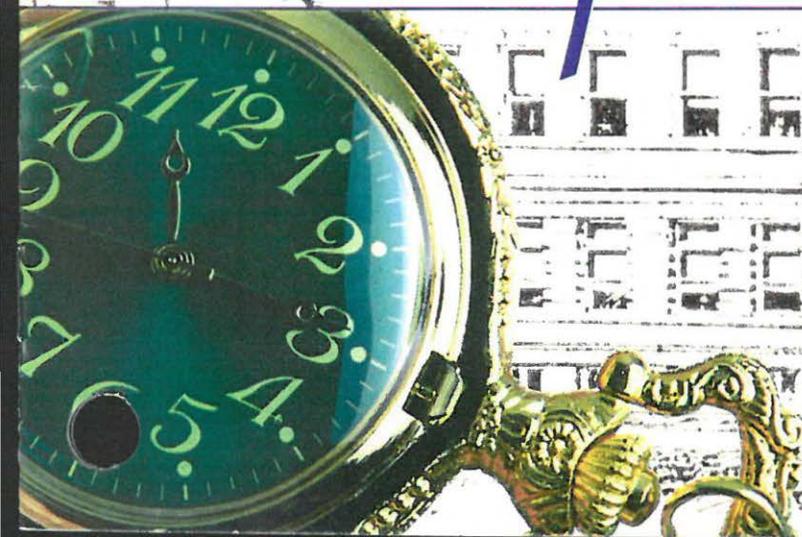




ONCE

*upon a time* . . .



Once upon a time... I was conceived in the minds of people and born on a drawing board. The blueprint was to capture the dreams of visionaries.

People construct their dreams in many ways. I grew up as bricks and mortar, and, oh yes, DREAMS. Oh my, the dreams. Dreams in anticipation of things yet to come, of events and people of such remarkable caliber and importance no one could have even begun to imagine. I was meant to provide the space where learning would be the primary purpose. What a challenge to be just the right setting for a variety of educational experiences. What a thrill to be a participant in the lives of so many people who are eager and earnest about knowing.

I don't like to boast, but I would like you to know my exterior makes quite a statement by itself. I rather like my Renaissance style and exterior walls faced with Bedford stone

and mottled pressed brick. They have protected me from the elements overhead with a slate roof, and designed my interior woodwork with red oak and my floor and stairs of hard maple. I am quite exquisite, to say the least. I don't like to brag about my size, but I can't resist telling you I have a frontage of 229 feet and am 146 feet from front to rear through the center. I have three stories and a basement, all with high ceilings and I proudly claim an auditorium that seats 2,000; a gymnasium 70 x 78 feet, 50 classrooms, recitation rooms and offices, and six large society halls. With a modern system of steam heating and fan ventilation, including an automatic temperature controlling apparatus, and even a complete system of baths and sanitary plumbing, how do they say it these days? Oh yes, I am state-of-the-art.





Gilchrist circa 1900

I wasn't the first one to be erected out here on the hill. My companions, Central and Gilchrist, came before me. Central was my next door neighbor who became a close friend over the years. Although 31 years old when I was born, Central welcomed me like a first child. We shared a space that students referred to as the Crossroads. It became a social respite between classes. As a gathering place it was like a crossroads in the lives of students, too. The conversations were about where they had been and where they were going. Their comings and goings were always so fascinating. There was talk about classes and teachers, plans for the weekend, boyfriends and girlfriends, oh yes, and engagements,

too. The bulletin boards that covered the walls were filled with upcoming events. They sparked lots of conversation and produced lots of plans. Oh my, the excitement of young people at the crossroads of their lives, standing between me and my buddy making life intriguing for us.

Beauty Queen  
and Old Gold voting, 1941

# Iowa State Normal School

Central Hall  
after the fire, 1965

You are most cordially invited to be present at the  
Formal Opening and Dedication of the New Normal  
School Building, Thursday, January the thirtieth, nine-  
teen hundred and two.

Homer H. Scerley, President of the Faculty

Richard C. Barrett, President of the Trustees

Cedar

3

Realities

15, 1902.

Well, you might imagine how people made over me when I was dedicated. Everybody who was somebody came out to see me and to talk about me. There were inspiring prayers, glorious music, and edifying speeches all aimed at celebrating me. I was both proud and humble. Proud to be the center of so much attention; humbled by the dreams people had for me. My doors were to be portals to opportunity. A place where dreams could be held up as possibilities and possibilities could be transformed into realities. Oh my, forgive me. I can get carried away by my desire to be what people need and hope for.

