



Oregon State University Campus Historical Tour

Welcome to the beautiful and historic campus of Oregon State University, a recently designated historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1868, small and struggling Corvallis College was designated as Oregon's land grant institution thanks to the efforts of one of its faculty members. The college was originally located in downtown Corvallis on the block where City Hall currently is located. The first college building was a structure built in 1858 and added onto in 1876. In 1871, the college purchased 34.85 acres west of downtown for the college farm, as specified by the Morrill Act, the federal act which provided for a land-grant institution in each state. The \$4,500 needed for the purchase was raised by 100 local citizens. The lands included the lower campus area and the future site of Benton Hall.



Benton Hall

1650 SW Pioneer Place

In 1885 The State Agricultural College Association of Citizens of Benton County incorporated for purpose of acquiring the funds required to provide for a new college building on "College Hill," part of the college farm site. The cornerstone for new the building was laid in 1887, and the completed building was accepted in 1888. The college moved into the new building in 1889.

First called the College Building or the Administration Building, it has been known as Benton Hall since 1947. Unfortunately, the designer is unknown. The building was built at a cost of \$25,000, paid for by the citizens of Benton County. It is a frame building with a brick exterior; the brick was cemented over in 1899. The original entrance was a large stairway up to the 2nd floor; it was removed in 1899. A clock was not installed until 1988; prior to that time, clock faces were painted on the tower. According to some accounts, lights were placed on the tower at this time to keep couples off the front lawn area at night.

Benton Hall has served the university in many capacities. When first built, it contained all of the college's classroom and lab space. It housed the library until 1918, the President's Office until 1923, and many administrative offices through the 1940s. Currently, it is the home of the music department, which has occupied Benton Hall since at least 1916.



Women's Center

1700 SW Pioneer Place

The Station Building, known today as the Women's Center, was constructed in 1892 for the Agricultural Experiment Station, and contained a chemistry lab in the basement. The structure combines Queen Anne and Gothic Revival influences, and apart from an addition constructed in 1920, looks much the same as it did more than 100 years ago. It has also served as chemistry and paleontology labs, the bookstore and the student health center.



Kearney (Apperson) Hall

1491 SW Campus Way

Originally called Mechanical Hall, this building was constructed in 1899-1900 after the first Mechanical Hall (built in 1889) burned in 1898. Lost in that fire were the college's athletic equipment, dressing rooms & shower facilities. The new Mechanical Hall, dedicated in 1900, was designed by Portland architect Edgar H. Lazarus. Its facade is Oregon gray granite and sandstone, done by French stone workers. The third floor was added in 1920, the same year the building was named for John T. Apperson, an Oregon Agricultural College (OAC) regent (1888-1917) who died in 1917. Apperson Hall has been used by the College of Engineering its entire life. It also housed the printing department for many years. Today it houses the civil, construction & environmental engineering department. It is currently undergoing renovation and expansion and has been renamed Kearney Hall in honor of the donors underwriting the construction.



Early Campus Planning

Oregon State's first campus planning efforts began soon after William Jasper Kerr assumed the college's presidency in 1907. In 1909, OAC contracted with John C. Olmsted (son of New York City's Central Park designer Frederick Law Olmsted) to create a comprehensive, long-range campus plan. Olmsted presented his plan to President Kerr in October 1909 after visiting campus in June. Among his recommendations were:

- visualized development of trees
- buildings of a simple classical design (most new buildings for the next 30 years were red brick with white terra cotta trim)
- limiting enrollment to 2,500 students and building a separate institution when that level reached (more than 3,000 students were enrolled in 1925)

In January 1926, A.D. Taylor, a landscape architect from Cleveland, Ohio, presented a revision of the 1909 Olmsted campus plan. His recommendations for the 100-acre central campus included:

- east (lower) campus be developed as park area
- development of quads — administration, agriculture/academic, engineering, separate men's and women's recreation, etc.
- moving barns beyond 35th Street
- develop 30th St. as a boulevard and the western edge of central campus
- landscape plantings to emphasize building entrances or screen portions, create or enhance vistas; group plantings and specimen trees, flowering trees; and establishment of an arboretum



Education Hall

200 SW 15th Street

Education Hall was built in 1902 as Agriculture Hall. It was designed by Charles H. Bugggraf of Albany, who also designed Waldo Hall on campus and several other public buildings throughout the state. The Oregon gray granite on the lower facade was quarried in the Cascades.

