



ARCHITECTURAL



HISTORY

OF

RESIDENCE
HALLS



AT

COLORADO STATE



UNIVERSITY

1954-1968



THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY
OF
RESIDENCE HALLS
AT
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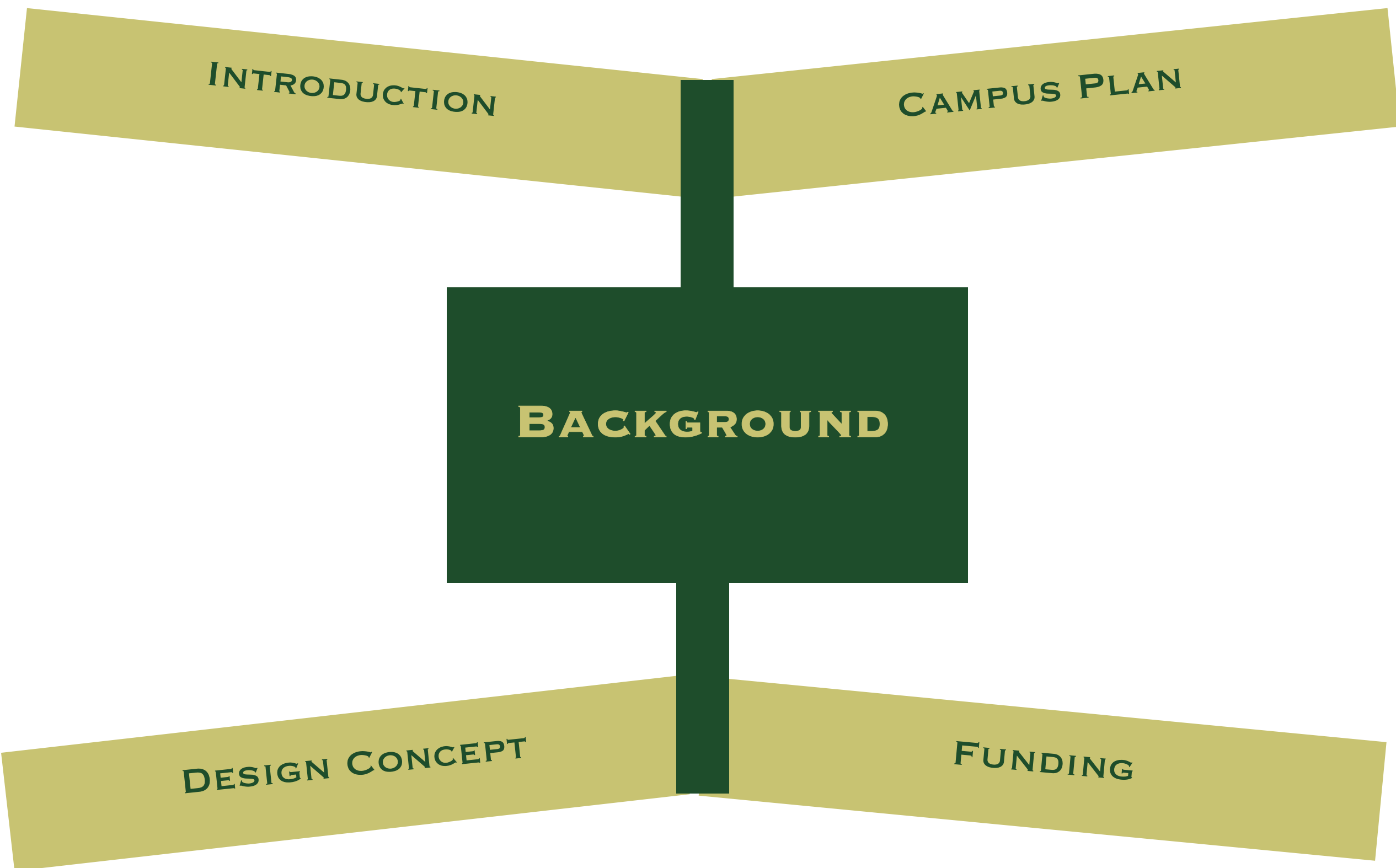


LOUIS S. INGHILTERRA



Newsom Hall in 1965

Louis Inghilterra
Heritage Resource Management
Dr. Sarah Payne
Spring 2022



INTRODUCTION

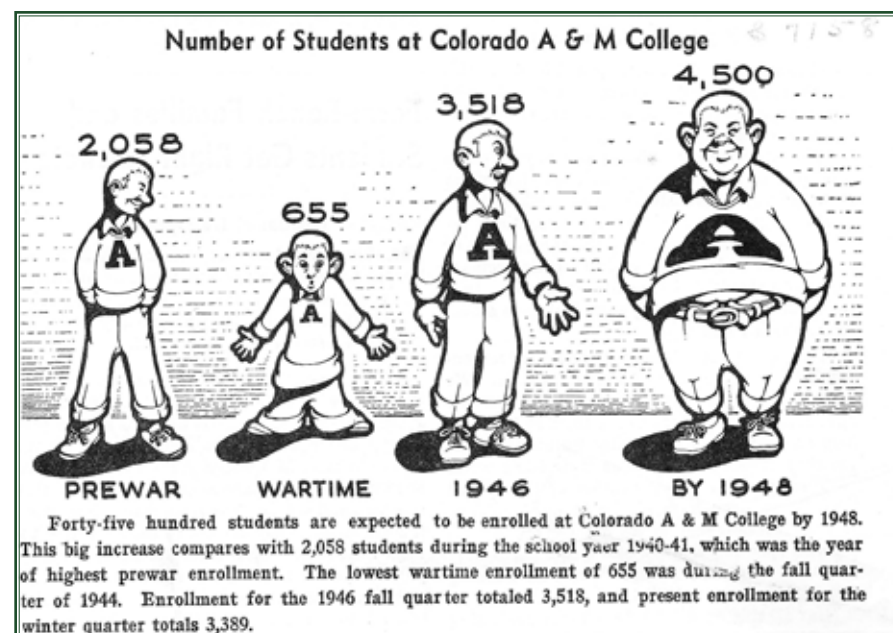
Some of the most utilized buildings on campus are the residence halls. For those who live on campus, these halls are used on a daily basis throughout the school year. However, few often wonder what the history of these buildings are or why they were formed in a unique way. Colorado State University is home to some of the most uniquely designed residence halls in the country. Between the years of 1954-1965, CSU constructed nine residence halls that were the product of revolutionary thought for how the architecture, form, and interior design could enhance a student's wellbeing. Faced with a dramatic spike in enrollment following World War II, President William Morgan planned a massive campus expansion to accommodate the unprecedented predictions of enrollment for the future. The residence halls constructed during the campus expansion project were designed to be individual campuses that would equally disperse 400 students into four buildings with a central communal space. Architect James Hunter of Boulder was responsible for designing all of the dorms, classroom buildings, and social spaces during the campus expansion of the mid 20th century. Hunter used the modern style, also known as Miesian style, to design his buildings. The Miesian style lacks unnecessary ornamentation, symmetry and instead uses low-cost materials that often relate to the natural surroundings. The ways that the end users function in the building are also important considerations to the form and design. The end goal for the residence halls was to provide more than mere shelter and food to the students and that an atmosphere of high aesthetic value, and one in which the students can take pride, will serve as a teaching device to instill stable standards of conduct and produce harmonious group life. James Hunter's design style and philosophies reflected the goals of President Morgan's campus expansion project and they soon became partners for CSU's future.