It's sad to say, but I'm the only one left on the hill now. I remember the night that flames burned high into the sky as I watched my partner Central slowly dwindle away. The fire cast a huge glow and smoke bellowed from all the windows. People came from all over town. Some who came from nearby buildings ran through my halls to get to locations in the burning building where they had treasured possessions. There was one person who arrived only to see the fire consume the space where he had the final draft of his doctoral dissertation. As people watched, their conversations were filled with remembrances. This was not just a building, a piece of state property, but an heirloom. Memories were ignited by the flames. They cast a spell as many stood wrapped in the silence of their thoughts. President Maucker estimated the loss of the building at \$500,000. I thought, how can a person put a price on a friendship?

What students referred to as the Crossroads survived the fire. It continued to be a meeting place as students passed from Gilchrist to me. Oh, it hasn't been the same for me. One does not easily forget what once was. Yet there is some consolation in knowing this passageway continues to tug at hearts, and remind me of an earlier day.



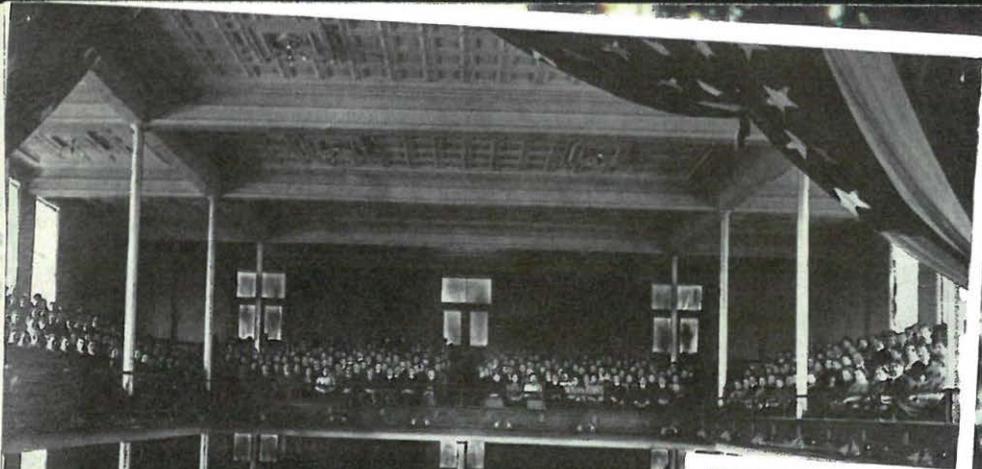
Even with the heartache of losing my friend, I feel that beginnings are so excitingly wonderful. However, they soon give way to in-between time. This time can be quite ordinary, only occasionally punctuated by excitement, but I must say excitement has been an everyday occurrence in my life. The spaces in my life are filled with people who love what they are doing. There is a constant exchange of illuminating ideas and challenging ideals. The conversation not only shapes the way people think, but shapes their relationships as well. I see so much evidence of people caring about people. I treasure the opportunity to just stand back and observe the happenings, planned and unplanned, as people discover life and fruitful ways to live it. I guess over the years I have become quite a philosopher; but deep down I think I am a lover. I have seen so much of it around here over the years, I guess it isn't surprising that it seeps into my bricks and mortar. A building can really take on a life of its own.

We all have special spaces in our lives. Places we go when we want to be alone with ourselves. Places we go when we want to celebrate our connections to one another. The stage in my auditorium was a place to celebrate all kinds of things. Famous people stood on my stage and talked from their heads and their hearts. I wish I had a better memory for names, but there have been so many who have lived them with distinction.



