A Catalog of Historic and Significant Campus Interiors
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The University of Texas at Austin

Project Management and Construction Services
2010
Introduction

The University of Texas at Austin has nearly 50 buildings built before 1960, many of which have served as important precedents for the development of the university’s architectural style and identity. While UT’s architectural icons like the Tower and Battle Hall quickly come to mind, special interior spaces on campus are less widely known. This catalog will provide a historical context for significant spaces, including dates of construction, associated designer(s), original use and change over time, materials, and character-defining features.

Primarily intended as a reference resource for the university to be used when planning projects that may impact historic interior spaces, we hope this catalog may also be helpful to the larger campus community as well as citizens of and visitors to Austin. Further, this report may be a launching pad for future researchers interested in architecture, interior design, historic preservation, and materials conservation.
# Table of Contents

Anna Hiss Gymnasium.................................................................5

Battle Hall.....................................................................................6

Mary Gearing Hall ......................................................................8

Goldsmith Hall..........................................................................14

Hogg Memorial Auditorium..........................................................18

Homer Rainey Hall ....................................................................20

Main Building.............................................................................24

Texas Union..................................................................................38

Robert A. Welch Hall.................................................................42

Will C. Hogg Building..................................................................44
Name of Building
Historic and Significant Interiors • The University of Texas at Austin

Anna Hiss Gymnasium

Building History
The Anna Hiss Gymnasium was designed by Greene, LaRoche & Dahl and completed in 1931. Formerly known as the Women's Gymnasium, in 1974, it was renamed to honor Dr. Anna Hiss, who directed the Women's Physical Education program at UT for 36 years.

The gym’s “feminine” features, such as its diminutive scale and relationship to the central courtyard have also been noted, perhaps referencing the original function of the building. AHG was integral to Paul Cret’s vision for the “Women’s group” on campus. Though the building no longer has a pool, the gym still serves as an athletic facility, currently housing basketball and volleyball courts, dance studios, and an archery range in the basement.

Gymnasium spaces (formerly rooms 201, 234, 213 and 233; today AHG 133-136)
The light-filled gymnasiums are some of the most pleasant spaces on campus. Though the gyms are relatively small, the expansive windows (much larger than those in the original Gregory Gym) make the rooms feel large and airy.

Materials
• Maple flooring
• Steel casement windows
• Brick walls

Character-Defining Features
• Expansive windows
• Exposed brick

Previous Treatment & Maintenance
The windows of many of the gymnasium spaces appear to have a variety of retrofitted panes and opacity treatments, including back-painting and various films applied to the exterior and interior. In 1994, the natatorium wing of the building was demolished to make way for the Molecular Biology Building.
Anna Hiss Gymnasium

Women’s Shower Room (formerly room 106; today AHG 41)
Shower rooms once occupied the majority of the basement floor of the gymnasium. Though only the south wing retains the original function, the basement of the gym was said to once contain over 200 tons of marble in partitions for showers and dressing stalls, which were designed to include seats and alcoves for hair dryers.

Materials
Character-Defining Features
Previous Treatment & Maintenance
The partitions in the north wing have been replaced with an archery range, while the showers and dressing areas of the south wing remain. Some showers are operable, but the space has largely been converted to a storage area.
Battle Hall

Building History
Arguably the most architecturally significant building on campus, Battle Hall played a significant role in establishing the governing style for the architecture of the university. Designed by Cass Gilbert in the early years of campus development, Battle Hall is located in the historic core of the University. The building was completed in 1911, served as the main library until 1937, and is now home to the Architecture and Planning Library and the Alexander Architectural Archive.

First Floor Corridor (BTL 100)
The interior plan of Battle Hall is based loosely on the Renaissance palazzo, with offices on the first floor and the primary space housed on the second level (piano nobile). The main entrance of Battle Hall opens to the cruciform first floor plan, with barrel-vaulted ceilings. The first floor was once home to the Wrenn Library, when the building served as the university’s main library. The Wrenn Library was disassembled and reinstalled in the Main Building when it was completed in the 1930s.

Materials
- Alabama cream-white marble wainscot, trimmed above and below with a course of gray marble
- Plaster walls above the wainscot
- Marble staircase with ornamental iron balustrade

Character-Defining Features
- High marble wainscot
- Barrel vaulted ceiling
- Grand staircase

Previous Treatment & Maintenance
A dropped ceiling was added in the 1960s, obscuring the barrel vaulting of the north-south corridor.
Battle Hall

Reading Room (BTL 200)

With its soaring ceilings, rich paneling and a flood of natural light from the large windows, the crown jewel of the building is the reading room. Adjacent to the stacks, this room occupies the majority of the second floor. The exposed king trusses are a primary character-defining feature of the space, and may also be the work of master painter Elmer Garnsey. Gilbert and Garnsey often collaborated, and Garnsey was involved in the painting of the soffits of the exterior of the building, though his hand in the design of the interior work has not been confirmed.

The Reading Room also contains historic furniture. Most notable is the desk of James Riely Gordon (1863–1937), which was designed by Gordon for his architecture office. Gordon, whose drawings and papers are held at the Alexander Architectural Archive in the basement of Battle Hall, is best known for his Richardsonian Romanesque designs for public buildings, especially courthouses.

Materials
- Oak cabinets and shelving
- Limestone walls
- Washington Fur casement windows with bronze sills
- Wood decorative screens at entrance to Reading Room
- Stained glass skylight

Character-Defining Features
- Timber frame ceiling with exposed beams and trusses, painted with geometric patterns in blue, green, red and cream
- Double-height arched windows
- Ashlar masonry walls
- Chandeliers with globe-shaped lights
- Domed, leaded glass skylight
- Elaborately carved screens at entrance (pictured at left)

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

In 1946, the trusses were repainted, though it is not clear whether the original designs were preserved.

The entrance to the reading room and the various portals to request and return books have been remodeled since the early days of Battle Hall. Originally, patrons entered the library through the first archway on the left and requested items in the closed-stack system from a desk facing east under the center archway. Today, one enters the reading room through the center archway where this desk formerly stood.

The original flooring has been replaced or overlaid with linoleum tiles.
Mary Gearing Hall

Building History
Completed in 1933, the Home Economics Building enjoys a prominent position in Paul Cret's plan for the campus. Situated to the north of the Main Building, the building is the gateway to the north mall and once served as an anchor for the “Women’s campus” as envisioned by early architects Herbert Greene and Paul Cret.

The interiors of the Home Economics Building were designed to evoke the feel of a domestic environment and also to pay tribute to Texas history and the diverse heritage of early settlers. Vestiges of the interior design of the building’s early days remain, including antique furniture and a hand-painted mural. The building was renamed in 1976 to honor former chair of the Home Economics Department Mary Gearing, and today houses the School of Human Ecology.

Great Hall (formerly room 107; today GEA 104)
The lobby, or Great Hall, provides a glimpse into the building's interior before the dropped acoustical ceilings were added. This space retains the original tall vaulted ceilings and rustic character. The Great Hall was designed as a showcase for the various nationalities who settled in Texas, including the English, French, German, and Spanish. Though they have since been moved elsewhere, the Great Hall originally featured a 17th century German Court Cupboard, two Spanish torchiers and tables, and two lamps made from French Provincial vases. The high-back English settles do remain in the hall, forming a seating area on the north side of the space.

