



Ag Hall Has a Birthday!

By **Monroe S. Miller**, Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club

"The girl sank into a chair almost unconsciously as they talked of Madison — a great city to them — of the Capitol building, of the splendid campus, of the lakes, and the gay sailing there in summer and ice-boating in winter.

'Oh, it makes me homesick!' cried the girl, with a deep sigh. 'It was the happiest, sunniest time of all my life. Oh, those walks and talks! Those recitations in the dear, chalky old rooms! Oh, how I would like to go back over that hollow door-stone again!'"

A Stop-Over at Tyre, from
Other Main-Travelled Roads
By Hamlin Garland;
West Salem, Wisconsin

Any among us who attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison would think that Hamlin Garland was surely writing about Agriculture Hall when he penned these lines. Few are the students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences — current or alums — who didn't have a class or a lecture in the venerable old building atop the hill that marks the ag campus at Wisconsin.

Our beloved Ag Hall had a birthday in December. It is doubtful anyone would be surprised that Ag Hall is 100 years old. I thought it was that old forty years ago when I sat in the lecture hall with the uncomfortable seats and the wooden floors that creaked with every step one took. And since Steenbock Library hadn't been built yet, I studied many hours in the agricultural library located in the basement of Ag Hall, just like my dad had before me. From the distance of so



"Ag Hall 100th Anniversary" stained glass panel created by Professor Emeritus Owen Fennema.



AG HALL 100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Agricultural Hall Rotunda
1450 Linden Drive
Thursday, December 4, 2003
RECEPTION 3-5:00 pm
PROGRAM 3:30 pm
Room 125

Welcome
Elton Aberle, Dean and Director
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

Agriculture and Agricultural Hall at UW-Madison
Peter D. Spear, Provost
University of Wisconsin-Madison

**"A Biography of Agricultural Hall, 1903-2003:
Architecture, Landscape and Research Education"**
Professor Arnold Alanen
Department of Landscape Architecture
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

**Dedication of the
National Register of Historic Places Plaque**

**Presentation of "Ag Hall 100th Anniversary"
Stained Glass Panel**
created by Owen Fennema
Professor Emeritus of the Department of Food Science
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

"Create the Future"
Alan Koepke
CALS Campaign Steering Committee

Announcement of the Ice Cream Contest Winner

Live music by the Mad Hatters

■ COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL & LIFE SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Program for Ag Hall's 100th birthday.

many years past, my memories of the old building are all good ones.

The lecture hall was filled for the birthday party with current and emeritus faculty, deans and former deans, former students like me, and even a few youngsters that make up today's student body. Chris Williamson and I sat together through the history of Ag Hall as presented by Dr. Arnold Alanen, a member of the Department of Landscape Architecture.

The building has a fascinating history. W.A. Henry, hired in 1880 as an agricultural professor, was appointed the first dean of the



Plaque noting Ag Hall's placement on the National Register of Historic Places in America.



The 700 seat lecture hall, shown just before the 100th birthday party, is still one of the largest on campus. This photo was taken under the balcony.

College of Agriculture in 1889. The college was housed on Bascom Hill in what is now South Hall. The land west of Bascom Hill was the Ag Experiment Station back then, and the only buildings there were Hiram Smith Hall (1892), King Hall (1893) and the Dairy Barn (1898). Dean Henry hired well known architect J.W. Jennings to design a new Agriculture Hall to be built on the ag campus. Before Jennings started his planning and design, he travelled college campuses in the East to get a sense for such buildings.

The Jennings design presented a building in the Beaux Arts style, 200' x 64'. The exterior of the building was completed in 1902 and the interior was finished in 1903, and the building was opened. There is a long sweeping approach to the building, and the entrance is framed by four huge ionic columns. The finish details of the old building are impres-

sive and, sadly, not noticed by me over many years of visiting Ag Hall.

Across the street from Agriculture Hall - Linden Drive - is a statue of the great Wisconsin governor, W.D. Hoard. The sculptor of Mt. Rushmore, Gutzon Borglum, created the statue of Governor Hoard. Hoard, considered by many the father of Wisconsin's dairy industry, was also a University of Wisconsin regent, a publisher, and a great supporter of the College of Agriculture. The statue is at the north end of Henry Mall, obviously named in honor of Dean Henry.

The birthday lecture pointed out something I'd never noticed or known. The applied sciences on the west end of campus (ag campus) are red brick, while the liberal arts buildings on the east side (Bascom Hill) were finished in buff-colored limestone!

Over its history, the building has

been the campus home for some of the greatest minds and greatest discoveries in agriculture. Professor Elmer McCollum discovered Vitamins A, the B complex and D. McCollum also is credited with giving vitamins the letter system, and he established the world's first research colony of white rats, which he used for nutrition studies. Well-known corn agronomist Ransom A. Moore worked from Ag Hall. So did the famous landscape architect and horticulturalist William Longenecker. Dr. Joshua Lederberg, who won a Nobel Prize while he was a CALS professor, did some of his studies on the sexual reproduction of bacteria in Ag Hall. This led to his Nobel Prize.

Research on spoiled sweet clover led to the discovery of coumarin in Ag Hall. Coumarin is a blood thinner used by millions, and is also the active ingredient in Warfarin, a rat poison.

The world's first departments of Agricultural Economics and of Rural Sociology were started in Agriculture Hall.

The library so many of us used was moved to the new Steenbock

building in 1967, depriving those since the chance to work in a setting with the "character" of the old ag library.

The Ag Hall 100th birthday celebration was accented several ways. Emeritus professor Owen Fennema presented a stained glass panel he created. The plaque designating Ag Hall as a National Historic Place by the National Park

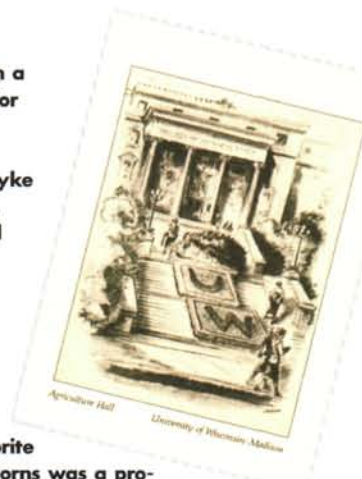
Service was dedicated.

And the winner of the new ice cream flavor created to honor Ag Hall's 100th was announced. A CALS undergrad from a dairy farm near Bonduel gave us "Ag Hallberrie on Henry Malt." It's a cranberry ice cream with malted milk balls throughout and a ribbon of fudge.

It was really good, just like the party. 🌿



Ag Hall has been a favorite subject for many Wisconsin artists, including Jennifer Samerdyke and Byron Jorns. Jen used Ag Hall for the cover of the May/June 1997 cover of *The Grass Roots*. Professor Byron Jorns' classic rendering of Ag Hall is a favorite of CALS alums. Jorns was a professor in agricultural journalism and was the staff artist in the College.



Ag Hall has been a popular subject for campus post cards over the years.

- From the collection of M.S. Miller.