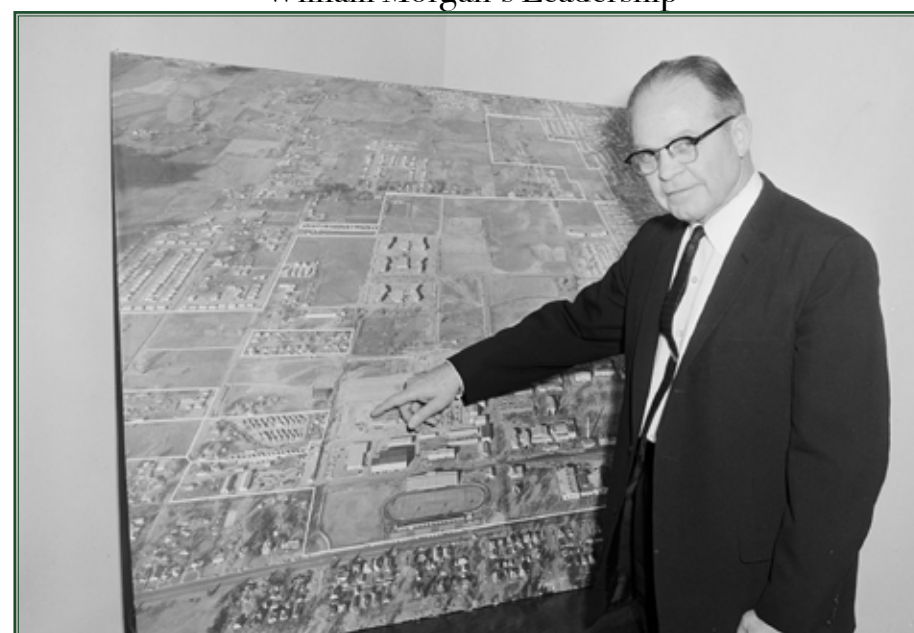
Aerial view of campus in 1935



The College Farm in 1937. This area is the present location of the residence halls and recreation facilities constructed under William Morgan's Leadership



Cartoon of campus enrollment during the 1940s



President Morgan with a map of campus, 1962



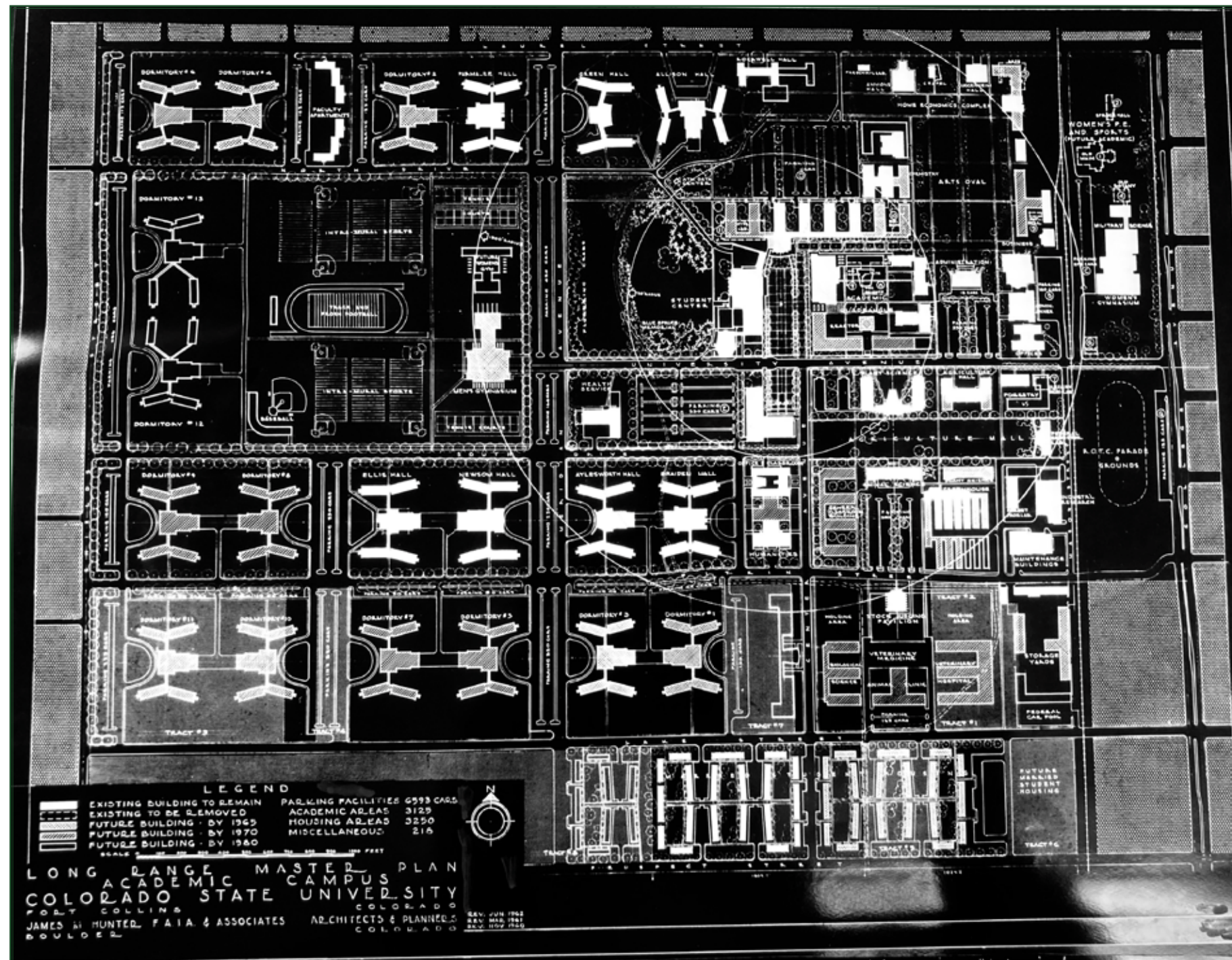
Campus aerial, 1962



West campus aerial, 1967

CAMPUS PLANNING

When president Morgan took office in 1949, CSU's campus consisted of the Oval and agricultural fields to the west. The average enrollment in the 1930s was around 1,800 and grew to more than 3,000 immediately following World War II. Confronted with the continuing rise of enrollment, President Morgan began to plan the future layout of the campus. With the help of architect James Hunter, every detail of the campus expansion project was carefully analyzed for how it would function for future students. The overall idea for the layout of the campus was to create three distinct regions for the various activities of campus life. With the establishment of the Oval, the East side of campus would continue to provide spaces for the academic buildings. Agricultural fields west of the Oval would be replaced with residence halls and recreation facilities. In the center of these two regions would be the social and gathering spaces such as the Student Center and the Library. The arrangement of the campus was intentionally designed for the daily routines of students. Students living in the housing units on the west side would walk to class on the east side and the student center and library would always cross their path.