Materials
- Long leaf yellow pine framing timbers
- Quarry tile flooring in herringbone pattern
- Plaster walls and ceiling between beams
- Rustic stone trim at entrances to exterior and corridors

Character-Defining Features
- Vaulted ceiling
- Arched openings
- Ceilings with exposed beams
- Tile floor
Mary Gearing Hall

Pioneer Room (formerly room 122; today GEA 117)

The “Pioneer Room” and the “Plantation Room” were two small period museums located on the first floor of the building, meant to represent different eras in Texas history. The Plantation Room has since been converted to a computer lab, and the pine flooring is the only remaining original feature.

The Pioneer Room originally displayed antique furniture, cooking utensils, and two spinning wheels; though the space no longer showcases the life of Texans in the early 19th century, it does function as an exhibition space today, currently featuring historic textiles and apparel from the school’s collection.

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

In the 1960s, the Pioneer Room was converted from its use as a mini-museum tribute to early settlers to office space (the Plantation Room was also converted at this time). Sometime later the Pioneer Room served as a conference room, and was more recently repurposed as an exhibition space. The room originally had no electricity, to make the experience of frontier living as authentic as possible. Today, the room has been wired for electricity, and fluorescent lighting has been installed between the ceiling beams.
Mary Gearing Hall

**Reading Room** (formerly room 117; today GEA 125)
The large room at the southeast corner of the first floor was originally a reading room and today serves as a conference room. Large windows on the south wall provide ample light, though their arches are obscured by the current valences. The room’s west side opens on to the loggia and courtyard through doors on either side of the fireplace. The north wall is lined with the original built-in shelving, now holding china. The flooring and chandeliers are original to the room, as are the desks against the south wall. The fireplace is trimmed with colorful Dutch-style, hand-painted tile, and features wood paneling above.

**Materials**
- Oak flooring
- Wood paneling and shelving
- Ceramic tile fireplace surround
- Plaster between ceiling beams and above paneling

**Character-Defining Features**
- Handmade reproduction Dutch tile
- Tall ceilings with exposed beams
- Original light fixtures and desks
- Wood paneling and shelving

**View of room looking southeast**

**Materials**

**View of west end of room; doors flanking fireplace lead to the courtyard**

**Original light fixture**

**Detail of Dutch-style tiles surrounding fireplace**

**Original desk**
Mary Gearing Hall

Tea Room (formerly room 414; today GEA 403)

This former dining room once served as a learning lab as well as a functioning restaurant space for faculty and students. According to departmental records, under the direction of UT Home Economics faculty member Helen Corbitt, the dining room became so popular that it soon required its own space outside the building. A separate “Home Economics Tea House” was opened in 1939, housed in a cottage built in 1870 near 24th and San Jacinto Streets (since demolished). Corbitt went on to become Director of Food Services for Neiman Marcus and left a legacy as an important tastemaker in Texas cuisine.

Character-Defining Features

- Rustic trusses and brackets
- Wood paneling on west wall and ceiling
- Built in shelving to the left of the fireplace
- Original light fixtures

Materials

- Oak strip flooring
- Cordova shell limestone fireplace trim
- Wood window surrounds, ceiling, beams, trusses and brackets
- Plaster on north, south and east walls
- Wood paneling on west wall
- Steel grilles below windows

Early photograph of the “Tea Room”

Fireplace with Cordova Shell Limestone surround; the same stone is employed on the exterior

The north, south and east walls have a plaster finish

Wood-paneled ceiling with exposed trusses

South wall of the room with windows overlooking the courtyard

West wall with paneling and built in shelving
Mary Gearing Hall

The Republic of Texas Suite

The set of rooms known as the “Republic of Texas Suite” on the third floor of the building were designed as Mary Gearing requested, reflecting her idea of the domestic traditions of the days of the Republic of Texas (1836-1845). There was a shortage of funds at the time construction of the building was completed, so Gearing herself purchased a mahogany empire dining table and ten Grecian style curved-backed chairs for the dining room. Gearing made this donation to the university on the condition that the suite would eventually be completed.

Though it was still not yet fully furnished at the time of her death in 1946, the university appropriated the funds to complete the suite shortly thereafter. Joseph Mullen, then president of the American Institute of Designers and longtime friend of Gearing, was commissioned to turn the suite in to a family home setting typical of the period of the Republic Texas. According to an early document describing the room, the guiding decorating principle was to produce an effect “reflecting the beauty and good taste found in some of the early Texans’ plantation homes.” For many years the suite served as a lab for home economic students; its connection to the kitchen next door allowed students to practice formal meal service.

Parlor (formerly room 326; today GEA 327)

The parlor, or reception room, features several pieces of antique furniture. The mantelpiece is of special note; it is original to the room and is a copy of one found in a home in Bastrop, Texas.

Materials

- Wood chair rail and panel molding wainscot
- Wood fireplace surround

Character-Defining Features

- Carved wood mantel featuring Star of Texas design
- Antique furniture
- Wainscot and crown molding

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Mary Gearing Hall

Dining Room (formerly room 328; today GEA 325)

The most striking feature in the dining room is the peach-colored walls with hand-painted mural. This mural was designed by Mullen, executed in New York, and sent to Texas for mounting. Several sources list the style of the “Texain Campagne” plates, which were donated to the suite and feature a monochrome line design, as a source of inspiration for the mural.

The chandelier, table, and chairs are original to the room, while the cradle and spinning wheels currently stored here were once exhibited in the Pioneer Room. The buffet in the dining room was also originally displayed on the first floor. A gift from building architect Paul Cret, it is a German “Court Cupboard” and once sat in the Great Hall.

Materials
- Hepplewhite mahogany dining table and chairs
- Wood chair rail and panel molding wainscot

Character-Defining Features
- Mural featuring conception of Texas home life during the era of the Republic
- Original chandelier, table and chairs
- Wainscot and crown molding

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

The furniture in the dining room was loaned to the Flawn family during their stay in the university Presidential residence (1979-1985) and was later returned to the suite. The current window treatments are a recent addition; the original draperies were made of a fabric that depicted the 1847 Battle of Buena Vista, thought to have been a close substitute for the imagery of the Battle of San Jacinto, a decisive battle of the Texas Revolution, fought in 1836.
Goldsmith Hall

Building History
Goldsmith Hall, known as the Architecture Building until 1978, was designed by Paul Cret and completed in 1933. Constructed at the same time as the Texas Union, these two buildings frame a stately entrance on the western border of the campus. Designed with rectangular wings surrounding a center courtyard, the building was extended to the south with an addition and renovation completed in 1988 by Booziotis & Company. The addition doubled the depth of the south wing and extended the length of the west wing along Guadalupe Street. New review rooms, offices and a lecture hall were added to the building, while existing uses were reprogrammed. The large assembly room on the first floor was remodeled to become an exhibition space, the Mebane Gallery. The building’s original library on the second floor was converted to studio space.

Lobby and Exhibition Corridor
The space Paul Cret designed as the main lobby retains this function today, serving as a welcoming vestibule from the entrance to the building on from the West Mall. The light fixture, exposed beams, and an elevated platform with slate steps leading to what was once the General Office of the University Architect (now subdivided into several faculty offices) are original to the space.

