Located next to the mill, a shed was used to house the Dr. Charles Van Riper Speech Clinic, which was used until the late 1930s when the clinic was relocated to the Health Services Building.<sup>87</sup> Around 1922, the department of manual arts moved into its new structure and the Department of Dramatic Arts began to utilize the space. Known as the Western Normal Players, the department built a stage in the old mill and soon referred to it as the "Playhouse". The first public production in the Playhouse was *Beyond the Horizon* and was directed by Laura Shaw. Unfortunately, the building was condemned in 1923 due to safety concerns. The Western Players, however, continued to use the space for drama classes and rehearsals for the next 20 years. Due to the lack of adequate space for the dramatic arts, a new building was constructed in April 1942, and the mill was demolished shortly after. Many of the thespians were saddened by the planned razing of the building, especially Laura Shaw. In an effort to save the building, Shaw had an architect draw up plans for a restoration

---

<sup>84</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 30.

<sup>85</sup> "The Old Playhouse Was the Thing for Laura Shaw," *Encore Magazine of the Arts*, April 1977, pp. 11.

<sup>86</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 52.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

campaign, but the building's fate was sealed. Fortunately, Shaw was able to salvage some of the bricks which were incorporated into her residence's backyard barbecue.<sup>88</sup>

The site of the former Eames Mill is now the location of President Dwight B. Waldo's boulder, which is situated near the intersection of Oakland Drive and Stadium Drive. Growing up in Plainwell, Michigan, President Waldo always admired this boulder, and these feelings carried over into his adult life. In 1944, Western's Men's Alumni Club raised money to have the boulder brought to Kalamazoo in order to pay homage to President Waldo's service to Western. Today, the boulder displays a plaque that commemorates the legacy of President Waldo and the why it was relocated.<sup>89</sup>

Also located at this site is the street that was named after Eddie Powless, who was a bus driver for Western between 1942 and 1975. The street, which was dedicated to Powless in 1956, is a small one-way that connects Stadium Drive to Oakland Drive and was used throughout the latter half of the 1900s as the primary route for students traveling between campuses. Powless was best known for driving the bus that carried Western students from West Campus, which is now known as Main Campus, to East Campus, or vice versa. Powless' bus was one of the most popular modes of transportation at the time due to the limited number of students that had cars on campus.<sup>90</sup> Today, this stretch of road is still used as a one-way to get to Oakland Drive from Stadium Drive.

## **Barracks/Classrooms**

---

<sup>88</sup> "The Old Playhouse Was the Thing for Laura Shaw," 11.

<sup>89</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 85.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

On April 4, 1917, the United States entered into World War I and priorities began changing to reflect the overall needs of the country. Around 1917, President Waldo set out to secure Western's status as a Student Army Training Corps (SATC) in order to attract students who were interested in military training. This status was granted in June 1918, and, with the help of Dr. William Brown, President Waldo traveled across Michigan for recruiting.<sup>91</sup> In September 1918, over 350 trainees, nicknamed the "boys", arrived on campus to participate in basic training courses, along with traditional classes. At this time, the housing for the trainees was not completed, which resulted in cots being placed in the Science Building's basement and around the pool deck in the gymnasium. After the first week of courses, Western hosted a ceremony where the recruits were officially inducted into the U.S. Army and later that year, the barracks were completed.<sup>92</sup>

In October 1918, the trainees in Western's Student Army Training Corps finally had designated housing when the barracks were officially completed. Erected with the help of the United States Government, the two-story wood-frame building was roughly 8,000 square feet and was primarily utilized as sleeping quarters.<sup>93</sup> However, the building did not serve in this capacity as long as it had intended due to the armistice that was reached in November 1918. Because of this, none of the recruits in the SATC went to battle and the corps was officially disbanded on December 21, 1918. The original barracks were remodeled after the war ended to be used as classroom space and was later renamed the Temporary Building.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>94</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 124.

The barracks was not the only temporary building constructed around this time to keep up with Western's changing student body. Between 1918 and 1948, around five other temporary buildings were constructed to serve as classrooms or storage spaces. In 1928, two wooden structures and a small fieldhouse were built just south of the Men's Gymnasium. These one-story buildings each had space for two classrooms which were used for business and English instruction. Another smaller building was constructed adjacent to these temporary classrooms as a storage space for the theatre department. In addition to these structures, Western also constructed tennis courts near this complex for the Physical Education curriculum.<sup>95</sup>

These structures were utilized until the early 1930s when they were no longer needed due to falling enrollment during the Great Depression. Another factor that contributed to the razing of these buildings was the future plans for expanding the athletic fields, which are now part of Waldo Stadium. Presently, the site of these former buildings is used as a parking lot for Waldo Stadium and for parking near other buildings.<sup>96</sup>

## **Physical Plant**

Due to the expansion of Western and the growth of departments, a new building was required to house the manual and industrial arts programs. The Industrial Arts Building, also known temporarily as the Manual Arts Building, was constructed in 1921 and the departments were moved over from the Eames Mill in 1922.<sup>97</sup> Constructed by Henry H. Turner, the one-story structure was the first permanent building that was not located on the land of the original

---

<sup>95</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary,"

<sup>96</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 29.