Long Range Master Plan of campus developed by James Hunter. 1962

RESIDENCE HALLS DESIGN CONCEPT

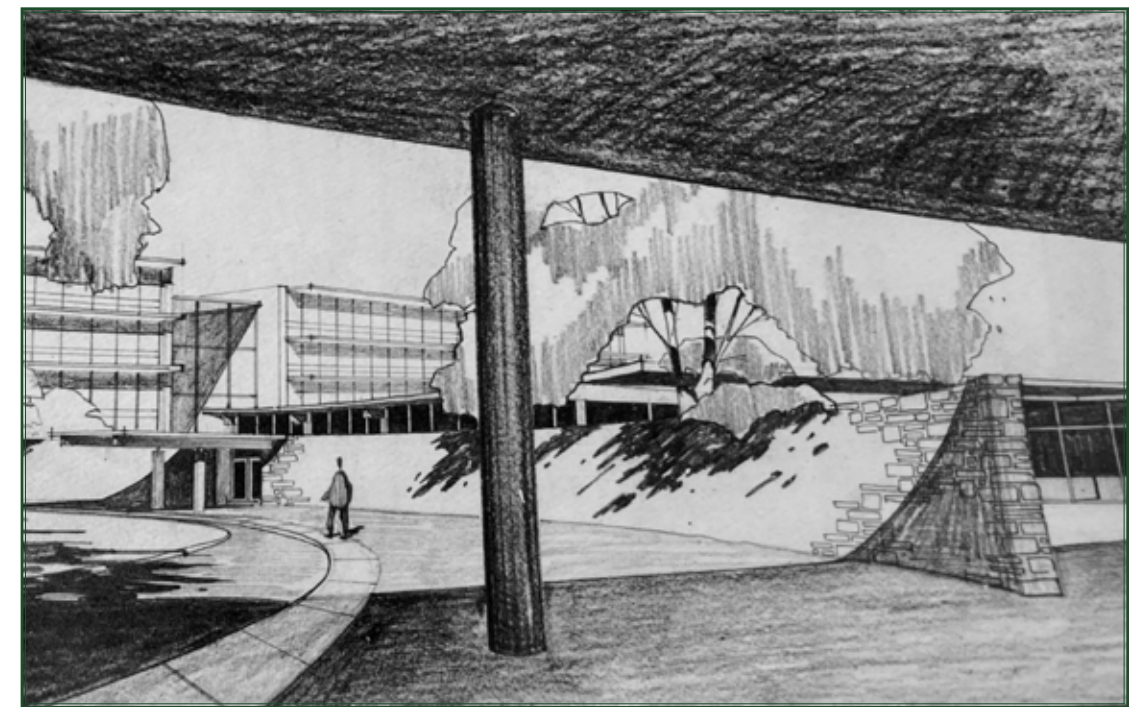
The first priority in the master plan of campus was addressing housing. Prior to William Morgan's arrival in 1949, the only housing options for students were three small dormitories, temporary army surplus Quonset huts, a student mobile home park, fraternity and sorority houses, and boarding houses in town. After a research study was conducted by James Hunter and the Board of Agriculture, it was determined that the maximum efficiency for student housing would be 400 students. Following the similar spike in enrollment after WWII, other university campuses around the country began building high-rise dormitories due to the lack of space on their already established campuses. During the research study, James Hunter and the housing committee visited these large dormitories and found the designs to negatively affect the students with regards to their wellbeing, socialization, and education. In addition it was determined that the welfare and morale of the students as well as respect for their surroundings seemed far better when tastefully designed spaces in smaller units were utilized. In contrast, students living in large units with drab and uninteresting designs disrespected their surroundings and experienced problems with socialization and scholarship. Noise, distraction, and wayfinding were also important aspects that were considered as it was determined that large units had many issues with lack of sound proofing and confusion of orientation of spaces.

In an effort to break away from this model, one of the student affairs officers, Courtlyn Hotchkiss, proposed a new plan. While completing his graduate thesis, Hotchkiss began researching collegiate housing and student needs and determined that the best method is dividing the building into separate connected units. Each wing would hold 100 students and each floor would have 30 to 35 students. The purpose was to imagine a freshman coming to a large university and instead of being overwhelmed, they would be able to identify with a small group on their floor. The student and their hall group would also be able to meet others in the central "commons wing" which contained a dining room and lounge.

Every element of the design was closely reviewed and not left up to chance or for cost cutting measures. The furnishings and finishes used in Newsom Hall for example, were specifically selected by Florence Knoll who was the head of the leading interior design firm, Knoll Associates. The paint colors in the student dorm rooms were also specifically chosen according to the direction of the sun to ensure each received ample amounts of natural light. The furnishings for the student rooms were also carefully selected to ensure they were aesthetically pleasing as well as durable for continued student use. Furniture was even tested by students to determine the possible weaknesses or design flaws before the final selection was made. Another unique design element of the dorm rooms is their use of brick interior dividing walls which were chosen to help with noise reduction.



Aylesworth Hall Exterior Rendering by James Hunter
circa 1956



Aylesworth Hall Exterior Rendering by James Hunter
circa 1956

RESIDENCE HALLS FUNDING



View of Men's Residence Halls on the south side of campus. 1958



View of women's residence halls on the north side of campus and Allison Hall under construction. Circa 1957



Men's residence halls including the newly opened Newsom Hall and Ellis and Aylesworth Halls under construction. 1956



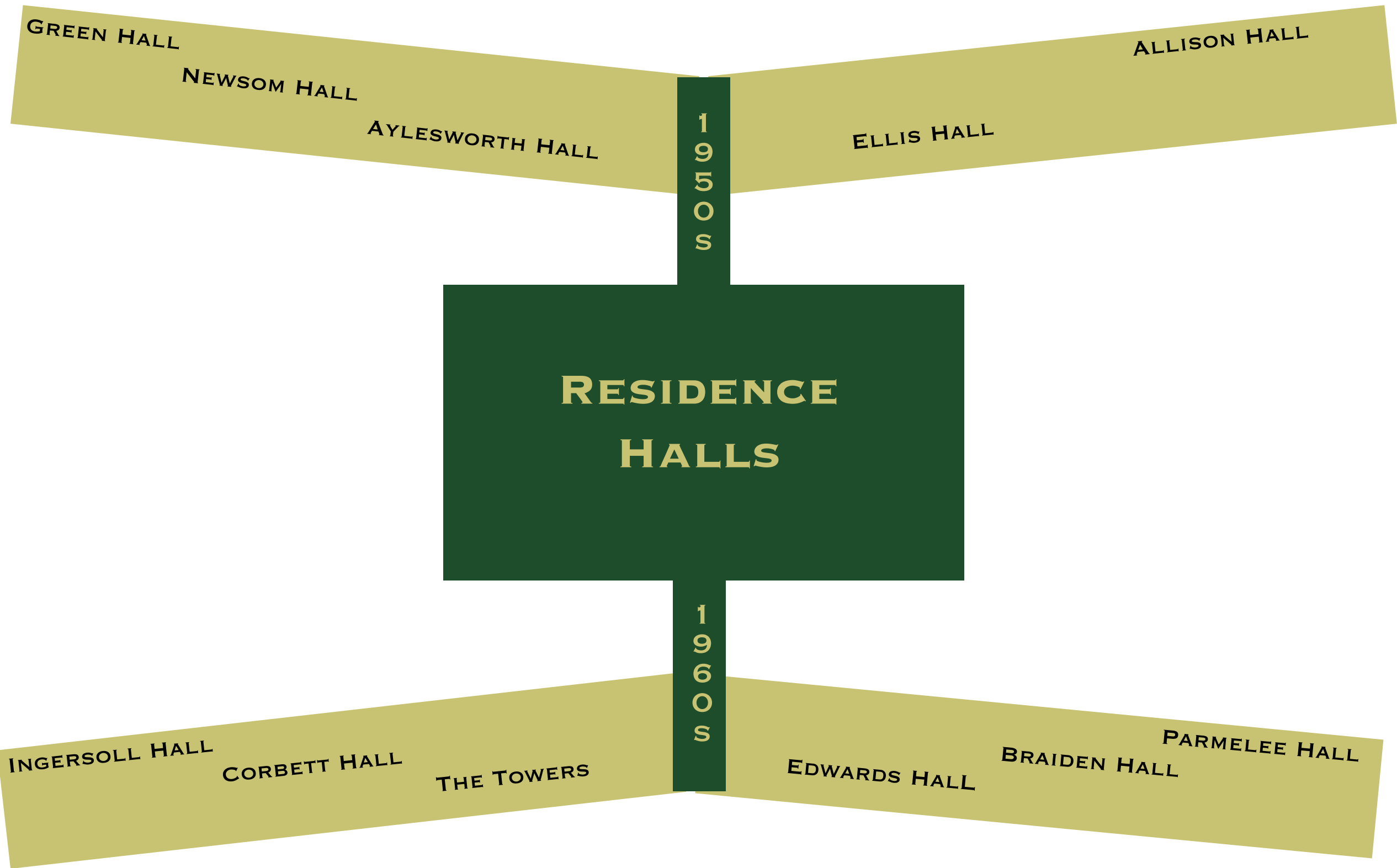
Green hall and the Veteran's Village in the present location of Parmelee Hall. Circa 1955