The lobby opens on to a long hallway once called the “Exhibition Corridor,” which is flanked by the courtyard to the east and the Mebane Gallery to the west (once the Assembly Room). This light-filled space features arched windows on both walls and marble trim underneath the windows.

Materials
- Concrete beams
- Slate steps leading to 2.200 suite
- Bronze light fixtures
- Marble baseboards and trim underneath windows of Exhibition Corridor

Character-Defining Features
- Exposed and painted beams of Lobby
- Raised entrance to 2.200 suite
- Arched windows lining Exhibition Corridor
- Original side lights and transom of main entrance door
Goldsmith Hall

Former Architecture Library (formerly room 219; today GOL 3.112)

Paul Cret designed a room on the second floor of the building to house the library for the School of Architecture. This large space has since been converted to a studio, but retains much of the built-in wooden shelving lining the walls and the exposed and decorated ceiling beams.

The concrete beams decorations were likely designed by Peter Allidi (1885-1948) and Harold Everett “Bubi” Jessen (1908-1979) in 1933. Allidi, born in Switzerland, also collaborated with Jessen to decorate the exterior loggia ceiling of the old Austin Public Library (1933) and was later employed to paint the Stark Library and Rare Book Study on the fourth floor of the Main Building (1937). The stenciled designs follow the theme of “The Progress of Architecture Through the Centuries” and feature famous buildings in architectural history and icons of the machine age. These decorations were the inspiration for the similar designs painted on the beams of the south lobby, added in the 1980s addition to the building.

Materials
- Concrete ceiling beams
- Wooden shelving

Character-Defining Features
- Built-in shelving
- Un-subdivided space
- Painted ceiling beams
- Interior windows looking to hallway
- Decorative grilles under windows

Previous Treatment & Maintenance
The room was converted from a library to studio space during the 1986 renovation. The painting on the ceiling beams was restored by Betty Treanor in 19XX.
Goldsmith Hall

Top Floor Studios (formerly rooms 307 & 309; today GOL 4.106 & 4.130)

The two studio spaces flanking the courtyard on the fourth floor of the building were originally designed to be drafting rooms for third and fourth year students on the south and north wings of the building, respectively. These spaces have been maintained as studios; though the rooms often house more than one studio today, they remain unsubdivided. Both rooms feature expansive windows on the north and south walls and high ceilings with exposed trusses; the trusses were left open for students to reference in detailing designs.

These two spaces are significant because they are a part of the Architecture Building that, as a vestige of Cret’s original plan, represent a link to the educational environment of the School of Architecture in the 1930s.

Character-Defining Features

• Exposed trusses
• Open nature of the rooms

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

The renovation in 1986 included and addition on the south side of the building, but the original south façade was retained, including its windows. Illuminated by a narrow skylight, the outer wall of room 4.130 became the inner wall of a hallway separating old from new in the building.
Goldsmith Hall

The Tower Room (formerly room 402; today GOL 5.102)

Goldsmith Hall’s “Tower Room” was labeled as the “Mural Decoration Room” on Cret’s original plans, and today is occupied by the Dean of the School of Architecture. The large vaulted room, measuring 25 feet square, currently accommodates a large conference table, the Dean’s desk, and a small sitting area.

The white plaster walls are largely bare, as the intention was for murals to be painted directly on the walls. The room may never have actually been used for a mural painting studio; in December of 1933, shortly after the building was completed, the room was being used for small seminar classes and faculty meetings. The fireplace, featuring bands of buff colored stone and dark slate, is the centerpiece of the space and the sole remaining original interior feature. The slate patterning on the fireplace, it has been suggested, was inspiration for the use of a thin band of this material to distinguish the 1986 addition to the building from the original structure.

Another special aspect of the Tower Room is its connection to an intimately scaled loggia with a view over the West Mall plaza. Double doors provide direct access to the outdoor space, as well as a generous source of natural light. This columned loggia is located on the top floor of the building’s “tower,” which likely gave the room its nickname.

Materials

- Fireplace: slate and stone with brick lining

Character-Defining Features

- Slate and stone fireplace
- Vaulted ceilings
- Connected loggia
- Nature of the space as one large, open room

View of room looking north; loggia accessed through doors

View of room looking east

Original fireplace shop drawing
Hogg Memorial Auditorium

Building History

Designed by Paul Cret and completed in 1933, Hogg Memorial Auditorium was part of the “Union Group,” buildings financed almost entirely by student and alumni efforts. The auditorium was named after James Stephen Hogg, the first native governor of Texas. Seating about 1,200 people, the auditorium was the first theater at the University of Texas.

The inaugural event at the auditorium was a lecture by poet Robert Frost, and over the years Hogg has provided a setting for lectures, debates, and traveling plays, serving the campus as well as the community. In the 1950s, as the main stage for UT’s drama department, Hogg was the venue for a well-regarded series of Shakespeare plays directed by scholar B. Iden Payne. With the opening of Bass Concert Hall in 1980, Hogg was essentially closed for performing arts, as the university now had several newer theater spaces. After a dormant phase in the 1980s and 1990s, when the venue was used for lectures, exams, and film screenings, it reopened as a performing arts venue in 1997.

The interior of the building, which retains a high degree of integrity, is solely devoted to the auditorium, with supporting spaces including a lobby, box office, and dressing rooms. The theater features many original elements; of special note are the elaborate screens framing the stage and the decorative ceiling in the theater.

Entry Vestibule (HMA 101)

The small entry vestibule includes many original finishes and is more decoratively appointed than the pared-down lobby beyond. Visitors enter the vestibule through double doors and are provided with immediate access to the ticket booth. The relatively dark space features a painted ceiling with exposed beams and decorative tile flooring and wainscot; if the exterior suggests a restrained classicism, this space reflects a “Texas” influence on interior design, reminiscent of predecessors Mary Gearing and Goldsmith Halls and its contemporary, the Union Building next door.

Materials

- Ceramic tile flooring and wainscot
- Wooden beam ceiling
- Bronze light fixtures

Character-Defining Features

- Painted ceiling with exposed beams
- Original bulletin board and light fixtures
- Decorative tile flooring and wainscot
Hogg Memorial Auditorium

Lobby (formerly room 102; today HMA 110)

A set of two double doors flanks each side of the box office, leading to the lobby. The lobby, a simple hallway, has stairs to the upper level and exit doors at the two far ends. There are also rest rooms located off the lobby, one on each side of the vestibule, and ADA-accessible bathrooms located across the hallway. Interestingly, these bathrooms, which extend into space that had been planned for seating, were not depicted on initial plans for the auditorium. It appears that plans were changed before construction to add these bathrooms, which are shown on measured drawings of the building just one month after completion.

Materials
- Painted plaster walls

Character-Defining Features
- Original clock

Auditorium (HMA 106)

The auditorium space features many surviving original finishes. Though the ceiling today is acoustical tile, this grid is apparently installed over the original highly decorative suspended plaster ceiling. Along the wall and extending along the ceiling over the mezzanine are detailed plaster carvings, painted a metallic gold and featuring Moorish designs. Embedded in this gold grillwork over the mezzanine seats is a set of six illuminated six-sided stars. Framing the stage are two rows of polychrome plaster carvings, and the grills screening the organ pipes and extending around the stage in a third frame echo the carved grills seen in the mezzanine. The theater also features green vinyl-upholstered chairs, each with metal interlocking “UT” symbols on the sides underneath the armrests.