<sup>97</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary"

campus.<sup>98</sup> The plans for the building were first introduced in 1916 and included three other structures, but World War I limited the availability of funding, which resulted in only one being constructed right after the war.<sup>99</sup> The exterior of the building included the words “Manual Arts” above the southwest entrance and the space around the building provided more parking for faculty members who owned automobiles.<sup>100</sup> The Industrial Arts Building included an automobile shop, a woodworking room, tool rooms, offices, as well as spaces for sheet metal work, blacksmithing, and welding. There was also classroom space that was used for courses in cabinet construction, wood finishing, pattern making, architectural drafting, and automobile repair.<sup>101</sup> One of the key features of the automobile shop was the overhead trolley system that allowed engines to be carried around and worked on in different spaces throughout the building.<sup>102</sup> The auto mechanics department was under the direction of Elmer C. Weaver and provided opportunities for students to learn more about high-demand skills, such as engineering and automobile repair.<sup>103</sup>

Over twenty years later, the building became known as the Maintenance Building and was expanded to include new spaces for classrooms and offices, as well as garages. This renovation included a two-story addition, which totaled around 21,000 square feet, designed by architect Ralph C. Calder. With this addition, the entire building provided roughly 45,000 square feet of workspace and continued to be used as the university garage.<sup>104</sup> Today, the building is

---

<sup>98</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. “WMU Campus History” [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>99</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 41.

<sup>100</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. “WMU Campus History” [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>101</sup> “Plans Complete for Manual Training Shop,” *Western Normal Herald*, May 5, 1920.

<sup>102</sup> “Handsome Manual Arts Building to Be Erected,” *Western Normal Herald*, August 25, 1920, 1.

<sup>103</sup> “What They Do in the Auto Shop,” *Western Normal Herald*, May 5, 1920.

<sup>104</sup> University Libraries, “Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary”

known as the Physical Plant and is home to the university's transportation services. Although the purpose has changed since the building's construction, hints of its former use can still be seen in the words "Manual Arts" that are still located above the entrance.

### **Mechanical Trades Building**

In April of 1940, the Michigan State Board of Education accepted a gift of around \$60,000 from the W.E. Upjohn Unemployment Trustee Corporation for the construction of a new building just west of the Industrial Arts complex. An additional \$10,000 was also provided to Western to aid in the completion of the building that would be used for Aviation Training.<sup>105</sup> The contract was awarded in June 1941 to the architectural firm of Stewart-Kingscott Corporation.<sup>106</sup> Completed later that same year, the new two-story Aviation Building featured concrete walls with block and brick accents, steel sash windows, and wooden doors. Both front entrances, on the northwest and southeast sides of the structure, were decorated with concrete ornamentations that displayed airplane propellers, which hinted at the building's original purpose.<sup>107</sup> Aside from the building's value to the aviation department, the building also brought the value of Western's campus up by \$1,441,000 without appropriations from the state legislature. The Aviation Training Building was not the only building that followed this model, with the others including Walwood Hall, Vandercook Hall, Spindler Hall, the Health and Personnel Building, and Waldo Stadium.<sup>108</sup>

The interior of the building was also well-equipped to accommodate the airplane mechanics department and other vocational education. The center of the building was utilized for

---

<sup>105</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 39.

<sup>106</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 3.

<sup>107</sup> Stewart-Kingscott Company. Aviation Mechanics Building, May 31, 1941, Map case 12, drawer 6, 1.

<sup>108</sup> "Campus Value up \$1,441,000 in Four Years," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, October 30, 1911.

airplane assembly and overhauling, while the office spaces around this central room were in a u-shape. The spaces included an airplane engine testing room, engine repair shop, spray booth, sheet metal shop, instrument laboratory, blueprint rooms, classrooms, and a library. Students had the opportunity to develop a multitude of hands-on skills related to airplane mechanics, as there were five airplanes available for instructional use. These planes included a Parks Biplane with a 175-horsepower engine, as well as an Aeronca sport monoplane that featured an 85-horsepower engine.<sup>109</sup> The building was primarily utilized for aviation training until 1967 when it was renovated by Louis C. Kingscott to become the Industrial Tech Building.<sup>110</sup>

The last renovation done to the building was completed in 1980, when it was repurposed for the university's printing services.<sup>111</sup> Due to its new purpose, the building was renamed Brink Printing Services after Lawrence J. Brink as a retirement salute by the Board of Trustees. Brink graduated from Western in 1940 and served as the director of printing services, during which he developed and implemented a printing management curriculum and contributed to the production of the Western Herald.<sup>112</sup> This building conversion was completed by Louis C. Kingscott in 1980 and included the addition of a stereotype, type shop, pressrooms, composing rooms, wire room, photo studio, and a newspaper press.<sup>113</sup> Most of Western's publications during this time were printed in this building, which continued until other printing service centers began being constructed in Kalamazoo. Due to its decreased use, the building was torn down to make room for the construction of the Seelye Center which began in 2001. The site was not totally

---

<sup>109</sup> "Campus Value up \$1,441,000 in Four Years," *Kalamazoo Gazette*.

<sup>110</sup> Louis C. Kingscott & Associates Incorporated. Aviation Building - Printing Press Conversion, November 15, 1966, Map case 12, drawer 6, 1.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> "Building to Be Named For Brink," *Western News*, May 19, 1980, p. 2.