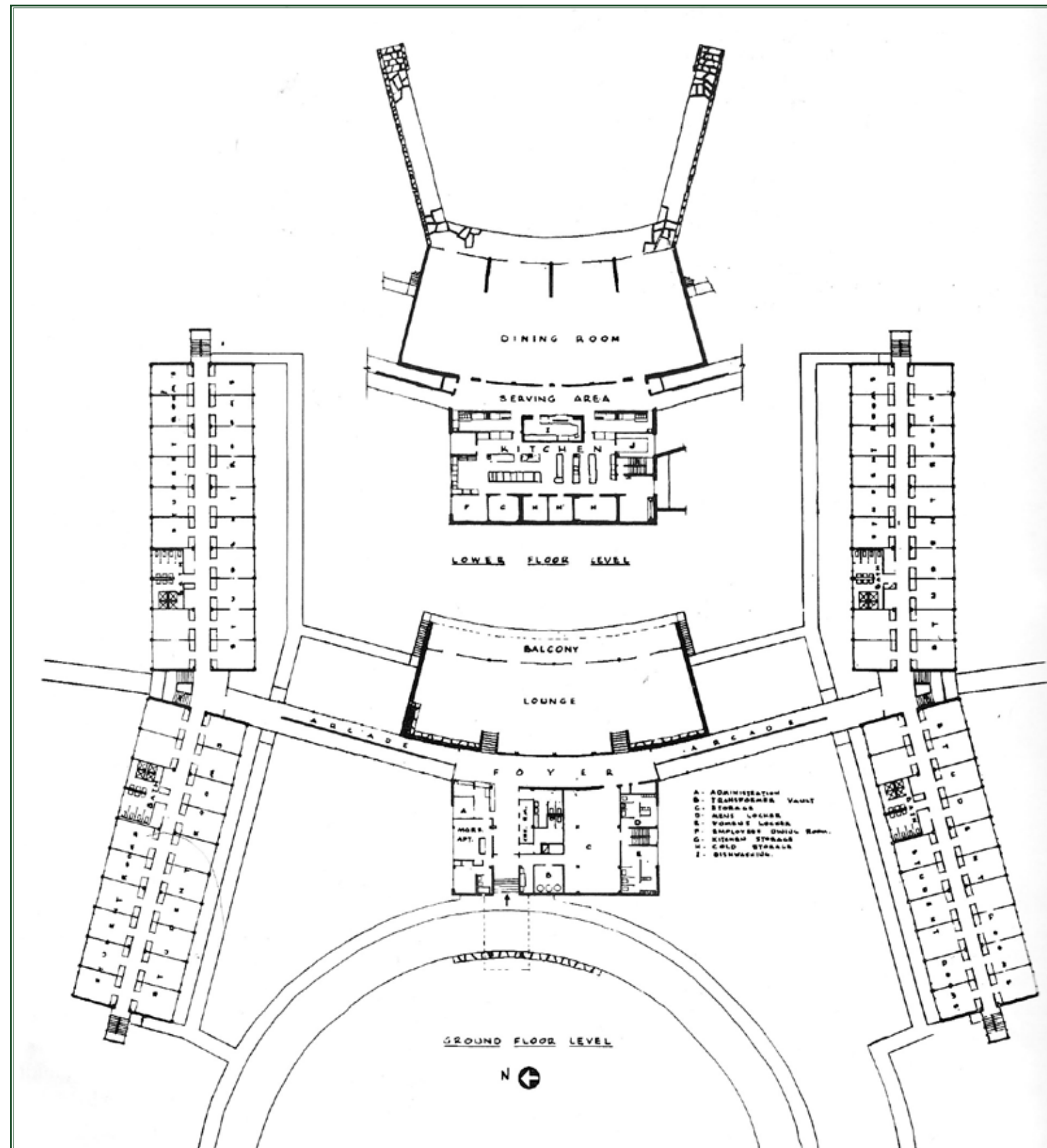
While planning out the campus expansion, it was determined that the housing units for female and male students would be separated on either side of a central axis. The central axis was planned to contain open fields for recreation as well as future places for the athletic facilities. It was determined that the first dorm to be constructed using the conceived architectural design would be placed next to the all-women dorm, Rockwell Hall. However, problems ensued when William Morgan and his team inquired about funding. Following WWII, the Federal Housing and Home Financing Agency began to give loans out to universities for new campus housing. This loan would assist in constructing all of the residence halls beginning with Green Hall in 1953. When the planning phase of Green Hall began in 1953, President Truman put a freeze on federally funded projects due to the fear of the Korean War outbreak. In an effort to unfreeze funds, William Morgan decided to make Green Hall a male dorm designed to train men needed for the military. This decision was met with harsh criticism from the student body as one headline in the Collegian read "You deceived funding authorities by agreeing to build a girls' dormitory then using it for boys." Luckily the Korean War did not develop into full-fledged conflict and after a few years it was returned to its original purpose of housing female students.