Materials
- Wood paneled walls with wood trim
- Plaster grilles and ceiling decoration
- Ceramic tile framing doorways on either side of the stage
- Vinyl tile flooring in the aisles
- Sealed concrete under the seating areas

Character-Defining Features
- Decorative plaster work framing stage and along ceiling of mezzanine
- Ceramic tiles around doors on either side of the stage, with pattern echoing the tiles in the entrance vestibule
- Faux theater boxes
- Seats with interlocking UT logo

Hogg Auditorium stage

Detail of plaster work framing stage

Detail of ceramic tile (left) and decorative ceiling above mezzanine with illuminated star (right)
Homer Rainey Hall

Building History
Homer Rainey Hall was the first of the buildings of the “Six Pack” to be completed (1942), and was specifically designed to house the music department, featuring a concert hall and soundproof practice rooms along with classrooms and administrative space. Project architect George Dahl worked with UT physics professor Dr. C. Paul Boner to incorporate the latest technology in acoustical engineering into the building design, including floors, walls, and ceilings suspended by springs, and oak paneling to reflect, rather than absorb sound. In 1995, the building was renamed in honor of Homer Price Rainey, who served as university President from 1939 to 1944.

Entry and floor lobby
The first floor entrance and lobby retain many significant original features. The walls are lined with shell stone, trimmed with marble at the baseboards. Marble is also used for the built-in water fountain and ticket counter outside the concert hall. The original light fixtures remain, and the pendant light over the interior entrance vestibule from the south façade is especially noteworthy, featuring eagles and lyres in the design. These ornamental bronze fixtures were furnished by Summerour & Devine of Kansas City, Missouri.

Materials
- Shell stone walls
- Marble baseboards, ticket counter and water fountain
- Terrazzo flooring
- Bronze light fixtures

Character-Defining Features
- Original light fixtures
- Water fountain
- Ticket counter
Homer Rainey Hall

Jessen Auditorium (formerly room 127; today HRH 2.104)

Originally seating about 500 (today, 300), the “Recital Hall” was just as acoustically cutting-edge as the rest of the new Music Building. Initially designed by architect George Dahl, plans for the space were re-worked after an evaluation by C.C. Potwin, a nationally-renowned acoustical expert. When it opened, the recital hall featured cylindrical walls and a sloping, tiered ceiling. Though many of the original finishes have been removed or replaced, the space retains a warm, intimate feel, due in large part to the wood paneling. The design of the wood grilles on either side of the stage also firmly place the auditorium in the decade of its design.

In 1984 the room was officially named Jessen Auditorium, in honor of university donors Wolf and Janet Jessen.

Materials

- Wood paneling
- Painted plaster insets at intervals along east and west walls
- Oak stage flooring and steps
- Leather-covered doors (check?)

Character-Defining Features

- Decorative wood grilles on either side of the stage
- Wood paneling throughout
- Curved walls
- Distinctive design of ceiling panels

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

The stairs at center stage were added in a 1982 renovation, at the same time that a projector room was added at the rear, extending into space that was previously part of the lobby. A second set of doors was also added at the south entrance at this time.

In 2009, the auditorium underwent another renovation. In addition to HVAC work, the ceiling was repainted and the wood paneling was refinished, replacing damaged pieces. The carpeting was replaced, and the seats were reupholstered. The back wall of the auditorium received a new acoustical paneling system.

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Homer Rainey Hall

 Former Rehearsal Hall (formerly room 227; today HRH 3.102A)

Designated the “Rehearsal Hall” on original drawings, this room showcases the building’s attention to detail in acoustical design. The room features floating walls with three and a half foot curved wood panels, each with a circular, aluminum-framed “resonator” with metal screen.

Materials

- Wood paneling
- Bronze light fixtures
- Aluminum resonator openings

Character-Defining Features

- Curved wood walls
- “Resonator” openings with metal screens
- Original clock and light fixtures
- Angled ceiling

Materials

- Wood paneling
- Bronze light fixtures
- Aluminum resonator openings

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

The undulating paneling was originally specified for all four walls but today only covers the south and west walls; it is unclear whether the paneling was ever installed on the north and east walls, but the detailing on these walls suggests that this finish was intentional.

The room had been converted to a conference room as early as 1980, and today houses the Hindi Urdu Resource Center, with several temporary cubicles breaking up the once open space.

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Homer Rainey Hall

Practice Rooms (third floor)
The clusters of small rooms (average size 7'x10') comprising most of the third floor of the building were originally designed to be individual practice rooms for students. Like many of the other rooms in the building, the design incorporated new ideas in acoustics. The walls and doors are unusually thick (21"), in order to provide soundproofing. The floating walls and floors are both finished in wood and the rooms have 8' ceilings. These rooms, in their original configuration, are highly significant to the identity of the building as the home of the music department, and represent acoustical design that was revolutionary at the time of construction. The original wood lockers for storing musical instruments lining the hallways of the third floor also remain.

Character-Defining Features
- Original wood lockers lining hallways
- Surviving configuration of space as a group of several small rooms
- Floating walls and floors with wood finish

Materials
- Wood flooring, molding, and paneling
- Suspended plaster ceiling
- Wood lockers

Previous Treatment & Maintenance
The former practice rooms have since been converted into office spaces, though they retain their original configuration and much of the original finishes.
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Main Building

Building History

As the first building he designed at UT, the Main Building and Tower were conceived as the centerpiece of Paul Cret’s master plan for the university.

The building was constructed in two phases between 1931 and 1937. The first phase was an E-shaped building, with the base of the tower comprising the central leg of the E. The second phase completed the Tower and added a unit to the south of the existing nucleus, the primary façade of the building. As plans were being made for the second phase, the program of the building shifted to accommodate more space for administrative functions, and less for the library. As a result, many of the most impressive interiors, designed as library spaces, were confined to the first phase.

The Main Building was designed as the new primary library for the campus, and served this purpose until 1977, when the Perry Castaneda Library (PCL) was constructed as a much larger and more accessible replacement.
Main Building

Hall of the Six Coats of Arms/ Life Science Library Circulation (MAI 220)

The large room housing the loan desk for the Life Science Library is known as the Hall of the Six Coats of Arms, after the heraldic arms of six nations which are displayed here. The decorative plaster crests each represent a nation by whom Texas has been governed in its history. Starting from the west end of the hall, above the entrance to the Hall of Texas, the coats of arms are displayed in chronological order: Spain, France, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the Confederate States, and the United States.

This space has many rich decorative details, including the original bronze light fixtures, walnut-paneled ceiling and marble-clad walls.