<sup>113</sup> Louis C. Kingscott & Associates Incorporated. Aviation Building - Printing Press Conversion.

incorporated into the new athletic facilities and is now being used as part of the parking lot for the Physical Plant and stadium.<sup>114</sup>

## **Seelye Center**

Although the first gymnasium on Western's campus was included in the addition to the Administration Building, a new state-of-the-art gym was planned in 1924. The construction, which was led by Henry H. Turner and Victor E. Thebaud, officially broke ground on June 4, 1924, and the construction was finished in a record time for the school's history of construction.<sup>115</sup> Named for its location on Oakland Drive, the Oakland Gymnasium's dedication ceremony was held on June 19, 1925, and was attended by nationally famous athletic directors, including Alonzo Stagg of the University of Chicago, Fielding H. Yost of the University of Michigan, and Western's own William H. Spaulding.<sup>116</sup> Once the building was finished, it also became known as the Men's Gymnasium and the original gym atop Prospect Hill became the Ladies' Gymnasium. At approximately 60,000 square feet, it was regarded as the largest gymnasium in any American teacher's training institution at the time, as well as the largest gym devoted exclusively for men out of the other teacher training institutions.<sup>117</sup>

This state-of-the-art facility included two stories and plenty of space for physical education activities. Included in these spaces was a regulation basketball court with three cross courts, a 14-lap cork track, locker rooms, a vaulting and jumping pit, a dirt floor for various field events, archery/golf alleys, handball courts, classrooms, offices, and a 50-caliber rifle range for

---

<sup>114</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>115</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 2.

<sup>116</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 28.

<sup>117</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 54.

use by the ROTC program.<sup>118</sup> The space was also used for various social events before the Walwood Union Building was built in 1938.<sup>119</sup>

The Oakland Gymnasium continued to serve as a physical education space until it was demolished in 2001. However, the façade of the structure was saved and was later incorporated into the new Seelye Indoor Athletic Facility.<sup>120</sup> Completed in 2003 by Kalleward and Associates in partnership with Eckert-Wordell Architects, the Seelye Center is roughly 121,000 square feet and connects to Waldo Stadium.<sup>121</sup> Named after Donald “J” Seelye, the center includes classrooms, weight rooms, a practice field utilized by multiple sports teams, conference rooms, and locker rooms.<sup>122</sup>

### **Vandercook Hall**

Shortly after the construction of the first dormitory for women in 1938, plans were put in place to construct a residence hall for men. The contract for the new construction was awarded to Malcomson, Calder, and Hammond Incorporated, and the building was completed in 1939 with funds from the federal government as part of the Public Works Administration.<sup>123</sup> The building totaled about \$285,000 and included four floors to accommodate roughly 215 students. The exterior of the building is characterized by Tudor-style architecture constructed of brick and contrasting masonry on the front entrances.<sup>124</sup> When it was first erected, the building, which sits along Oakland Drive, was named the Hall of Men, and a committee was soon after put together

---

<sup>118</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 28.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>120</sup> University Libraries, “Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary,” 15.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>122</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. “WMU Campus History” [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>123</sup> Lynne B. Weir, MaryGrace York, “Western State Normal School Historic District,” National Register of Historic Place Registration Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1989)

<sup>124</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 91.

to officially name it. The committee submitted their proposed list of names to President Paul V. Sangren, which included Vandercook Hall, Lodge, West Hall, Oakwood Residence, and Prospect Hall.<sup>125</sup> The name Vandercook Hall, which was named after Henry B. Vandercook, won the committee's vote and, after being passed along to President Sangren, was chosen as the new name for the hall for men. Henry B. Vandercook is often regarded as the father of Western due to his role in the bill that established the institution in 1903. As a member of the Michigan House of Representatives, Vandercook introduced the bill to the legislature for the creation of the Western State Normal School. Once the name was officially chosen, it was added to the front façade of the building in cement above the entrances.<sup>126</sup>

At around 45,000 square feet, Vandercook Hall included three floors dedicated to residential rooms and featured both bathrooms and communal kitchenettes on each floor for the residents to use. The main floor also included a barbershop, small auditorium, recreation rooms, coffee and sandwich bar, pressing rooms, counselor services, and various lounging areas scattered throughout.<sup>127</sup> Most of the resident rooms accommodated two men and were outfitted with a bed, dresser, study table, lamp, armchair, bookshelf, curtains, sheets, pillowcase, one blanket, and a wastebasket for each student.<sup>128</sup> When the dormitory first opened, students paid \$50 for each semester, which totaled about 18 weeks, for a room or \$135 for each semester for both room and board.<sup>129</sup> After World War II ended, there was a shortage of rooms due to the number of returning veterans, which required three students to be housed per room. Students

---

<sup>125</sup> Ray C. Pellett (Kalamazoo, MI, n.d.).

<sup>126</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 4.

<sup>127</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 91.

<sup>128</sup> "Henry B. Vandercook Hall for Men," Henry B. Vandercook Hall for Men (Kalamazoo, MI: Michigan College of Education, 1942).