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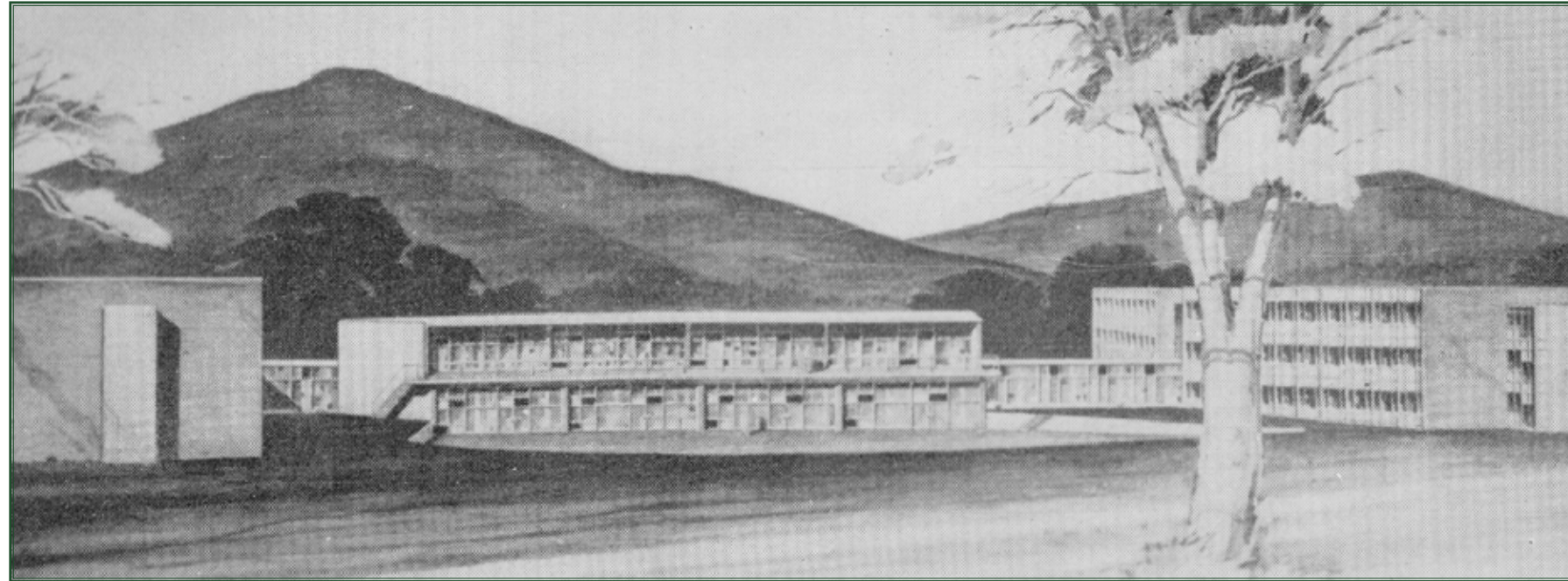
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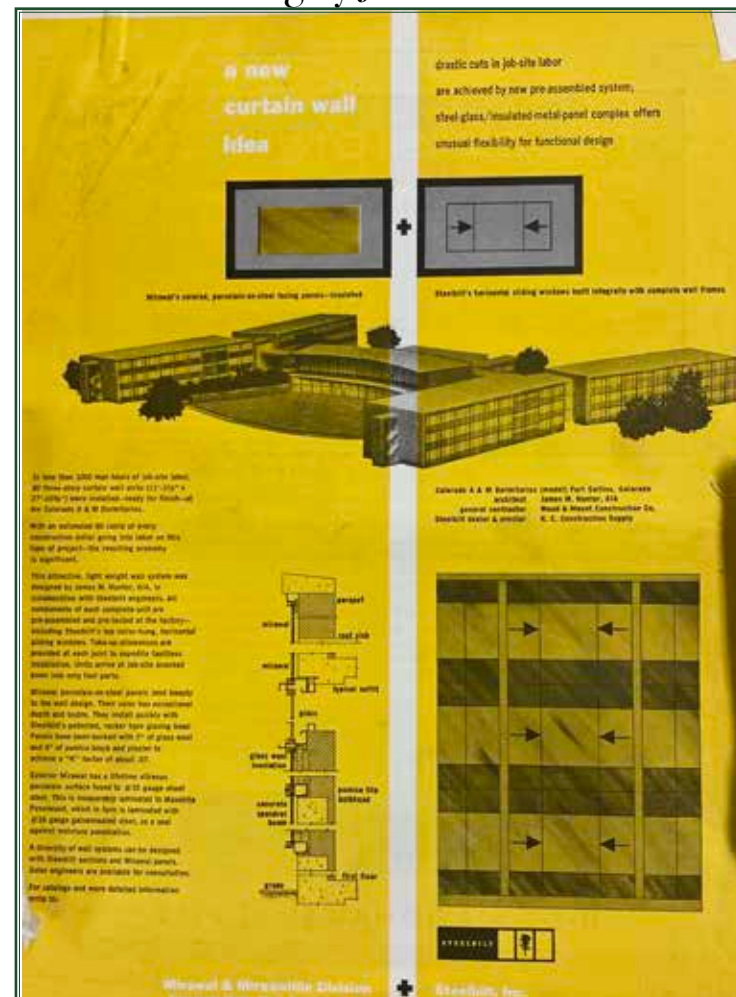


Main Floor Plan of Green Hall, circa 1954

GREEN HALL (1954-2005)



Green Hall Rendering by James Hunter AIA. Circa 1953



Advertisement featuring the windows of Green Hall designed and patented by James Hunter AIA.

Circa 1953

Named in honor of the late college president Roy Green, Green Hall was the prototype for the newly developed plan for residence halls on campus. Upon its opening in September of 1954, the design was well received by its first residents. The luxurious modern residence hall featured a uniquely designed central wing that was not replicated in the dormitories that would follow. The two story structure was built with a dining hall on the half level below grade and a lounge and offices on the ground level. Both the lounge and dining hall featured floor-to-ceiling plate glass windows all along the east façade. The windows provided ample amounts of natural light into both spaces. The use of natural light was one of the many signature design techniques by the architect James Hunter. Hunter was an early pioneer in solar designs and actually designed and patented the windows used for the sleeping rooms of Green Hall.

The exterior walls were wrapped on all four sides with various skinny shaped sandstone blocks that is native to the state. The use of this stone broke away from the cream colored bricks used on the buildings around the Oval which were actually from a foundry in Nebraska. The use of these sandstone blocks soon became the architectural identity of the rest of the campus buildings that would follow Green Hall and the Danforth Chapel.

Green Hall was a residence hall until 1990. After serving various uses such as storage, the student room wings were eventually demolished and were replaced with a parking lot and the Walter Scott Engineering Building. The central commons wing still remains today and serves as the CSU Police Station.



Rear Exterior Facing East showing facade of commons wing. Circa 1955



Main Entrance of Green Hall Facing West. Circa 1956



View of Wing Stairwells. Circa 1956



View of Northwest Wing from Meridian Ave. Circa 1956



Students in front of commons wing rear façade. 1955



Students in front of main entrance, circa 1956



Main Lounge in Commons Wing looking North. Circa 1954



Close up view of Fireplace, circa 1954



Female students enjoying the luxurious commons wing. Circa 1956



View of the dining hall located below the lounge of the commons wing. 1954



Entrance leading to the student room wings. circa 1956



Two students decorating their room in 1956



Bird's Eye View of Newsom Hall, circa 1955

NEWSOM HALL (1955)