Materials

- Bronze light fixtures
- Walnut grilles, doors, and ceiling
- Marble loan desk
- Door frames and wall base French gray marble from Vermont
- Wainscot comprised of panels of Saint Genevieve Rose marble trimmed by Texas Magnolia Gray marble
- Pink Lepanto marble pilasters

Character-Defining Features

- Plaster coats of arms
- Marble cladding
- Rich ceiling paneling
- Transom windows with wood grilles
- Original light fixtures

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

In 2005, the circulation desk was modified by removing a small end section of the counter to provide ADA access. The rooms on the south side of the hall once housed the card catalog; in 2008, these spaces were converted to seminar rooms. According to early plans, the entrances to the stacks on the north side of the hall were to have wooden doors with a carved star, but these were never installed. The new doors on the seminar rooms were inspired by this unrealized design, slightly modified to include glass panels.
Main Building

Hall of Noble Words/ Life Science Library (MAI 227)

The reading room on the east side of the Hall of the Six Coats of Arms was named the “Hall of Noble Words,” in reference to the 31 inspirational quotations painted on the ceiling beams. The brackets of the beams feature various printer’s marks. William James Battle, then chair of the university Building Committee selected the quotes and the decorative scheme, and the painting was executed by Dallas painter Eugene Gilboe (whose work can also be seen in the Texas Union).

The room also features a beautiful work by another significant artist. Centered between the broken pediment over the door leading to the Hall of the Six Coats of Arms is a walnut carving of the central tower of Old Main by Peter Mansbendel (see Union entry).

Materials

- Concrete ceiling beams
- Wood shelving, molding, and grilles surrounding entryway
- Walnut medallion over door

Character-Defining Features

- Decoratively painted ceiling beams
- Built-in shelving
- Open layout with natural lighting
- Mansbendel’s medallion

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

The Hall of Noble Words underwent a cosmetic renovation in 2006-2007. The service counter surface was covered with black granite, replacing the original linoleum-type material. The room’s venetian blinds and woodwork were restored and the walls were repainted.

The original chandeliers in the room had been replaced with fluorescent fixtures in the 1950s, when fluorescent lights were also installed above the bookcases. Though the original chandeliers could not be located, the library staff selected compatible replacements, created by ELA Lighting. The fluorescent lighting above the bookcases was removed, and new fixtures were installed in existing light boxes.
Main Building

Hall of Texas/ Life Science Library (MAI 228)

Mirroring the reading room on the east, the room on the west side of the Hall of the Six Coats of Arms originally served as the “Periodical Reading Room.” This room is known as the “Hall of Texas” because of the theme of the ceiling beams, which are each devoted to a period of Texas history, including the eras of the Aztecs, Native Americans, Spanish and French, as well as the Republic of Texas, and the United States. One beam is also devoted to the university’s first fifty years. The brackets of the beams are painted with the national arms of what were believed to be the primary groups of ancestry of the Texas population when the room was completed in 1937.

Like the Hall of Noble Words, the beams of the Hall of Texas were also painted by Gilboe, and the entrance door also features the work of Mansbendel. The walnut carving in the Hall of Texas depicts the south entrance to Old Main.

Materials
- Concrete ceiling beams
- Wood molding and grilles surrounding entryway
- Walnut medallion over door

Character-Defining Features
- Decoratively painted ceiling beams
- Mansbendel’s medallion

Previous Treatment & Maintenance
The original chandeliers were also removed from this room, and the fluorescent replacements remain. In the 1980s, the Hall of Texas was subdivided to provide storage for the Herbarium Collection of the Plant Resources Center.
Main Building

Latin American Room (MAI 316)

The room in the first phase of the Main Building that now houses the Accounting Department was once a library space, called the “Latin American Room.” The core of the collection of Latin American literature kept here was the private library of Mexican Genaro Garcia, acquired by the university in 1921. The library occupied the entire third floor of the northwest wing, with book stack areas to the north and south of the reading room in the center. The stacks areas show few remnants of their earlier life, but the central room retains many original features.

The carvings on the bookcases of the north, south and east walls feature the work of Peter Mansbendel. Over the west (primary entrance) door is a representation of Garcia’s book plate, which depicts the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl. Above the south bookcase are the arms of the Franciscan order, and the north wall features the arms of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, a famous Spanish explorer of Texas.

The spaces between the beams of the ceiling are painted with bright shades of blue, green, red, orange, and white in stylized floral designs. At the ends of the painted panels are copies of various brands imprinted on Garcia’s books as marks of ownership by former owners.
Main Building

Latin American Room continued (MAI 316)

Materials
- Blue and white ceramic tile at base under windows
- Gray marble baseboards under shelving
- Plaster walls and beams
- Leather-covered entrance doors
- Walnut shelving
- Wrought iron curtain rods
- Cork flooring (under carpet)

Character-Defining Features
- Leather doors with portholes
- Decoratively painted ceiling
- Original light fixtures
- Carved woodwork
- Ceramic tile

Blue and white ceramic tile

Details of ceiling painting (left and center)

Previous Treatment & Maintenance
The Office of Accounting moved into the space in the early 1990s; before that it served as the reading room for the Asian/Middle East Collections (the Latin American Collection moved to Sid Richardson Hall in 1971). The original ceiling and light fixtures were preserved in the middle room, with the addition of supplemental fluorescent lighting. All existing light fixtures and bookcases were removed from the stacks rooms, and they received dropped ceilings.
Main Building

Phase II (Completed 1937)
The second phase of construction of Main Building added the monumental south façade and several important interior spaces. Gustav Ketterer (1870-1953), a German-born and Philadelphia-based decorator was given charge of the decoration of the primary spaces in this phase of construction, including designing decorative schemes, selecting colors, and creating stencils and patterns. In Philadelphia, Ketterer served as the honorary curator of Furniture and Woodwork at the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art (alongside Alexander Calder, who was honorary curator of Sculpture, Marbles and Casts). Ketterer also designed and executed decorative work for Yale, Princeton, the University of Chicago, the Department of Justice Building in Washington, DC, and many other public buildings. It is believed that his work for the Main Building may be his only work in Texas; he was likely involved in the project because of Philadelphia connections to Paul Cret.

Grand Stairway (MAI MS1.1, 2.1, 1.2, 2.2)
The main stairway, located between two light courts on the south side of the building, offers a grand introduction to the building. The marble-faced walls are topped by an elaborately carved plaster cornice and a vaulted ceiling. Over the stairway, the ceiling features diagonal coffers inset with gold leaf on a soft blue background. On the north and south sides, walnut grilles frame the entrances to the Life Sciences Library and the second floor elevator lobby, respectively.

Materials
- Steps of gray Tennessee marble
- Wrought iron and bronze balustrades
- Walnut grilles
- Plaster frieze and ceiling
- Walls of Magnolia gray marble from West Texas
- Windows framed in French Gray marble from Vermont

Character-Defining Features
- Original light fixtures
- Decorative ceiling
- Carved woodwork at entrance to library
- Large windows providing natural light
- Marble finishes
Main Building

Second Floor Elevator Lobby (MAI C200)

The rich appointments from the central stair continue in the second floor elevator lobby. This space, providing access to the Academic Room (MAI 212) and the Provost’s Office, features limestone walls and a decorated plaster ceiling with a warm terra cotta-color finish.

The north wall of the lobby also displays a bronze medallion depicting Robert Lynn Batts by Peter Mansbendel. Batts (1864–1935) studied law at UT and later served as a university regent as well as a federal judge.

