

7 January 2004

Historic Resource Addendum for:
ARCHITECTURE HALL

HISTORY

Architecture Hall (1907-09) was constructed as the University of Washington Chemistry Building, but was used as the Fine Arts Palace for the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (AYPE). It is the only largely intact building of the four original AYPE buildings intended to be permanent additions to the UW campus. (Of the other three, only the power plant, in a much enlarged condition still stands. Although several "temporary" AYPE buildings also remain, Architecture Hall is the only building that reflects its appearance during the AYPE.) The architects were Howard & Galloway of California, the partnership of AYPE supervising architect, John Galen Howard. The contractor was Westlake Construction Company of St. Louis, Missouri.

Architecture Hall reflects the primary stylistic direction of the major AYPE buildings in its Beaux-Arts Classical Revival executed in cream-colored brick with terra cotta details.

Following the AYPE, interiors were modified for the use of the Chemistry Department following the design by Charles H. Alden. The building received the name "Bagley Hall," which remained its name until the Chemistry Department moved to (new) Bagley Hall (1935-37) in 1937. In fall 1937, the Architecture Department moved to the second floor and part of the first floor of the building; the rest of the first floor and the basement served the Physiology Department. The building was renamed "Physiology Hall." [At some point, not yet identified, the area now called the "pit" was added to the building.]

In 1949, when the Physiology Department moved to new space built for the UW Medical School, and the Architecture Department took over the rest of the first floor and the basement, the former physiology spaces were remodeled for Architecture's use. (For many years "Basic Design" was taught in the basement, and upper level studios were on the first and second floors.) The building was renamed "Architecture Hall" in 1950, when the Architecture Department became the sole tenant of the building, although the large auditorium (now numbered Architecture Hall 147) continued to serve courses from many university departments. In 1952-53, before the national AIA Convention in Seattle, the University upgraded the lighting of the second floor design studios.

Other upgrades and changes were made over the years. In 1958 the “pit” was renovated to improve its use as Architecture’s shop. 1962-63 a partial interior remodeling designed by Dan Streissguth was carried out. This improved the restrooms and also added vertical cedar boards to the first floor exhibit room between the stairs—reflecting the design tendencies of that period. The back stair may have been rebuilt in 1966 following a design by Van Slyk, Callison, Nelson (as part of a package of University-wide minor alteration projects). In 1972, the opening of Gould Hall allowed the removal of the College and Departmental administrative spaces from Architecture Hall to Gould. The University reclaimed space in the basement and first floor for general classroom use; minor remodeling to the basement classrooms took place in 1973, designed by Jim Decker (as part of alterations to classrooms in several buildings across campus). HVAC upgrades were made in the building in 1968 and again in 1984.

In 1986-87 the Architecture Hall was remodeled to the designs of Boyle-Wagner Architects. This remedied some code deficiencies. Boyle-Wagner stated that their goal was to clarify the distinction between historic fabric and new work—thus, the new Auditorium exit stairs and the new northwest stairs were designed to be non-obtrusive while clearly reading as new construction. Changes to interior partitions were limited, particularly in the basement and on the first floor. The skylights of the former art gallery spaces were restored in the second floor design studios as part of the 1986-87 project.

At some point in the 1970s or early 1980s, the southeast corner of the first floor had been allocated to CAUP research programs. About 1989, the Building Construction (now Construction Management) Department offices were moved to the southeast corner of the first floor of Architecture Hall and the CAUP spaces were moved to Gould.

In 1997-99, basement spaces under the Auditorium were remodeled to the design of the Miller/Hull Partnership to accommodate the growing program in design computing. This remodel also created a corridor to solve the security problems that had been caused because the loading dock had previously linked to a studio space. Funds provided by the “Tools for Transformation” fund allowed the Architecture Hall studios to be “wired” in 2000-02, and a digital input/output center was created in the basement.

Today Architecture Hall houses classrooms, studios, digital research spaces and faculty offices for the Department of Architecture, and administrative and office spaces for the Department of Construction Management. Some classrooms and the Auditorium also now serve general university-wide use.

(Sources: University of Washington *Daily* (various dates); *University of Washington Campus Guide, An Architectural Tour*, Norman J. Johnston, 2001)

DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

Architecture Hall is a three-floor building with a generally symmetrical plan and overall form. Its classical style stands in contrast to the Collegiate Gothic style of most of the buildings of the central campus, and its cream-colored brick stands out from the generally red tones of the brick used elsewhere on the central campus. As one of very few remaining buildings from the AYPE, it is an especially notable reminder of the 1909 Fair.

Significant features of the building are its exterior envelope of brick with terra cotta details and the large wood windows, most of which appear to be original. The symmetrical order of the building is reflected in the entry lobby and stairs from the first floor to the second floor which appear to be original and may, therefore, be of high significance. The skylights in the second floor galleries may also be original to the Fine Arts Building, although these may have been rebuilt. The interior of the Auditorium also reflects its original configuration with sloped floor and curved aisles, although the fixtures are likely not original.

In the 1986-87 remodeling, a partial entablature or frieze was added to the Auditorium. This was designated the "Roll of Honor" and names of individuals connected to the disciplines in the College who have made significant contributions in this region have been inscribed. Eight names were initially inscribed; two more were added in the early 1990s; the "Roll of Honor" Committee has met in Fall 2003 and an announcement about more names for the frieze may be made shortly. Although less than 20 years old, the frieze with the "Roll of Honor" has become a significant feature of the building.

LANDSCAPE AND OPEN SPACE

Lombardy Poplars which line Stevens Way on the east side of the building were planted for the AYPE and remain as monarchs of the species on the campus. Other planting has changed over the decades of campus additions, including the Guthrie Annex, a World War II temporary building which crowds the north edge of the site. Several mature Crab Apples were added to the east landscape in the 1960's as well as some Abelias, Fatsia, Rhododendron and miscellaneous native plantings. The west planting of Deodar Cedars, Spirea, Quince seedling Cherries and the rare Water Oak predate the war and probably date from the late 1930's when the Civilian Conservation Corps concrete retaining walls were placed.

SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED RENOVATION

The renovation will address upgrading of all the building's major systems including seismic, structural, mechanical, electrical, telecommunications, life safety, interior finish systems, doors and hardware, and improvements to the building enclosure (roof, windows and brick veneer systems), correcting accessibility conditions, performing hazardous materials abatement and providing updated facilities for instruction and academic programs.

The focus of the Architecture Hall Renovation is to update the building to accommodate existing uses. No new program space is anticipated to be constructed. However, if the "pit" is removed replacement space may be added as well as a new elevator and stairs. If this occurs any additions should be located on the west side of the building. Program enhancements will be balanced along with the objective of modernizing the building to meet today's standards while ensuring the long-term preservation of the facility. The interior, symmetrical main stairs should be conserved.

POTENTIAL MITIGATION MEASURES

Should it be required to replace the existing windows, they will be replaced with windows of the same scale and modulation as the existing. Any replacements of exterior materials will be the same as the existing.