Instructors helping students register for classes, 1961

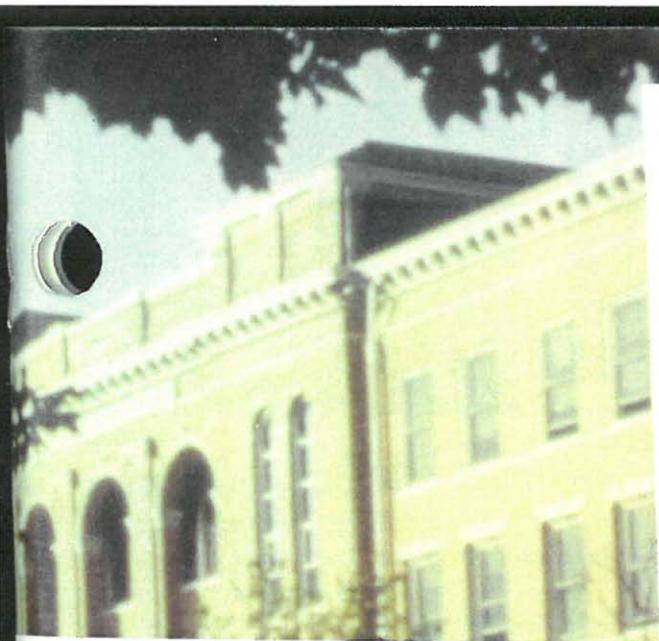
Dedication Ceremony  
January 30, 1902



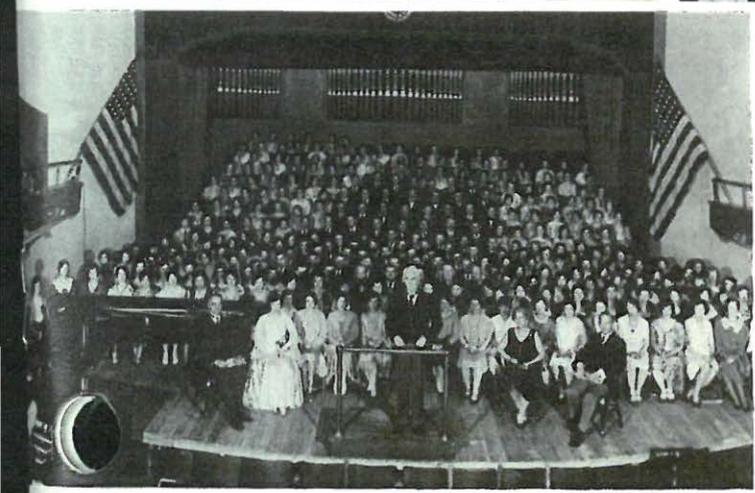
FIVE STATE MEMORIALS  
STREETS OF JAMESVILLE



Communion Service, 1929

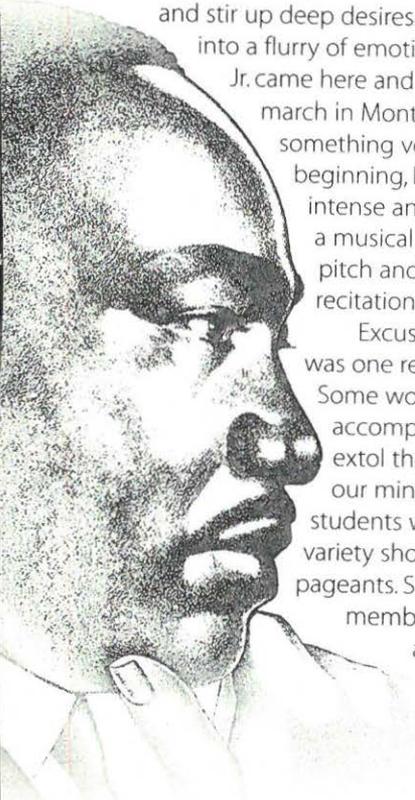


Controversial Speakers Series, 1971



Messiah Chorus  
Christmas, 1930  
C.A. Fullerton, Director





Oh my, the way people can take single words and put them together into patterns that make profound thoughts and stir up deep desires. I recall the gradual stirring into a flurry of emotion when Martin Luther King, Jr. came here and spoke about the civil rights march in Montgomery, Alabama. There was something very ordinary about his delivery in the beginning, but as he spoke his voice became more intense and his words gathered momentum. Like a musical score, his words and voice changed in pitch and tempo, reaching a crescendo, a lyrical recitation of poetry.

Excuse me, I do tend to dwell, yet dwelling was one reason people came to my auditorium. Some would expound on all the accomplishments of humankind. Some would extol the virtues of those who have informed our minds and formed our spirit. There were students who put on the freshman orientation variety show, the fall style shows and the beauty pageants. Student organizations inspired their members to test themselves in a variety of art forms. There were wonderful drama productions, marvelous musicals and how I loved the soft and graceful touch of feet upon the



Teacher Education  
Convocation, 1991



Orchesis

surface of my stage during Orchesis shows. How I did treasure beauty in the art forms that graced my auditorium. The movement and music just made my heart sing. Oh, my, the applause - my heart would swell with pride.