Materials

- Baseboards of Imperial Black marble from Tennessee
- Walls and columns of Cordova cream limestone
- Bronze light fixtures and wall medallion
- Painted plaster ceiling
- Wood transom and grille at entrance to stairs

Character-Defining Features

- Medallion depicting R.L. Batts
- Richly decorated ceiling
- Original light fixtures

Elevator lobby looking south to MAI 212; elevator are to the east

Detail of original bronze light fixture

Entrance to stairs on west side of lobby, with medallion of Batts on the north wall
Main Building

Academic Room (formerly MAI 202; today MAI 212)

In Cret’s original plans for the building, this room was intended to be a reading room for the new library, but it never served this purpose. As the program in the Main Building shifted towards more administrative functions, the room was appropriated by the Board of Regents, who used it as a conference room. The space is known today as the Lee Jamail Academic Room, and is employed for formal university functions.

Offering one of the best vistas in the building, a direct view of the capitol to the south, the Academic Room also has beautiful interior finishes. The walls are paneled with pilasters of rose marble and fabric damask wall coverings. The vaulted ceiling features decorative plasterwork, including gold leaf work.

Materials

- Bronze doors
- Wainscot comprised of a Dark Cedar marble base, Phantasia Rose marble panels, and veinless gray marble framing, all from Tennessee
- North door frame of rose marble
- Windows and east and west doors framed in veinless gray marble
- White oak east and west doors
- Plaster and gold leaf ceiling decoration
- Oak flooring (underneath carpet)

Character-Defining Features

- Built-in niches
- Gilded plasterwork
- Barrel-vaulted ceiling with quotes pertaining to knowledge and education
- Two-story height and open nature of the room

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

Main 212 was renovated in 2008. The existing carpet and upholstered wall panels, which were not original, were replaced, and the room was upgraded with audio/visual equipment. The wooden doors were refinished, and parts of the plasterwork were re-gilded. The room also received new furniture and draperies.
Main Building

Provost’s Office (formerly MAI 203 & 204; today MAI 209 & 210)

The rooms on either side of the Academic Room were intended to be men’s and women’s reading rooms, but have been used for office or conference space since at least the 1940s. Today the provost offices in MAI 209, on the east side of the Academic Room, and the room on the west side houses offices for the provost’s staff. MAI 209 retains its integrity as a single open space, while MAI 210 has been subdivided with cubicles. Both rooms feature warm wood paneling and niches with plaster busts of famous writers.

Character-Defining Features

- Distinctive pine paneling and shelving
- Vaulted ceilings with decorative plaster
- Niches with busts of famous writers
- Clocks built in to wood paneling above shelving
- Overhead light fixtures

Materials

- Swedish Pine woodwork
- Appalachian white oak floors with French herringbone pattern (underneath carpet)

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

In the 1990s, a new opening was installed in the east wall of MAI 209, providing access to the suite of rooms in MAI 201. This new door, designed to match the existing finishes, became the primary entrance for the room. MAI 209 and 210 both served as conference room spaces before being converted to their current use.
Main Building

Fourth Floor Elevator Lobby and Exhibition Room (MAI C400 and MAI 400)

The fourth floor elevator lobby, with walls of Tennessee veinless gray marble trimmed with Phantasia rose marble, provides access to the suite of rooms that now serve the office of the university president. A group of stained glass windows are set in front of the window of the landing between the third and fourth stairs, on the west side of the lobby. The stained glass work by Harry Eldridge Goodhue was presented to the university by the Ashbel Literary Society in 1909 and moved from Old Main to its present location.

Through the bronze double doors of the lobby is a hall originally known as the Exhibition Room. This space was planned as an exhibition gallery for rare books, which were housed in the libraries on the east and west side of the hall. The area now houses the office of the President.

Materials

- Tennessee veinless gray marble with base and frieze of Phantasia rose marble in elevator lobby
- Bronze doorway between lobby and Exhibition Room
- Walls of Exhibition Room clad in green and gray marble with plaster between
- Base, pilasters and frieze are gray green marble from Vermont
- Trim of east and west doors dark “Verd Antique marble” with pale “Westland” green veined cream marble, both from Vermont
- Inscribed slabs over the doors are cream Alabama marble
- Ceiling of Exhibition Room features plaster reliefs and gold leaf

Character-Defining Features

- Original light fixtures
- Vaulted ceiling in Exhibition Room with decorative plaster
- Marble-clad walls
- Stained glass window at stairway landing between third and fourth floors
Main Building

Wrenn Library/ Offices of Deputies to the President (MAI 407)

The suite of three rooms to the south of the Exhibition Room was once a single room, the Wrenn Library. This room, designed by Tallmadge and Watson of Chicago, was originally installed in Battle Hall (when it was the university’s main library), and housed a rare book collection purchased for UT by George Washington Littlefield. The room was dismantled and reinstalled in the Main Building when it was built in the 1930s.

The library’s design was modeled after the library of Sir Walter Scott, and features a painted coffered ceiling, ornate carvings, and stained glass. The center section of the ceiling presents 65 printers’ marks, and alternating squares depict university seals and historical characters illustrating the history of costume. The stained glass was designed by Charles Connick of Boston, and illustrates types of literature as symbolized by female figures. The stained glass transoms contain the coats of arms of Oxford and Cambridge universities. The beautiful entrance door is framed with elaborately carved molding, and topped by the university seal surrounded by a wreath of bluebonnets, the work of Peter Mansbendel.

Materials

- Walnut bookcases, door, and molding
- Wrought iron hardware
- Alabaster light bowls
- Stained glass
- Flooring: quartered oak, with borders and parquetry field with basket pattern design
- Wood ceiling

Character-Defining Features

- Decoratively painted ceiling
- Stained glass
- Carving at main entrance door, shelving, and molding
- Light fixtures

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

By the 1970s, the library had been subdivided into three rooms. Wood partitions extend to the ceiling, sitting flush to the surface in a reversible treatment. Today this suite of rooms houses the offices of the deputies to the president on the east and west, with administrative assistants in the center space.
Main Building

President’s Office (formerly the Aitken Rare Books Study, MAI 402)

The room on the west side of the Exhibition Room was once known as the Aitken Rare Books Study and served as a private library for students. Today the space is occupied by the president of the university, but many of the original features remain.

Close in layout to the Stark Library at the east end of the hall, both rooms feature extensive woodwork and a balcony on three sides of the room. Both spaces also include a below floor storage area and a wall of windows opening on to a terrace.

Materials
- Oak woodwork
- Painted aluminum metalwork
- Plaster ceiling with gold leaf
- Cork flooring (under carpet)

Character-Defining Features
- Frieze carved by Peter Mansbendel
- Wood paneling
- Double-height space with balcony
- Ceiling with decorative plaster reliefs

Previous Treatment & Maintenance
The room received new carpeting, installed over the original cork floor, in 2006.
Main Building

Stark Library (MAI 401)

The Stark Library houses a collection of books, paintings, textiles, and other art objects collected over a period of 40 years by Miriam Lutcher Stark. Mrs. Stark, whose husband and son both attended the University of Texas and served as members of the Board of Regents, bequeathed the collection to the university in 1926. It was installed in a specially-designed room on the fourth floor of the Main Building in 1938, when sufficient space for the collection was finally available. The library, today used as a conference room for the university president, was modeled after a room in the Stark mansion, containing furniture and other decorations from their home in Orange, Texas. Many of the original antique pieces remain in the room, lining the walls around the conference table and chairs (of contemporary vintage).