By 1909, the building became known as Science Hall. In the late 1910s and early 1920s, Linus Pauling (a 1922 OAC graduate and two-time Nobel Prize winner) took classes and labs and also taught classes in the building. It was damaged by fire in 1924 and 1927, and remodeled in 1939-40 as Education Hall; the School of Education has occupied it since then. The wire mesh was installed in 1996 when workers discovered that stone facade was not properly attached to the building's frame. It is scheduled for restoration soon.



Valley Gymnastics Center

1701 SW Jefferson Avenue

The evolution of this architecturally unique building has come full circle. Built in 1898 as the college gymnasium and armory, it was the first of two buildings designed by Portland architect Edgar M. Lazarus (Apperson Hall is the other). It served as the college armory until 1910; the men's and women's gym from 1899 to 1914; the women's gym from 1914-1926; the rehearsal hall for the cadet band and symphonic orchestra; and it was used for commencement from 1899 to 1910. It later housed the Horner Museum (1936-1950) and the college theater (Mitchell Playhouse, 1951-1990). After being condemned in 1990, the building was restored in 1992 as the training facility for OSU's nationally ranked gymnastics team with a donation from OSU alumni Wayne and Gladys Valley.



McAlexander Fieldhouse & Heating Plant

2201 SW Washington Way

Designed by Portland architect John V. Bennes, the building was constructed in 1909-1910 as the Armory; the back portion served as the college's heating plant. Today it houses the Army and Air Force ROTC offices, and the main interior area is used by Recreational Sports. The old heating plant area is now the rifle range. It is named for Ulysses Grant McAlexander, commandant of cadets from 1907-1911 and 1915-1917.

A new heating plant was built in 1923 (Bennes designed) and was expanded several times between the 1940s and the 1970s. The original smokestack from 1923 was removed in 1994.



John V. Bennes

Bennes was a prolific Portland architect who designed at least 36 buildings on the Oregon State campus between 1907 and 1941; he also designed additions and renovations to several buildings. Bennes, an admirer of Frank Lloyd Wright, was an exponent of Prairie School design for residences in Portland, but his styles ran the gamut. Bennes' unity of design at OAC was characterized as "exceptional" by A.D. Taylor in his 1926 report. One of the first buildings at OAC designed by Bennes was a dairy barn (first of six barns designed by Bennes for the college). He also designed buildings for at least one branch experiment station and the administration buildings at Eastern Oregon University and Southern Oregon University. Other Corvallis buildings that he designed include First Presbyterian church, two sorority houses, the Bexell House on 30th St., and Masonic Building in downtown. At least nineteen Bennes designed buildings are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Waldo Hall

2250 SW Jefferson Way

Designed by Charles H. Burggraff (who also designed Education Hall), Waldo Hall was completed in 1907 as a women's dormitory. It originally contained 115 rooms and could accommodate up to 300 women. When it opened, room and board was \$3.50 a week. The building also included Domestic Science labs and classrooms, and faculty women were allowed to live in Waldo until 1912. It was named in honor of Dr. Clara Humason Waldo, an OAC regent from 1905 to 1919. Waldo Hall was used as a dorm until 1965; today the first three floors house the Anthropology and Public Health Departments, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Educational Opportunities Program. The fourth floor is vacant.



Goss Stadium at Coleman Field and site of Bell Field

430 SW Langton Place

OSU has played baseball on the same site since 1907, when it began playing organized collegiate baseball. It is the oldest college/university baseball diamond in PAC-10 and one of the oldest in the United States. It was renamed Goss Stadium at Coleman Field in 1998 when a new grandstand and press box were constructed with funds donated by alumni John and Eline Goss of Portland. Ralph Coleman was a long-time baseball coach at Oregon State. Goss Stadium is currently undergoing expansion, due to increased interest in OSU baseball following two national championships.

Oregon State's football stadium was located on the current site of Dixon Recreation Center from 1913 until 1953, when Parker Stadium opened. The stadium was named Bell Field in 1921 in honor of J.R.N. Bell, a former regent and avid Beaver fan.