<sup>129</sup> Ray C. Pellett, "Men's Dormitory Rooms," 1939.

could expect to pay around \$2.75 per week for a triple room or they had the option to pay \$4 per week for a standard double room in the 1946-1947 academic year.<sup>130</sup>

Vandercook Hall served as a dormitory until the early 1990s when there were more residence halls available to students on the west campus. In 1991, the building was remodeled for use by fraternities, such as Chi Omega, and other offices. These organizations did not remain in the building for long and soon the building was closed, which is how it still sits today.<sup>131</sup>

### **Waldo Stadium**

As Western continued to grow, the expanding athletic departments sought adequate facilities to continue to represent the Normal School. In 1909, President Waldo had secured \$50,000 to buy land for the future athletic fields but it was not enough to cover the costs. Over the next two years, Waldo searched and negotiated for space and soon purchased 14 acres of swamp just west of campus.<sup>132</sup> Western's faculty was heavily involved with securing the athletic field by cosigning loans from the bank to help cover the costs of the land purchase and the process of rerouting the creek that ran through the landscape. Both students and faculty helped President Waldo to rechannel Arcadia Creek to the other side of the Michigan Central Railroad tracks, drain the pond near the former site of the Eames Mill, and prepare the ground for the new fields. Once completed, the athletic field included a grass field for various sports surrounded by a running track, and quickly became the proud home of Western Normal athletics until the late 1930s.<sup>133</sup>

---

<sup>130</sup> "Henry B. Vandercook Hall for Men," Henry B. Vandercook Hall for Men (Kalamazoo, MI: Michigan College of Education, 1946).

<sup>131</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>132</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 30.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

The athletic field, created in 1909, remained the same until December 1936 when the State Board of Education voted to approve the plans for a new football field and stadium. Estimated around \$196,000, the new stadium would receive \$162,000 from the Public Works Administration project, with the rest being raised with the help of alumni and faculty. Once the plans were set in place, Western ceded a strip of land that would be used for the stadium to the State Highway Department for a necessary remodel of U.S. 12, which is now known as Stadium Drive, and was given \$36,000 as payment. The department also removed a large section of the rising slope near the future stadium, which allowed for the construction of a baseball field.<sup>134</sup> During construction, however, the cost of the project increased to roughly \$270,000 and was partially funded by donations from the Upjohn Civic Trust and the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce, as well as various contributions from alumni. Fundraising campaigns were set up to help make the project debt-free upon completion, which included the selling of minted souvenir coins adorned with Waldo's image and sending out wooden barrels that were to be filled with coins and sent back. Although the fundraising efforts fell short by about \$4,000, the new stadium stood as a culmination of support by alumni for the future of Western athletics.<sup>135</sup>

The stadium, which was completed in 1939 by the Osborn Engineering Company, included concrete stands that accommodated up to 15,000 people, 52 eight-person boxes, locker rooms, a press box, conference rooms, and concessions.<sup>136</sup> When it was opened, it was regarded as one of the finest in the country due to its state-of-the-art design and features. The dedication game was held on November 4, 1939, against Western Kentucky and marked the official naming

---

<sup>134</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 37.

<sup>135</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 89.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

as the Waldo Memorial Stadium after Western's first president, Dwight B. Waldo, who had passed away on October 29, 1939.<sup>137</sup>

Over the next several decades, the stadium underwent numerous renovations to keep up with the growing athletic department, which started with several that took place in the 1970s. These remodels, which were completed by Osborn Engineering Company and Kellogg & Kiefer Architects added a few thousand more seats to the stands and replaced the grass field with artificial turf.<sup>138</sup> Smaller-scale remodels took place throughout the late 1900s, with some of the biggest changes happening in the last few years of the 1990s. In 1996, the architectural firm Hobbs & Black Associates Incorporated completed a renovation and addition of over 19,000 square feet to the eastern side of the stadium. This addition included the John Gill Press Box and Club House, which was dedicated on April 6, 1996.<sup>139</sup> The following year, Waldo Stadium underwent a \$7 million renovation that transformed the front entrance to include the Bill Brown Alumni Center, named after Western graduate and football MVP Willard A. Brown. In addition, the stadium was equipped with new locker rooms, training facilities, offices for conferences and coaches, meeting rooms, and an auditorium. In 1997, the stadium accommodated up to 30,200 spectators, which still remains true today. Waldo Stadium continues to serve as the official home for Western football and as a memory of President Waldo.<sup>140</sup>

## **Hyames Field**

With the construction of Waldo Stadium, plans were created for a baseball field right next to the improved athletic field. The land of the future baseball field, which included a large

---

<sup>137</sup> "Waldo Stadium to Be Dedicated Here Tomorrow." *Kalamazoo Gazette*, November 3, 1939.

<sup>138</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 10.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>140</sup> "\$7 Million Addition," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, July 16, 1997, sec. B1.

slope, was cut down to make room for an adequate field and stands when Western ceded the strip of land to the State Highway Department.<sup>141</sup> Also overseen by the Osborn Engineering Company, the west hillside was excavated, and a covered concrete grandstand was built to mark the realigned and newly graded baseball diamond.<sup>142</sup> The grandstand totaled around 10,600 square feet and featured reinforced concrete steps with wooden seats for 2,500 spectators, as well as storage space, dugouts, and locker rooms.<sup>143</sup> The new field quickly became home to the Western State Normal School's baseball team, which had been playing college teams exclusively since around 1910.<sup>144</sup>

The baseball field was officially named Hyames Field, after Judson A. Hyames, and the dedication game was held against the University of Michigan. During his time at Western, Hyames played on the Normal School's fifth baseball team and was on the first team that had ever faced a team from the University of Michigan. Hyames also coached baseball for 15 years and served as the director of Physical Education and Athletics.<sup>145</sup> Other notable alumni that either coached or played on Western's baseball team include William H. Spaulding, George Sisler, Ron Hibbard, Ernie Koob, and Frank Overmire. After the completion of the new field, Western's baseball program continued to hold a superior presence in college baseball, with at least 11 members moving on to play major league baseball and around 56 continuing on with professional contracts.<sup>146</sup> This legacy was further supported when Hyames Field was chosen to host the 1947 and 1948 inaugural College World Series, which featured the University of

---

<sup>141</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 90.