The large room is a two-story space, with a balcony providing access to a second level of books on three sides of the room. Tall windows reach almost to the ceiling on the east wall, providing a flood of natural light to the room. The Stark Library also features a stairway leading to a sub-level of storage space underneath the room.

The Stark family made several requests regarding the interior finishes of the room before the collection could be installed in the newly completed building. As a result, the bookcase doors were finished in walnut instead of aluminum, and fixtures and hardware were upgraded to bronze. The family also asked for more gilding than was initially specified. Peter Allidi, the Swiss decorator who likely designed the painted beams of the original Architecture library in Goldsmith Hall, did some additional painting in the room to accommodate the family’s requests.

Materials

- American black walnut paneling and shelving
- Wrought iron railings
- Quartered oak flooring featuring a diagonal square pattern
- Cork flooring on balcony
- Hand carved walnut frieze by Peter Mansbendel (below, right)
- Decorative plaster ceiling with gold leaf
- Brass light fixtures “specially toned by gold plating to harmonize with the gold banding of the ceiling” (from the Stark home, pictured at left and right)

Character-Defining Features

- Double-height space with balcony on three sides
- Rich paneling and shelving filled with books
- Ceiling with decorative plaster
- Light fixtures from the Stark home
- Original furniture, including antique arm chairs upholstered in French needlepoint

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

The room appears much as it did in the 1930s, with the addition of a new conference table and chairs and a sound system with speakers installed on the balcony. The parquet flooring has also been repaired and selectively replaced in kind.
Texas Union Building

Building History
The Texas Union, designed by Paul Cret with Robert Leon White and completed in 1933, was part of the 1930s building boom that added 19 buildings to the campus in ten years. Though oil had recently been discovered on university-owned property, the university’s resources were committed to classroom buildings. The Union, along with Anna Hiss Gymnasium, Gregory Gymnasium, and Hogg Auditorium, was funded in large part by student efforts, led by Ex-Students’ Association president T.W. Gregory.

The Union has supported various student activities in its history, including dances, concerts, film screenings, and other recreational activities. Today, the Union remains a hub of student activity, offering a variety of dining options, meeting spaces, and offices for student groups.

The Union was expanded in 1960. An addition almost doubling the building’s size added meeting rooms, a theater, and the below-street level recreational area now known as the “Union Underground.” Extensive renovation projects were completed in 1977 and 1983, and smaller-scale renovation work has been undertaken in the past two decades.

Presidential Lobby (formerly room 203; today UNB 3.100)
The Presidential Lobby, the space on the second floor outside of the ballroom, is a magnificent double-height space illuminated by a large skylight. Balconies provide a view to the lobby from the third floor. This portion of the Union was designed to serve primarily public functions, while the first floor, including the “Commons,” originally accommodated dining rooms for students.

Accessed through the building’s grand entrance from the West Mall, the Presidential Lobby features many special original design elements and is central to the identity of the Union. The steps from the entrance to the second floor level are executed in colored, hand-painted tiles. On the exposed beams of the ceiling are the names of all the past Texas Exes presidents.

Another group of presidents, past presidents of the university, are honored with portraits on carved wooden medallions. Eleven of these medallions, including those depicting William J. Battle and Harry Yandell Benedict, were carved by Peter Mansbendel, a Swiss-born woodcarver who immigrated to the United States in 1907 and moved to Austin soon afterwards. In Texas, Mansbendel worked with leading architects throughout the state, designing architectural details, mantelpieces, and furniture.
Texas Union Building

Presidential Lobby (continued)

The Presidential Lobby also features two special original pieces of furniture, the victrola cabinet, once used to play records during dances (currently positioned on the south wall), and a chest that once held blankets for female students who wished to nap in the Women’s Lounge (located on the east wall of the lobby). These pieces were also carved by Mansbendel and represent both beautiful workmanship as well as two traditions in the history of the Union which have faded into the past.

Materials

- Gumwood paneling
- Wooden beams and medallions
- Bronze light fixtures
- Decorative tile at stairs

Character-Defining Features

- Carved medallions with portraits of past presidents
- Wood paneling
- Exposed and painted ceiling beams
- Staircase leading up from the West Mall, creating a grand entrance
- Double-height space with balconies overlooking the lobby below
- Skylight
- Original furniture, including carved Victrola cabinet
- Tiled water fountain
- Custom light fixtures, designed by Walter G. Warren and Company of Chicago

Original light fixture

Carved victrola cabinet, featuring native Texas animals, including a depiction of an encounter between a roadrunner and a rattlesnake on a side panel

Original victrola cabinet, featuring native Texas animals, including a depiction of an encounter between a roadrunner and a rattlesnake on a side panel

Carved blanket chest, featuring an image of the Union on the center panel

View of the first floor of the Presidential Lobby; the bodhi tree was installed in commemoration of a 2005 visit by the Dalai Lama

Carved portrait of H.Y. Benedict, 10th president of the university
Texas Union Building

Governors’ Room (formerly room 209; today UNB 3.116)

This meeting room was originally a private study for men, called the Men’s Lounge. The room was renovated in the mid 1970s and renamed “The Texas Governor’s Room.” In 1990, the portraits of former governors were added to the room; these photos were printed from negatives from the state archives and brushed with oil paints by Austin artist Haydee Cano Allred.

Materials

- Gumwood and walnut paneling
- White oak flooring
- Fireplace trimmed in Cordova Cream limestone

Character-Defining Features

- Flooring is three-board installation, rare in this area of the country
- Portraits of Texas governors
- Extensive paneling
- Fireplace
- Coffered ceiling

Ballroom (formerly room 228; today UNB 3.202)

The ballroom was once the heart of the Texas Union, and still remains a grand space that retains much of its integrity. In the 1930s and 40s it was used as a lounge by day and a venue for dancing by night, with events held at least once a week. Dances featured live music, and the admission fees were a primary source of revenue for the Union. The ballroom also served as the stage for beauty pageants and other contests in the 1950s.

Materials

- Maple flooring
- Cast iron grilles
- Wood paneling with plaster finish above
- Larger beams of concrete
- Smaller ceiling beams and grilles between of wood
- Balcony with wood balusters

Character-Defining Features

- Arched doorways and windows on east and west walls
- Hardwood floor
- Wood paneling
- Exposed beams and mansard-shape ceiling
Texas Union Building

Sinclair Suite (formerly room 213; today UNB 3.128)

Though the room is called the “Sinclair Suite” today, it was during the days when the space served as the Women's Lounge that it was actually comprised of a suite of rooms, including a powder room and restroom. Today the wall between the primary space and the powder room has been removed, but the room still retains its own private restroom. The lounge was renamed to honor John Sinclair, who wrote the lyrics to “The Eyes of Texas.”

During its time as the Women’s Lounge, the space served as a place for female students to rest during the day, and men were allowed only as invited guests. The Union provided cots and blankets for the women’s use, and the intricately carved chest that now stands against the far eastern wall of the second floor of the Presidential Lobby once served to store these linens.