Langton Hall

2450 Jefferson Way

Another Bennes-designed building, it was built in 1915 as the Men's Gymnasium. The pool was added in 1920; it is 33 yards long, one of the few collegiate pools in the nation of that size. In front of the building is The Runner, a bronze sculpture (1920) that was one of the first pieces of artwork on campus. The building was used for men's basketball games and commencement until Gill Coliseum opened in 1950. Today it houses the Intramural Sports offices, the department of exercise and sport science, and is used for physical education classes. The building was named in the early 1970s for Claire V. Langton, head of health & physical education from 1928 to 1964.



Memorial Union

2501 SW Jefferson Way

The Memorial Union was built in 1927-28 as a monument to those who had given their lives in defense of the nation as well as the center for student life on the Oregon State campus. Built entirely with private donations and gifts (at a cost of around \$750,000), Oregon State students had assessed themselves a fee of \$3.00 a term, beginning in January 1922, to fund the building. One of the few buildings of the era not designed by John Bennes, it was designed by a 1907 OAC graduate, Lee Thomas, and is considered one of the finest examples of neoclassic architecture in Oregon. It was dedicated on June 1, 1929.

The east and west wings (bookstore & commons) were added in 1960; these areas were extensively renovated a few years ago. The MU was owned by the Memorial Union Corporation until 1965, when it transferred the facility to the State Board of Higher Education.



Moreland Hall

2550 SW Jefferson Way

This Bennes-designed building was built in 1917 as the Forestry Building, and was used by the College of Forestry until Peavy Hall was built in the early 1970s. The English and Psychology Departments have occupied the building since then. In 1973 it was named for W. W. Moreland, a faculty member in the 19th century and clerk of the State Legislature. He was credited with urging the legislature to accept the conditions of the Morrill Act, which led to the designation of Corvallis College as state's land grant institution. Remnants of Forestry's original arboretum are located behind the building.



Weatherford Hall

300 SW 26th Street

John Bennes designed this beautiful building, which was built in 1928 (in just six months) as the Men's Dormitory. It was actually a complex of five halls linked together, and accommodated up to 344 men. Originally just the center tower portion was named Weatherford Hall (for James K. Weatherford, an alumnus and long-time OAC regent (1885-1929); in 1957 the entire building became known by that name. Taylor's campus plan called for construction of three additional complexes at each corner of the quad in which Weatherford is located. A dining hall was added in 1957, and demolished as part of the Hall's recent renovation. Weatherford Hall reopened in the Fall of 2004 as the home of the Austin Entrepreneurship Program.



Fairbanks Hall

180 SW 26th Street

Built 1892 as a dormitory for men, it was originally known as Cauthorn Hall and named for state Senator and OAC regent Thomas Cauthorn. It was designed by architect W.D. Pugh in an architectural style that has been characterized as "eclectic." The dorm could accommodate over 100 students, and included water, steam heat, electric lights, dining room and kitchen. In the early 1900s, John Horner (for whom Horner Museum was named) and his wife served as dorm "parents." From about 1915 until 1931 the building was used as a women's dorm, and by 1927 was known as Kidder Hall (in memory of Ida Kidder, Oregon State's first professional librarian).

In 1935 it was converted to classroom use. It was renamed Fairbanks Hall in 1964 (in memory of J. Leo Fairbanks, head of the art department, 1923-1946) and today houses the art and sociology departments. Oral accounts report that the cupola on top of the building blew off in the Columbus Day storm of October 1962; in reality it had been removed several years prior.



Women's Building

160 SW 26th Street

This Italian Renaissance building, constructed in 1926 as the women's gymnasium, was designed by John Bennes and is considered one of his grandest structures on campus. It was also the only building he designed on campus through an open competition (there were 14 entries). The brick used in its construction was fired in Monroe. The building includes a 30'x70' swimming pool and a lounge and assembly room containing a large fireplace. It currently houses the dean's office, faculty offices and classrooms for the College of Health and Human Performance.



Milam Hall

2520 SW Campus Way

One of Bennes' early buildings, its first unit (east wing, shown here) was constructed in 1914 for the School of Domestic Science, which later became the School of Home Economics. Additions to the building were built in 1920 (center) and 1952 (west wing). In 1976 it was named for Ava Milam, the long-time dean of home economics (1917-1950). Today the Milam Hall houses components of the home economics program and the history department.