<sup>142</sup> "Building and Material Equipment," *The Teachers College Herald*, 1939, p. 29.

<sup>143</sup> "East Campus Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet, Section 7, 5.

<sup>144</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 153.

<sup>145</sup> Willis Bullard, ed., "Dedication of Hyames Field Is Fitting Tribute," *The Teachers College Herald*, May 2, 1939.

<sup>146</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 153-154.

California and Yale and the University of Southern California and Yale, respectively. During both years, the future president of the United States, George H. W. Bush, served as the captain and played first base for the Yale team.<sup>147</sup>

Hyames Field continued to serve in its original configuration until the early 2000s when it underwent renovations. This included a full restoration of the grandstand, the addition of 400 chair back seats, new walkways, two new VIP suites, concession, improved dugouts, press box addition, and new fencing around the field. This renovation also included the official naming of the stadium after Robert J. Bobb, who graduated from Western in 1969. This remodel helped to improve the overall experience at the stadium and helped to secure the future of the facilities. Much like Waldo Stadium, Hyames Field is still being utilized as a baseball field and remains home for Bronco Baseball.<sup>148</sup>

## **Spindler Hall**

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Western's campus was expanding, and new structures were being built to accommodate the growing student population. In November of 1939, the State Board of Education approved plans for a new women's residence hall. The building, like many of the other structures on campus, was to be built on a self-liquidating basis, which means that the building would earn back the money that was spent on it through resident fees such as room and board. The contract was awarded on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1940, to Malcomson, Calder, and Hammond Incorporated, and was completed by the end of the year.<sup>149</sup> Much like the other residence halls constructed during this period, the new hall for women was constructed out

---

<sup>147</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 39.

of brick and drew inspiration from the Tudor architectural style. The exterior also featured cement bas-reliefs at the entrance that detail the accomplishments of Lavina Spindler, after whom the building was named.<sup>150</sup> Spindler was hired at Western in 1906 and held multiple positions before her retirement around 1938, which included critic teacher and director of the Training School, Dean of Women, instructor, advisor, and director of the Women's League.<sup>151</sup>

At approximately 50,600 square feet, Spindler Hall had a capacity of roughly 200 women and had mostly double residential rooms on the top three stories.<sup>152</sup> Each resident received a single bed, double study desk with filing drawers and a shelf for a typewriter, shelves, built-in dressers, a built-in bookcase at the head of the bed, two study chairs, an upholstered chair, bulletin board, and an artistic lamp. The draperies were either hand-blocked or appliqued with the bedspread having a matching pattern to the curtains. To add a personal touch to each room, some of the linens incorporated the residence's monogram, which was designed by faculty member Lydia Siedschlag.<sup>153</sup> Each floor had communal bathrooms and there were small kitchenettes scattered throughout the building.<sup>154</sup> The main floor featured a lobby area, director's office, reception room, and dining room, as well as murals on the east and west walls. These murals were done by Gustave Hildebrand as a handicraft project for the Detroit Works Progress Administration and were inspired by Graeco-Roman mythology of ancient goddesses and the womanly virtues of the universe.<sup>155</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> "New \$300,000 Dormitory Named for Lavina Spindler, Member of Western State's Faculty for 32 Years," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, October 13, 1940, p. 15.

<sup>151</sup> University Libraries, "Biographical Data on Persons for Whom Buildings Were Named," 1975.

<sup>152</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 3.

<sup>153</sup> "Spindler Hall Dedication Set for October 17-19," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, October 13, 1940, p. 15.

<sup>154</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>155</sup> "Spindler Hall Dedication Set for October 17-19," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, 15.

In 1991, the building was remodeled by Hobbs & Black Association Incorporation for use by fraternities and other offices.<sup>156</sup> Today, however, Spindler Hall is still being used as a residence hall for students. Due to the majority of campus housing being offered on Main Campus, Spindler Hall is restricted to seniors, non-traditional students that are over the age of 21, and graduate students.<sup>157</sup>

## **Little Theatre**

As Western's campus continued to expand, more departments were moved into newer facilities, and the theatre program was no exception. Prior to the 1940s, the dramatic arts department and thespians, called the Western Normal Players, utilized the Eames Mill as their performance and practice space. The building was condemned in 1923 but still used as the theatre playhouse until the early 1940s. Although many were excited for the new department facilities, most of the Western Players were sentimental about their time in the old mill, which they called "The Playhouse".<sup>158</sup> As the theatre department continued to grow, however, a new and improved space was needed to accommodate the productions and personnel. In 1942, the Theatre was built by Malcomson, Calder, and Hammond Incorporated and officially became the new home for the Western Players.<sup>159</sup>

The building, situated at the corner of Oliver Lane and Oakland Drive, is over 14,000 square feet and was a state-of-the-art facility for the theatre department.<sup>160</sup> With over 350 seats in the audience, a stage, dressing rooms, offices, and classrooms, it was quite an upgrade from the

---

<sup>156</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 211.

<sup>157</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>158</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 40.