The room’s most significant remaining interior features are the decorative plaster cornices and ceiling. The light fixtures and the fireplace and its carved surround are also original to the room.

Materials

• Plaster cornice ceiling decoration
• Cast iron grilles
• Wood paneling

Character-Defining Features

• Fireplace
• Decorative plaster work

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

The Women’s Lounge was renamed the Sinclair Suite following the 1976 Union renovation.
Robert A. Welch Hall

Building History

Welch Hall, known as the Chemistry Building until 1974, was named after Houston oil and business baron Robert A. Welch, who established a large endowment for chemical research in Texas. Designed by Greene, LaRoche and Dahl and completed in 1931, the current building is more than twice the size of the original, with additions constructed in the 1960s and 1970s. Several important interior features remain in the original building.

Of special note are the decorative ceilings of the original library and a two-story lecture hall. Though the construction documents do not identify the artist, the designs could be the work of Eugene John Gilboe, a Norwegian-born master decorator. The design of the decorative painting in Welch closely resembles Gilboe’s work in the Main Building and Texas Union on campus. Gilboe was active between 1932-1952, with at least 32 attributed works in Texas, including a mural in the Stoneleigh Hotel in Dallas.

Lecture Theater (formerly room 15; today WEL 2.122)

Originally known as the “Lecture Room,” this large, 2-story space on the first floor of the original building is located directly below the former library. Like the library, the lecture hall features exposed concrete beams. The beams are shaped in geometric arrangements and feature painted designs in five colors. The original specifications call for both stencil work and freehand painting, with a glazing coat to give the appearance of softness and age. The stencil designs feature chemical symbols. The doors to the lecture hall are also significant, featuring octagonal glass panels with an inset wavy design.

Materials

- Concrete ceiling beams
- Wood doors and paneling

Character-Defining Features

- Exposed beams featuring stenciled designs
- Double-height space
- Octagonal glass with wavy inset design on doors

Materials

- Concrete ceiling beams
- Wood doors and paneling

Character-Defining Features

- Exposed beams featuring stenciled designs
- Double-height space
- Octagonal glass with wavy inset design on doors

44

Historic and Significant Interiors • The University of Texas at Austin
Robert A. Welch Hall

Former Chemistry Library (formerly room 219; today WEL 4.132A)

The Mallet Chemistry Library, named after John William Mallet (1823–1912) the first Chemistry professor at the university, was part of the original design of Welch Hall. This room housed the Chemistry department's library until 1978, when it moved to larger quarters in an addition to the building. Today the former library serves as conference room space.

There is a small vestibule area outside the library, where one could enter either the library or the book stack area to the right. The former stacks room now serves as an office. This vestibule space features doors with stained glass panels and a coffered and painted ceiling. The stained glass illustrates the university seal on one door and chemical equipment, including beakers and vials.

The library’s original painted beams remain, featuring brackets and stenciled designs in colors of gold, orange, red, and blue-green. The floral and geometric designs are very similar to those seen in the old Lecture Hall and were likely executed by the same artist.

Materials

- Concrete ceiling beams
- Stained glass in entrance doors to vestibule
- Wood shelving

Character-Defining Features

- Exposed beams featuring stenciled designs
- Stained glass
- Coffered and painted ceiling in vestibule (pictured at right)

Previous Treatment & Maintenance

Sometime after 1968, the stacks area was closed off from the library, and interior windows in arched openings were installed in place of the passages to the stacks.

In 1981, UT professor of Interior Design Buie Harwood directed a restoration of the painted ceiling, repainting bare patches left by the removal of fluorescent light fixtures. Using water-based paints, the restoration matched the original design.
Will C. Hogg Building

Building History

Built for the Geology department, in 1962 the building was named to honor Will C. Hogg, a benefactor to the University, former Regent, and the son of Texas Governor James Stephen Hogg. The Geology building was designed by Greene, LaRoche and Dahl, and was completed in 1933. A new building for the Geology Department was built 1967; Will C. Hogg is currently home to offices for the College of Natural Sciences, Liberal Arts, Special Projects, and Asian Studies.

The building once housed the Geology library, on what is now the third floor of the building. Though this space long ago lost its original finishes, the lecture hall on the ground floor preserves some vestiges of the building’s 1930s appearance.

Auditorium (formerly room 14; today WCH 1.120)

The 350-seat lecture hall on the ground floor of the east end of the building is one of the last spaces in the building which retains some original finishes, including the paneled wainscot, coffered ceiling, and wrought iron railing. The north, south and west walls were designed with special recesses to showcase plaster relief maps, though these have since been removed. The room still serves its function as designed, as an often-used auditorium.

Materials

- Slate base boards
- Wrought iron railings with bronze handrails
- Plaster brackets, cornice, and wall finish
- Paneled wainscot
- Cast iron grilles

Character-Defining Features

- Wood paneling
- Coffered ceiling
- Original clock
- Use as a lecture room
Gregory Gymnasium

Building History
Designed by Greene, LaRoche & Dahl, Gregory Gym was built in 1930 and financed largely by the efforts of the Ex-Students’ Association. The building is named after the leader of the charge, Thomas Wyatt Gregory. When it opened, the 8,000-seat auditorium was the largest in the southwest, and the gym played a prominent role in student life as a space for dances, pageants, and theatrical productions. From its completion until 1976, the gym was home to the UT basketball and swimming teams, accommodated on the main floor and basement, respectively. An annex was constructed in 1963, connecting to the south side of the original building.

In 1997, the building reopened after a two-year renovation project. The renovation removed offices located between the annex and the old gym, revealing the original south wall of the gym. This concourse serves as an important connection between old and new, and preserves the appearance of the building as it was in the 1930s.

Atrium

In 1997, the building reopened after a two-year renovation project. The renovation removed offices located between the annex and the old gym, revealing the original south wall of the gym. This concourse serves as an important connection between old and new, and preserves the appearance of the building as it was in the 1930s.

South facade of the original Gregory Gymnasium depicted on a historic postcard; this wall is now preserved inside an atrium connecting the old building to a 1962 annex

Concourse between the old Gregory Gym building and the 1962 annex
(photo credit Susan & Jim Sigmon)
Significant Features

Other significant features found throughout campus buildings

While many spaces on campus have warranted an entire entry, there are many individual elements which contribute significantly to character, even if the space is no longer a coherent historic interior. Some examples of these types of features are listed below. Careful consideration should be given to removing, obscuring, or altering individual significant elements.

Built-in features
Lockers, niches

Clocks

Decorative Painting

WCH 1.120
HRH 3rd floor
MAI 212
MAI 400
WEL 4.132
GOL 3.112
HMA lobby
Significant Features

Doors

Exposed Brick

Fireplaces & mantels
Significant Features

Flooring
Hardwood, tile, terrazzo, etc

Furniture

Grilles
Significant Features

Hardware

Light fixtures

Molding
Significant Features

Paneling/ shelving

Railings

Signage & lettering
Significant Features

Special finishes
murals, plaster, gold leaf, etc

Stained or leaded glass

Special ceilings
vaulted, exposed beams, etc