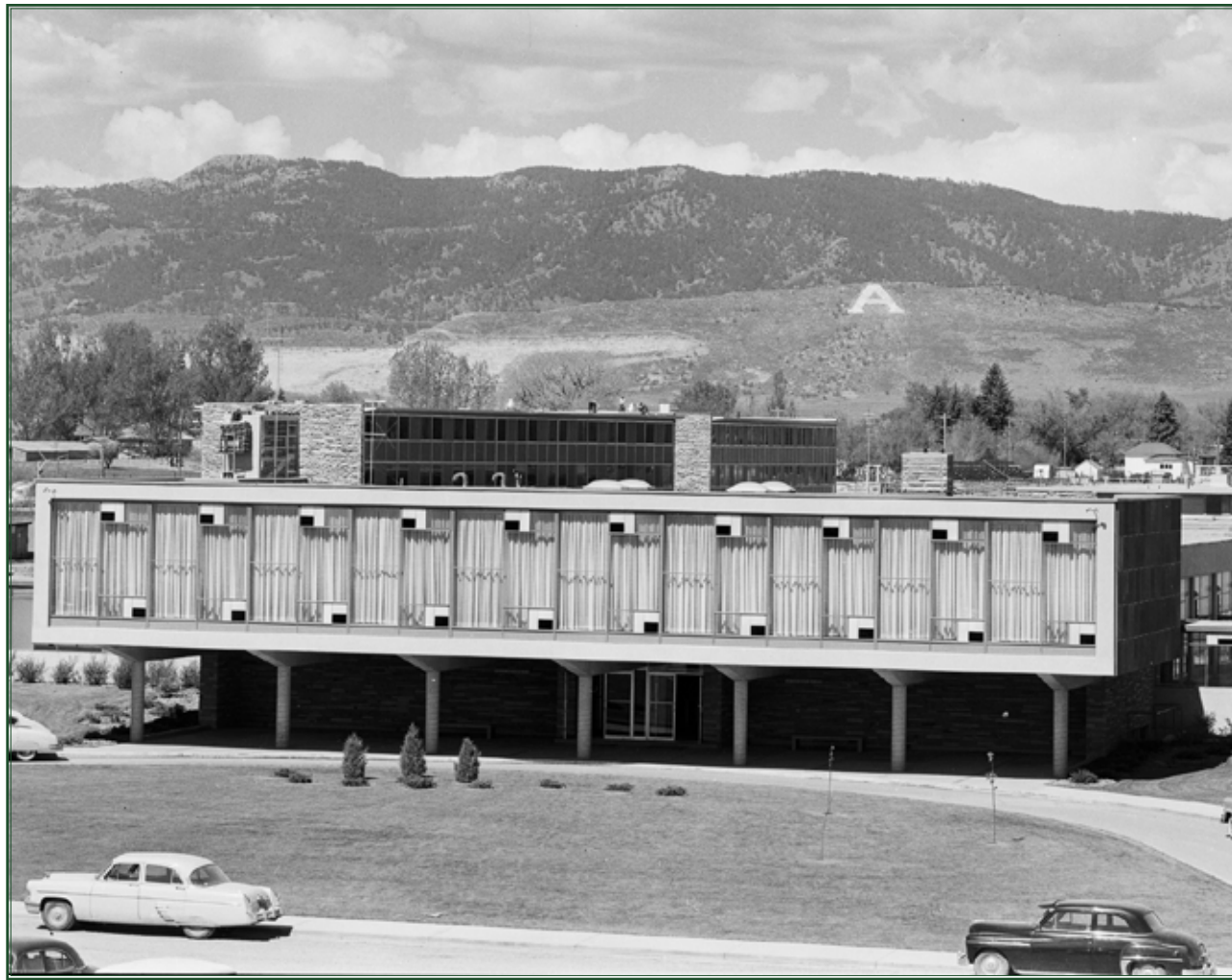
Exterior Rendering drawn by James Hunter AIA. Circa 1954



Main view of Newsom Hall from Meridian Ave. Circa 1955

Newsom Hall was named in honor of longtime faculty member and interim president Isaac Newsom. The dormitory for men opened in 1955 and its student room wings were identical to the wings of Green Hall. The central commons wing on the other hand was designed entirely different than that of Green Hall. The main lounge is located on the second floor and overhangs with a series of columns or pilotis above the main entrance. The front façade of the lounge featured a series of vertical curtain wall glass panels. The glass panels featured stained-glass windows on the top and bottom on every other panel in the style of Piet Mondrian. The north and south facing sides of the lounge portion features a grid of metal panels with cylindrical finials on the corners of each square panel. The first floor is adorned with sandstone and contains the dining hall in the rear.

Newsom Hall was extensively renovated in 1985 that included removing the beautiful windows of the lounge for smaller rectangular windows. Today, the dormitory is threatened with demolition to make way for the new Meridian Village.



View of Commons Wing with the Overhanging Lounge. Circa 1957



View of North-East Wing and Covered Walkway. Circa 1955



Dorm Wing Stairwell. Circa 1956



Exterior view of Dining Hall in the rear of the Commons Wing.
Circa 1956



Cattle in front of student wings when most of the campus was
still farm fields. Circa 1956



Main entrance below overhanging lounge. Circa 1956



Main Lounge looking south. Circa 1955



View of the floor-to-ceiling windows of the main lounge. Circa 1955



Dining Hall. Circa 1955



View of lounge looking Northwest. Circa 1955



Students relaxing in front of fireplace in the lounge.
Circa 1955



Student studying in his room overlooking the lounge.
Circa 1955

AYLESWORTH HALL (1957-2019)

Located directly east of Newsom Hall, Aylesworth Hall was named in honor of Barton Aylesworth who was president of the college from 1899 to 1909. Opening in 1957, Aylesworth Hall featured several different designs than its predecessors while following the same layout. Instead of a two story commons wing, Aylesworth contained the lounge and dining facilities on one level. The front façade replaced the curtain walls with clerestory windows and had a dramatic curved sandstone wall that extended past the connecting walls on both sides. In between the clerestory windows were large horizontal support beams that overhanged several feet from the façade. The façade for the outer wings featured a grid of chrome mullions that contained plate glass windows and gray panels underneath. Aylesworth Hall was used as a residence until it was converted into classrooms in the mid 1970s. Its final use was to house the school of Interior Design before it was leveled in the spring of 2019.



Front entrance featuring the unique curved wall. Circa 1957



Dining Hall. Circa 1957

ELLIS HALL (1957-2005)