<sup>159</sup> Lynne B. Weir, MaryGrace York, "Western State Normal School Historic District," National Register of Historic Place Registration Form.

<sup>160</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 4.

mill that dated back to the mid-1800s.<sup>161</sup> During the first few years after its opening, the Western State Normal Players put on their own productions of *This is the Campus* and Phillip Barrie's *Hotel Universe*.<sup>162</sup> Aside from theatrical performances, the theatre also served as a temporary classroom space during the post-war period from 1946 to 1950. During this time, student enrollment increased exponentially due to the number of veterans returning from World War II, which resulted in the need for more instructional spaces.<sup>163</sup> The building continued to serve under the name "The Theatre" until the 1970s when it was renamed the Oakland Recital Hall. This name lasted approximately 20 years until the theatre's remodel in 1996 and was rededicated as the Campus Cinema in September of the following year. In this capacity, the cinema served the community and university as a place to watch foreign and independent films, as well as domestic productions.<sup>164</sup>

With the construction of both Miller Auditorium and Shaw Theatre on WMU's Main Campus, the Campus Cinema was no longer needed to host the university's theatre departments. Now regarded as the Little Theatre, the space was renovated once again to be reutilized as a more modern space. In 2018, it became home to Western's E-Sports club and was upgraded with modern technologies for competitions and practice. Equipped with thirty-six gaming machines with high-resolution monitors, special headsets, keyboards, mice, and ergonomic gaming chairs, the space is state-of-the-art for the E-Sports players. Although the theatre's name and purpose have undergone multiple changes throughout its history, remnants of the past can still be seen through the ornamental detailing that is located above the main entrance. This concrete ornament

---

<sup>161</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 40.

<sup>162</sup> "The Old Playhouse Was the Thing for Laura Shaw," 26.

<sup>163</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 114.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 211.

aligns with the building tradition that can be observed on other East Campus buildings and pays homage to the theatre's history by including its original name.<sup>165</sup>

### **Walwood Hall and Union and Walwood Place**

Prior to the late 1930s, there were no on-campus residence halls for students to live in during the academic year, which meant that students and faculty had to commute up Prospect Hill from the surrounding Kalamazoo neighborhoods. Plans began forming for a women's residence hall in late 1937 and an area of land on the south end of the hilltop was selected. This land had been previously used for the Fletcher Sanitarium, also known as the Kalamazoo Medical and Surgical Sanitarium, which burned down in 1914, and was presently home to six residences.<sup>166</sup> These homes sat on a street, later named Walwood Place after Dwight B. Waldo and Leslie H. Wood, that stretched up the hill from the Davis Street neighborhood. The six houses became known as the Walwood Place homes and were named after the families that resided in them. From east to west, the homes were named Bartoo, Howson, Schoonmaker, Sprau, Tashjian, and Ross.<sup>167</sup> When Western acquired the land in 1937, the families residing in the Walwood Place homes were permitted to stay while Walwood Hall and Union were constructed.<sup>168</sup>

The contract for the women's residence hall was officially awarded on January 1, 1938, to the architectural firm of Malcomson, Calder, and Hammond Incorporated and the Miller-

---

<sup>165</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>166</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 90.

<sup>167</sup> *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan*. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, Republished 1958, 1958. Map. [https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn04060\\_009/](https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn04060_009/), 201.

<sup>168</sup> *1940 United States Federal Census*. 15th ed. Washington D.C., District of Columbia: United States of America, Bureau of the Census, 1940, [https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/85691023:2442?\\_phsrc=tvz535&\\_phstart=successSource&gsfn=george&gsln=sprau&ml\\_rpos=1&queryId=8055099695c61855ecb6899aa69a33f5](https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/85691023:2442?_phsrc=tvz535&_phstart=successSource&gsfn=george&gsln=sprau&ml_rpos=1&queryId=8055099695c61855ecb6899aa69a33f5), 5B.

Davis company.<sup>169</sup> This building's total cost was around \$425,000 and was the first structure erected as part of the new ten-year Hilltop Development Plan. The construction of the building also marked the beginning of a new form of financing through self-liquidating bonds. The hall for women also became the first building constructed under the new law that allowed the State Board of Education to borrow money for needed constructions at the Normal School.<sup>170</sup> The official dedication ceremony took place during Homecoming week of 1938, which extended from September 30 through October 8 and was attended by President Paul V. Sangren, director of the Training School Dr. Lofton V. Burge, and Dormitory Director Gladys Hansen.<sup>171</sup>

The dormitory, which spanned around 62,000 square feet and five floors, is an irregular-shaped brick building inspired by the late Gothic Revival architectural style. It features a slate roof adorned with roof dormers, corbelled chimneys, steel casement sash windows, and stone trim.<sup>172</sup> The dormitory accommodated up to 115 women and was soon named Walwood Hall, an amalgam of Dwight B. Waldo and Leslie H. Wood, who was the first head of the geography and geology department.<sup>173</sup> In addition to the hall for women, the building also included a Walwood Union hall that would serve as the student body social center. This side of the building featured faculty dining rooms, a kitchen, serving room, general lounges, a Women's League room, two Men's Union rooms, a Student Council room, a soda fountain, a powder room, and a ballroom

---

<sup>169</sup> Lynne B. Weir, MaryGrace York, "Western State Normal School Historic District," National Register of Historic Place Registration Form.