On my stage, the past seems to linger for another curtain call. Traditions begin with an idea and become a way of life. A bond with the past provides a link to the future. For years parents of students, often also graduates, have come to the auditorium for the Teacher Education Convocation. They often stand in the doorway and just gaze with awe. After all these years I still look much like their memories. They turn to their spouse, or relative, and begin to recount their experiences in this space. Oh, how nice it is to be a member of the family. Like a member, I create a warm glow and am associated with remembrances of times treasured.

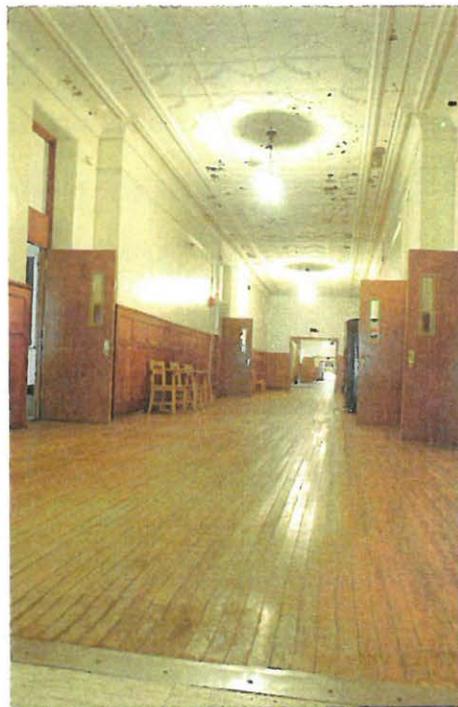
Traditions remind me I have been around awhile. At some time during my wonderful childhood, people started referring to me as the "Old Aud." I don't recall when or why. I only mention it because a nickname is a form of endearment. My nickname does convey a bit of history too.

Bas-relief outside the  
auditorium, 1998

Unfortunately the years have taken their toll. There are the aches and pains of growing old - life has become more of a struggle. My floors have begun to creak. The noise was distressing to instructors who liked to keep their classroom doors open. My windows leaked cold air in the winter. Occasionally I would let go of objects fastened to the plaster in my old walls. I just didn't have the strength to keep everything up anymore. It is difficult to keep up with time and technology. Time has a way of opening my doors to more people and more activity. So many people passed through my doors, walked through me, went about their work, and left their mark upon me. Oh, I was glad to make myself available. I appreciated efforts to care for me too. But as I aged it took so much more time to keep me healthy. Repairing an old body also tends to be pretty expensive.



Second floor hallway, 1998



Staircase, 1998

# Louriel

Controversy

## Lang Hall plan would leave out auditorium - Lang: Auditorium decision to be made Feb. 18 -

By JON ERICSON  
Courier Staff Writer  
WEST DES MOINES

is it a historical landmark or just in history?  
The auditorium in Lang Hall has marked a contentious debate about the value of the old assembly hall.  
University of Northern Iowa officials and a Waterloo architecture firm presented the Iowa Board of Regents with a plan for a renovation of Lang Hall Thursday. The plan includes more class space, better fire safety and new television studios, noticeably missing is "The Board of Regents decided to adjourn until January to vote on the

um," Koob said.  
The historical anecdote of the auditorium story. For decades simply referred to Lang auditorium or "The A" been a part of the building's construction in 1900.  
Koob himself saw Martin Luther King Jr. speak at "The Auditorium" during his undergraduate years at UNI.  
Kennedy said every campus has special places that bring back memories like that to alumni, and that's why she's hesitant to give up on the auditorium.  
"I believe strongly that this is one of those spots at UNI," Kennedy said.  
The 1,000-seat auditorium has

*Continued from page 1*  
the occupant in Lang Hall based on the space needs they presented.  
Despite the influence of the communication department within the department, the outcome of the meeting was discussed each option was discussed. The first option would eliminate the auditorium and redevelop the area into an Interpretive Theater and two television studios. These changes will meet the needs of the communication studies department. This space will also house the public relations offices.  
The second option proposed for the Auditorium would restore the auditorium to its original character of the space.  
which has endorsed option two, points out that the cost of greater than the cost of option one because you are not meeting the academic needs of the communication department. The major studies discussed concerning McGuire said. The major problem one is the aspect of losing the only large auditorium on campus that seats over 600. A major portion of the auditorium is a student organization known as Brothers and Sisters in Christ (BASiC).  
"It concerns me that we are developing for plans BASiC which is not a university recognized organization," McGuire said.