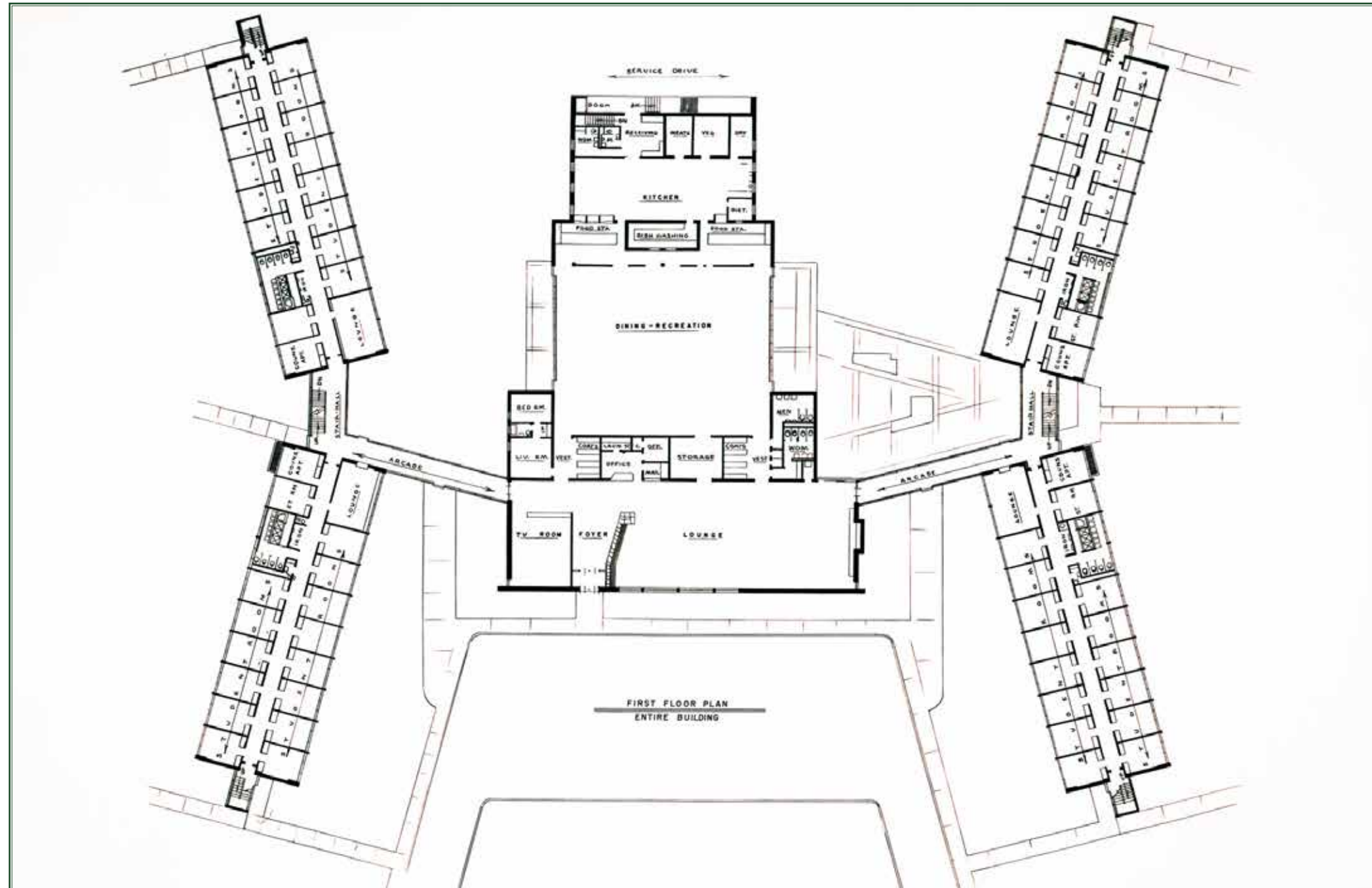
Construction. Circa 1956



Main Entrance of Common Wings. Circa 1957

Ellis Hall was constructed at the same time as Aylesworth Hall and was built directly west of Newsom Hall. Ellis Hall was named in honor of Dr. Alston Ellis who was president of the college from 1892 to 1899. The façade of the student residence wings mirrored Aylesworth while the Commons Wing featured a slightly different design. The building was also adorned in sandstone and had clerestory windows as well as overhanging horizontal beams. The entrance area was set back from the rest of the façade and contained curtain walls facing the front while the actual door was placed parallel to the beams above. The north facing wall extended outward past the footprint of the front.

Ellis Hall was used as a residence hall before being completely demolished in 2005 to make way for Academic Village.



Main floor of Allison Hall. 1958

ALLISON HALL (1958)



View of Commons Wing and East Wings during the end of construction. 1957

Allison Hall opened in 1958 as a women's dormitory and was named in honor of longtime professor and dean, Inga Allison who pioneered home economics education and high-altitude cooking techniques between 1908 and 1945. Allison Hall was styled in the like manner of Aylesworth and Ellis Halls but can be considered to be the high style between the two. It was described as an "ultra modern" dormitory as it featured a glamorous lounge in the commons wing. The architect, James Hunter described the lounge as "[it] can prompt gentlemanly conduct without inhibiting the zest of teen-age life."

In 1958, the lounge won a national award for interior design in Institutions Magazine. The lounge was a large rectangular space with vaulted ceilings, floor-to-ceiling plate glass windows and a large fireplace in the center of the far wall. Allison Hall also had unique amenities that were intended to influence the female student users of the dorm. Every floor contained built-in ironing boards next to the restrooms for the female students to practice their housekeeping skills for their assumed future of becoming a housewife.

In 1986, Allison hall was extensively renovated and the large lounge was stripped away of its grandeur and separated into smaller rooms.



Students in front of main entrance of common wing. Circa 1958



Students in wing stairwell with Green Hall in the background. Circa 1958



Students enjoying the patio outside of the dining hall. Circa 1958



View of covered walkway to student residence wings. Circa 1958



The Luxurious main lounge.
The space won a national award for interior design in 1958.



TV Lounge located in the present day location of the reception desk.
Circa 1958



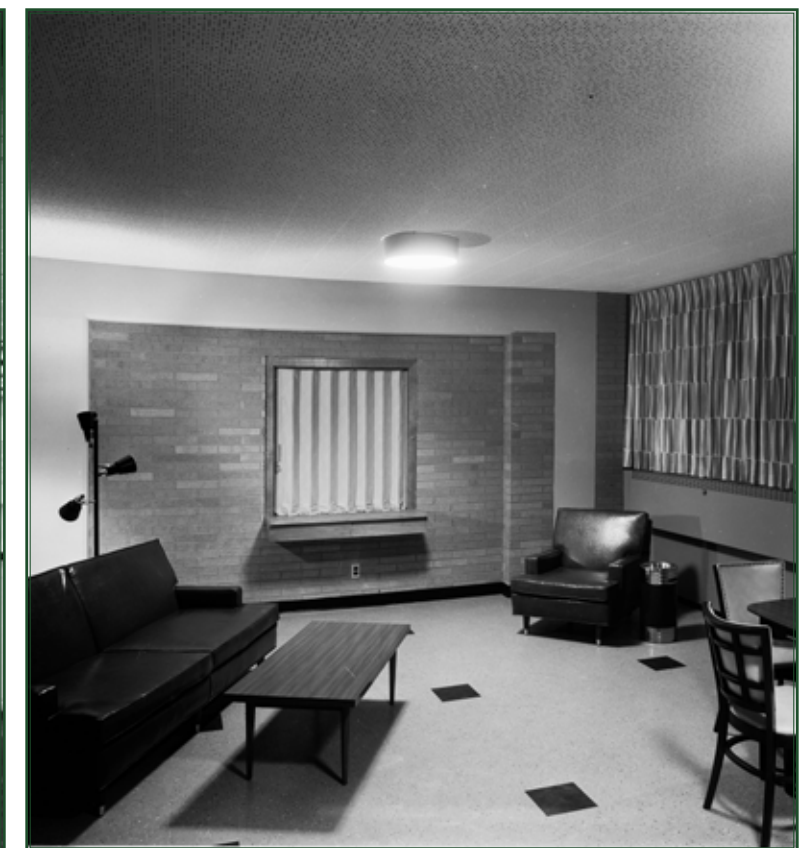
Built-in ironing boards next to the
communal bathrooms on each floor



Closeup of the rear of the lounge. The fireplace was covered by a wall in
the 1986 renovation. Circa 1959



Two Students in their dorm room. The personal telephone in each
room was quite the luxury in 1958.