<sup>170</sup> "Start Work on Women's Dormitory, Social Center," *The Teachers College Herald*, January 26, 1938, Vol. XXII, #15, 1.

<sup>171</sup> "Walwood Hall, Dedication, WSTC Homecoming, Combined in Big Program," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, September 25, 1938, 8.

<sup>172</sup> "East Campus Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet, Section 7, p.5.

<sup>173</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 90.

with a stage on the second floor.<sup>174</sup> When it opened in 1938, women who lived there could expect to pay \$7.50 per week for room and board.<sup>175</sup>

Walwood Hall continued to serve as a women's residence hall until 1955 when it was used to house men in order to equalize housing due to the recent construction of Zimmerman Hall for women on West Campus. However, this was not the first time that men had occupied the hall. In 1943, Walwood Hall was used to house military personnel due to the V-12 operations that were taking place on campus during World War II. The V-5 and V-12 groups also were housed in Vandercook Hall and Spindler Hall. During this time, the families that had resided in the Walwood Place homes left and the homes were used to house the women from Walwood Hall.<sup>176</sup> After the war, the women returned to Walwood Hall and the residences were utilized for various purposes. Howson House was used for the Colhecon Club, also known as the College Home Economics Club, Schoonmaker House was used for offices, and the other homes were used as faculty residences. Western continued to use these residences until they were demolished in the 1960s.<sup>177</sup>

Walwood Hall continued to be utilized as student housing and as a social space for students, as well as the home to various offices. In 1992, the company of Hobbs & Black Associates Incorporated renovated the building to transition from residence hall space to being fully utilized by offices and other departments.<sup>178</sup> Today, Walwood Hall and Union is home to

---

<sup>174</sup> "Walwood Hall, WSTC Campus Addition, New Student Social Center," *Kalamazoo Gazette*, September 25, 1938, p. 9.

<sup>175</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 91.

<sup>176</sup> "Walwood Hall Becomes Men's Dorm in September," *Western Herald*, May 20, 1955, p. 3.

<sup>177</sup> "1952 Campus Map." Map. *Western Michigan University Facilities Management*. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://wmich.edu/facilities/planning/maps>.

<sup>178</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 13.

the WMU Foundation office, School of Public Affairs, Office of the Vice President for Research, the Medieval Institute, and the Graduate College.<sup>179</sup>

### **Health and Personnel Building**

The last building constructed on Prospect Hill was the Health and Personnel Building. This structure was authorized on November 9, 1938 and completed the quadrangle that formed the center of Western's original campus.<sup>180</sup> Constructed by architect Lewis J. Sarvis, this health services center was officially opened in the fall semester of 1939 and featured around 21,000 square feet.<sup>181</sup> The three stories were made up of examining rooms, treatment rooms, an infirmary, a reception room, a semi-weekly dental clinic, physiotherapy workspace, classrooms, student advisory activity space, and offices.<sup>182</sup> The new 17-bed infirmary replaced the original space that was located in the West Hall and allowed for more patients to be treated.<sup>183</sup> This building was also known as the Speech and Hearing Center, due to the Charles Van Riper Speech and Hearing Clinic that was housed there.<sup>184</sup>

The clinic was one of the most widely publicized services that Western provided and dates back to 1936.<sup>185</sup> When the program began, it was located in the Eames Mill before being moved to the Science Building in 1941. From there, it moved to its final location in the Health and Personnel Building where it continued to test and aid in speech defects. Under the direction of Charles Van Riper, the program attracted many students who wanted to become speech

---

<sup>179</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

<sup>180</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 38.

<sup>181</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 3.

<sup>182</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 98.

<sup>183</sup> Larry B. Massie, *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*, 94.

<sup>184</sup> University Libraries, "Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary," 3.

<sup>185</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 100.

correction teachers and aided Western students who had speech difficulties.<sup>186</sup> The Health and Personnel Building also housed the Psycho-educational clinic under the direction of Homer L.J. Carter.<sup>187</sup> This clinic was the first in Michigan to be located outside of Detroit and provided space for research in clinical and educational psychology. Occupying the second floor of the building, the space included the clinic itself, speech correction labs, special testing rooms, classrooms, and offices. The Psycho-educational clinic served to examine students with difficulties in order to suggest remedial work for them, as well as provide intelligence tests to students which lasted until the 1950s.<sup>188</sup>

In addition to these clinics, the building also held many institutional offices, such as the Dean of Men, the Dean of Women, and the Director of Personnel and Guidance, as well as the Educational Service Library prior to 1952.<sup>189</sup> Other departments were also housed here, including the University Health Service and departments of Speech Pathology and Audiology, and the building continued to serve in this capacity until the early 2010s.<sup>190</sup> As a result of the new plans that were drawn up for the land atop Prospect Hill, the Health and Personnel Building was demolished in 2013. The land has not been redeveloped and is today being utilized as green space.<sup>191</sup>

---

<sup>186</sup> James O. Knauss, *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*, 101.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>190</sup> "Buildings and Grounds - Undergraduate Catalog".

<sup>191</sup> Sharon Carlson, Jason Glatz, WMU Facilities Management. "WMU Campus History" [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>.