**The cost of option one could be greater than the cost of option two.**

—Richard McGuire

## Renovations, expansion approved for

By KEVIN MABIE  
UNI NEWS EDITOR

Wishes concerning Lang Hall are about to be fulfilled, but not before student fees pick up the additional costs.  
Two months ago students attended the Board of Regents meeting in hopes of receiving one of two wishes. One group wished for the renovation and

The Regents requested a proposal that would include both options. In response to this, UNI arranged to expand the 98 year-old building, allowing it to include both student requests.  
However, expanding the building put UNI over the \$12.9 million allotted to pay for the building. It was decided that student fees would cover

Teresa Manley said. "The plan is to use this money initially and then to replace it through fundraising in the future."  
Fundraising efforts include that of the Northern Iowa Foundation, which is in the process of organizing a special task force to replace the student fee money that is being used to cover the excess expenses needed for the re-

made ties.  
President  
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Time also created opportunities for changes all around me. I don't adapt as easily as I did when I was younger. Age has a way of getting in the way of progress. Technology is progress. Now, changing me did involve some controversy. Some people wanted to convert my auditorium to communication technology classrooms. How I did groan when I heard about that proposal. True, I'm less flexible in my old age, and maybe my imagination has slipped a little too, but I couldn't help but wonder if there wasn't a better way to preserve the best of me and still make me serviceable to new purposes. Fortunately a way was found. Not everyone was happy with the solution, but it sure did make me feel good. My auditorium will still look a lot like it did for all those who remember me as a place where pleasures were cast into lasting memories. Sometimes magic moments are laid to rest in the quiet pleasure of having been a part of them.

I have heard people walking through my halls and standing in my rooms making all kinds of remarks about me. Sometimes I think they are overly critical. They look at me through eyes unfamiliar with my past. They only see the surface of things. I feel sad and wonder what will come of me. There are others who come with an appreciation of the past. They see the interior me. They arrive at conclusions that give me a glimmer of hope. Glimmers burn deeply, only the soul can detect them. The auditorium is the heart and soul of me. All my life seems to emanate from the life that has been celebrated in this part of me. Here resides an unbroken history of accomplished people. Here is where people have sat down to listen and stood up to acknowledge excellence and greatness. Here is where humans have met their humanity and have been raised up to celebrate it.

Mary Lang speaking at the  
Lang Hall Dedication, 1995



10

New Life

Most 'Once Upon a Times' have happy endings. This one is no exception. Unlike my old companions, Gilchrist and Central, I have been spared from the flame of destruction and the

wrecking ball that demolishes what remains. I knew it was a good sign when I was named Lang Hall several years ago. The Board of Regents would not name me to honor the character and contributions of Dr. William Lang only to have remove me from the landscape of this institution! However, even left standing, I cannot begin to duplicate his two volumes devoted to the history of this institution. When they dedicated the building, I heard people say that his writing and his life captured our strivings and our collective ideals. He taught Contemporary Events in my auditorium and Humanities II in my classrooms. A devoted scholar and ardent humanitarian, he built bridges between the past and the present; connecting people through their ideals. Some people can infuse living with life.

I am being infused with new life. They call it renovation. I call it restoring. When it comes to my auditorium, I call it preservation. They probably won't endearingly refer to me as the "Old Aud" anymore. But I like Lang Hall, it suits me just fine. I will be 100 years old when they open my doors again. When they do I'm going to hear the voices of people several generations removed from the ones I heard in 1902. I

hope these voices will find words that will again swell my pride and make me feel young again. Almost 100 years hasn't dulled my memories of those students, faculty and administrators who spoke so glowingly about me and treated me with such great respect. I also remember their gratitude to those who believed in me and wanted the best for me. It was so easy for me to be all that they asked then. I want to be all that is asked of me when I am rededicated. I will want to be rededicated to new plans and purposes.

Oh my, I have come to the end of this story. I have so much to say. Yet, I was told to make a long story short. By shortening I've left out lots of details. You can fill them in as you do when telling the longer version to a good friend. Good friends, like family, know the rest of the story. They are pleased to fill in the spaces in between. I invite you to do this with this story. Fill in the gaps with your own version of the facts; your own truth. (Admittedly, after all these years, I'm not entirely sure I can separate truth and fiction.)

Wherever there are two gathered to tell their ISTC, SCI, UNI stories, there are two who can speak with pride and gratitude.

Really, that has been my story. Our 'Once Upon A Times' have this in common.



Constantine (Deno) Curris and  
J.W. (Bill) Maucker outside  
Lang Hall, 1995



Photos and artwork courtesy of  
Special Collections and Archives at the University of Northern Iowa.