Strand Agriculture Hall

170 SW Waldo Place

The first (north) unit of this building, constructed in 1909 and called the Agronomy Building, was designed by John V. Bennes and his partners. The second and third units were built in 1911 and 1913. In the 1910s and 1920s, greenhouses were located on the building's south side, where the MU pay parking lot is today. Most departments within the College of Agricultural Sciences have been housed here at one time; many moved as programs expanded. Today it houses the College of Agricultural Science's dean's offices, the ethnic studies department, and several other programs. It was named for August L. Strand in 1984, OSU president from 1942 to 1961.

Gilkey Hall

122 SW Waldo Place

Another Bennes-designed building, it was constructed in 1912 as the Dairy Building. It has been used by the College of Liberal Arts for several decades. When Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Bernard Malamud was on the Oregon State faculty, he taught English classes in this building in the late 1940s and 1950s. Alpha Hall (built 1889) originally occupied this site. It was renamed Gilkey Hall in 2001 for Gordon Gilkey.



Bexell Hall

2251 SW Campus Way

John Bennes designed the building, which was constructed in 1922 as the Commerce Building. It has housed the College of Business (and its predecessors, such as the School of Commerce) its entire existence. It also housed the president's offices from 1923 to 1972. In 1966 it was named for John A. Bexell, founder and head of OAC School of Commerce from 1908 to 1931.

Shepard Hall

2001 SW Campus Way

Shepard Hall was constructed in 1908 as the YMCA/YWCA as well as a space for student activities. It was not an official campus building. It was designed by a Portland architect named McNaughton and named for Claiborne L. Shepard, OAC's YMCA general secretary in 1905-06. Shepard was largely responsible for raising funds for the facility, but died before it was built. Its basement included a swimming pool, which was used by female students until the Women's Building pool was completed in 1926. The building was used as a hospital during the flu epidemic of 1918-19; in January 1919 26 students and townspeople occupied rooms on the 2nd floor. The School of Education rented space in Shepard Hall from late 1920s until 1940. In 1940 the college purchased the building, which has housed the speech communication department since then.



Batcheller Hall

1791 Campus Way

This building was another of Bennes' early designs. It was constructed in 1913 and originally housed the School of Mines. It was later named for James H. Batcheller, head of the School of Mines from 1919 to 1942. Today the building is used by the College of Engineering.



Kidder Hall

2000 SW Campus Way

John Bennes designed this building, which was constructed in 1918 as the college library. Bennes also designed the library's west wing, which was built in 1941. Plans also called for an east wing, which was never built.

In 1954 the library was named the Kerr Library, in memory of William Jasper Kerr, OAC president from 1907 to 1932. After a new library was built in 1963, the building was named Kidder Hall for Ida Kidder, OAC librarian from 1908-1920. This was the second building to bear Kidder's name. Kidder Hall was the home of the University Archives from 1963 to 1972, and today it houses the College of Science dean's office, the mathematics and statistics departments, and part of Media Services.



Kidder Hall was the second building to serve as Oregon State's Library. Previous to this structure, it had been located in the Administration Building (Benton Hall). The 1963 Kerr Library building was enlarged in 1971. In the late 1980s, planning began for a new library facility. Today's facility, the Valley Library, is a \$40 million enlargement and renovation of 1963/71 structure. It was funded largely by the Valley Foundation (founded by OSU alumni Wayne and Gladys Valley).



Pharmacy Building

1601 SW Jefferson Avenue

Yet another Bennes design, this building was constructed in 1924 and has been used exclusively by the College of Pharmacy since that time. The 2nd floor included a model drug store, which was described in a pharmacy trade magazine of the time as providing "a laboratory for instruction in store arrangement, showcase and window decorating and practical salesmanship of drugs and druggists' sundries." An addition to the building was constructed in 1966.

All photographs are courtesy of the Oregon State University Archives. Additional photographs and information about each of these buildings, as well as other buildings on campus, can be found in the University Archives holdings and online at <http://digitalcollections.library.oregonstate.edu/cdm4/client/archives/index.html>. The University Archives, located on the third floor of the Valley Library, is open 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. Phone 541-737-2165; e-mail Archives@oregonstate.edu; Web - <http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/archives>.