## Bibliography

- 1940 *United States Federal Census*. 15th ed. Washington D.C., District of Columbia: United States of America, Bureau of the Census, 1940, [https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/85691023:2442?\\_phsrc=tvz535&\\_phstart=successSource&gsfn=george&gsln=sprau&ml\\_rpos=1&queryId=8055099695c61855ecb6899aa69a33f5](https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/85691023:2442?_phsrc=tvz535&_phstart=successSource&gsfn=george&gsln=sprau&ml_rpos=1&queryId=8055099695c61855ecb6899aa69a33f5), 5B.
- “1952 Campus Map.” Map. *Western Michigan University Facilities Management*. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://wmich.edu/facilities/planning/maps>.
- “\$7 Million Addition.” *Kalamazoo Gazette*, July 16, 1997, sec. B1.
- “Anna French Recalls First Library: 'A Happy Place in Which to Work'.” *Western Michigan College News Magazine*. 1955, 13 edition, sec. 2.
- “Building and Material Equipment.” *The Teachers College Herald*. 1939.
- “Building to Be Named for Brink.” *Western News*. May 19, 1980.
- Bullard, Willis, ed. “Dedication of Hyames Field Is Fitting Tribute.” *The Teachers College Herald*. May 2, 1939.
- “Campus Value up \$1,441,000 in Four Years.” *Kalamazoo Gazette*, October 30, 1911.
- Carlson, Sharon. East Hall Date, 2015.
- Carlson, Sharon; Glatz, Jason, WMU Facilities Management. “WMU Campus History” [storymap], <https://campus-history.library.wmich.edu/index.html>. (Accessed February 17, 2022)
- Diekema/Hamann Architects Incorporated. Rep. Building Audit of North Hall. Kalamazoo, MI, 1996.
- “East Campus Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1978), Section 7.
- “East Hall- Western Michigan University (About Cover...),” *The Michigan Assessor*, November 1979
- “Guided Tour Binder.” Kalamazoo: Heritage Hall Alumni Center, n.d.
- “Handsome Manual Arts Building to Be Erected.” *Western Normal Herald*. August 25, 1920.
- Henry B. Vandercook Hall for Men. Kalamazoo, MI: Michigan College of Education, 1942.
- Henry B. Vandercook Hall for Men. Kalamazoo, MI: Michigan College of Education, 1946.
- Knauss, James O. *History of Western State Teachers College 1904-1929*. Kalamazoo, MI: Western State Teachers College, 1929.

Knauss, James O. *The First Fifty Years: A History of Western Michigan College of Education, 1903-1953*. Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan College of Education, 1953.

Louis C. Kingscott & Associates Incorporated. Aviation Building - Printing Press Conversion, November 15, 1966, Map case 12, drawer 6.

Massie, Larry B. *Brown and Golden Memories: Western Michigan University's First Century*. Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University, 2003.

Miller-Davis Company. Letter to A.N. Langius. "Notice of Completion of Contract Work." Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University, September 12, 1958.

"New \$300,000 Dormitory Named for Lavina Spindler, Member of Western State's Faculty for 32 Years." *Kalamazoo Gazette*, October 13, 1940.

Pellett, Ray C. "Men's Dormitory Rooms," 1939.

Pellett, Ray C. Letter to Dr. Paul V. Sangren. "Suggested Name for Men's Dormitory." Kalamazoo, MI: Western State Teachers College, January 20, 1939.

"Plans Complete for Manual Training Shop." *Western Normal Herald*. May 5, 1920.

"Professor Saves Furniture of University's Past." *Western Herald*. March 20, 1997.

Rep. Buildings and Grounds - Undergraduate Catalog. Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University, 1968.

"Same Doorway -- New Tenant." *WMU News Magazine*. 1959, Vol. 17, #1.

*Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan*. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 2, Republished 1958, 1958. Map. [https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn04060\\_009/](https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn04060_009/), 201.

"Spindler Hall Dedication Set for October 17-19." *Kalamazoo Gazette*, October 13, 1940.

"Start Work on Women's Dormitory, Social Center." *The Teachers College Herald*. January 26, 1938, Vol. XXII, #15.

Stewart-Kingscott Company. Aviation Mechanics Building, May 31, 1941, Map case 12, drawer 6.

Stine, Leo C. *Western - A Twentieth Century University*. Kalamazoo, MI: New Issues Press WMU, 1980.

"The Old Playhouse Was the Thing for Laura Shaw." *Encore Magazine of the Arts*, April 1977.

"The Story of Heritage Hall." Kalamazoo: Heritage Hall Alumni Center, n.d.

"The Western Trolley Replica Display," Map case 12, drawer 2, Zhang Legacy Collections Center, Kalamazoo, MI

University Libraries. Rep. Biographical Data on Persons for Whom Buildings Were Named, 1975.

University Libraries. Rep. Campus Building Inventory - Yearly Summary, n.d.

“Waldo Stadium to Be Dedicated Here Tomorrow.” *Kalamazoo Gazette*, November 3, 1939.

“Walwood Hall Becomes Men's Dorm in September.” *Western Herald*. May 20, 1955.

“Walwood Hall, Dedication, WSTC Homecoming, Combined in Big Program.” *Kalamazoo Gazette*, September 25, 1938.

“Walwood Hall, WSTC Campus Addition, New Student Social Center.” *Kalamazoo Gazette*, September 25, 1938.

Weir, Lynne B., York, MaryGrace, “Western State Normal School Historic District,” National Register of Historic Place Registration Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1989)

“What They Do in the Auto Shop.” *Western Normal Herald*. May 5, 1920.