A 'pajama' lounge located on each floor of the
residence wings. Circa 1958

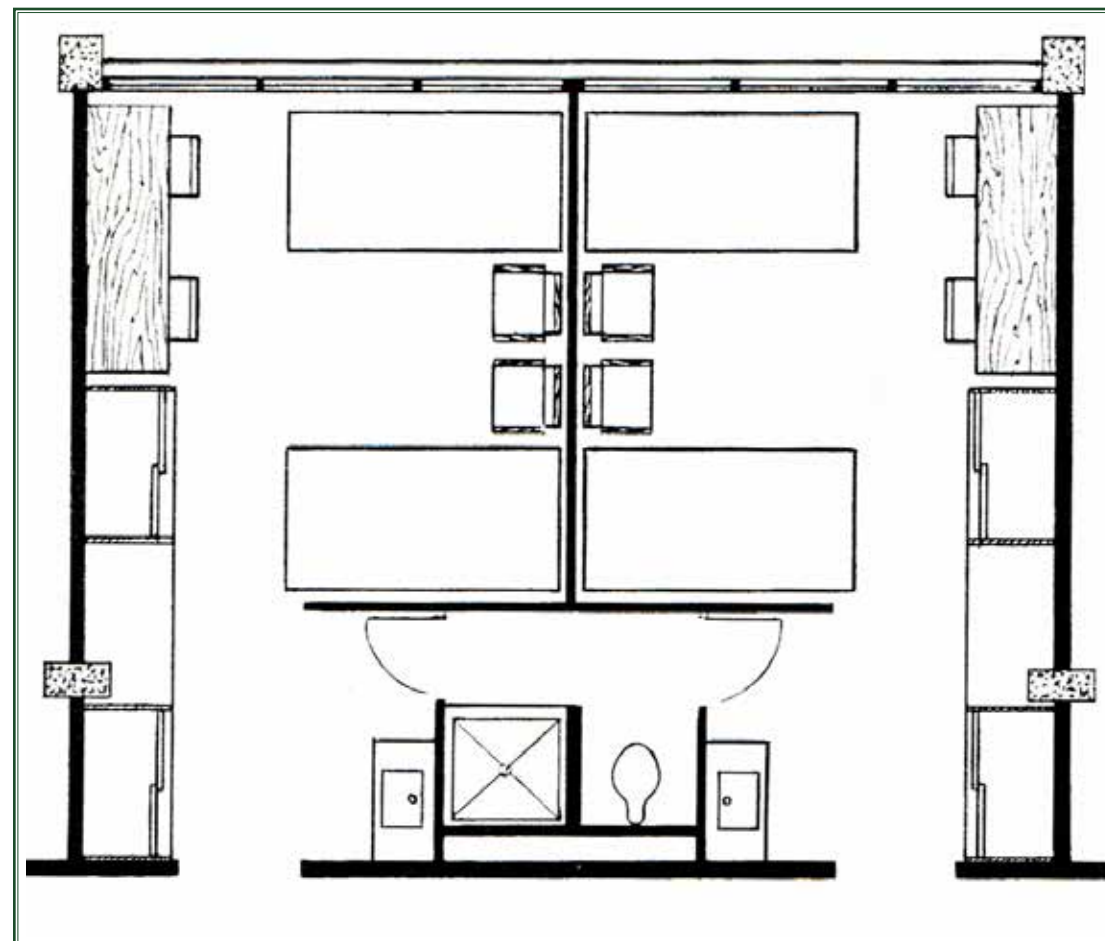


Bird's Eye View of Parmelee Hall. Circa 1963

PARMELEE HALL (1963)



Dedication Ceremony Program, May 8, 1963



Suite style dormitory room floor plan. Circa 1962

Parmelee Hall opened in 1963 named in honor of Amy O. Parmelee, who served as dean of women for 14 years during the 1930s and 1940s. The residence hall was the first on campus to feature pairs of rooms that shared a bathroom between them, also known as suite-style. While still retaining the five building model of its predecessors, Parmelee featured a new exterior architecture style that would be carried on by the dorms that followed. The façades of the student room wings featured narrower windows framed in concrete with a small concrete overhang or canopy above each window. Below the windows were green or blue tiles. The main lounge space in the commons wing featured a sunken lounge that is a few steps below the ground floor. A curved fireplace was placed in the middle of the space and Japanese style panel dividers outlined the space.

In 2011, Parmelee Hall went through an extensive renovation that renovated the lobby and front façade, added a fourth floor and peaked roof to all the wings and replaced the tiles with red bricks.



Wings under construction in 1962



View of covered walkway and stairwell in between wings. Circa 1963



View of Northeast Wing from Meridian Ave. Circa 1963



View of Wing Stairwells. Circa 1963



View of entrance to wings looking West. Circa 1963



Main Entrance of the Commons Wing. Circa 1963



View of the main lounge in the commons wing facing south. Circa 1963



View of the lounge from the entrance to the dining hall. Circa 1963



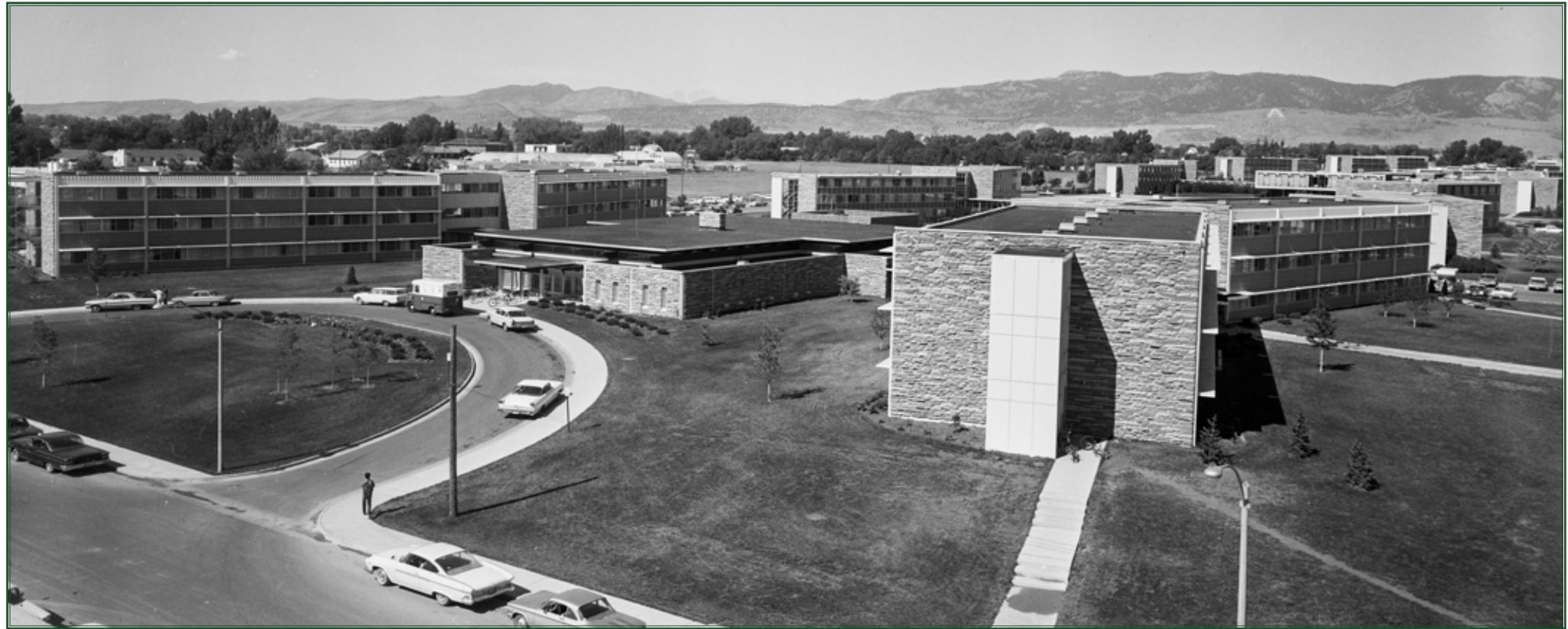
Main lounge facing southeast. Circa 1963



The dining hall in 1963.
The space looks very similar today and is currently known as the Foundry.

BRAIDEN HALL (1963)

Located east of Aylesworth Hall, Braiden Hall opened in 1963 and is almost identical to Parmelee Hall. The residence hall was named after Wade G. Braiden and is the second building to bear his name; the first being another dormitory built in 1940 that is now the student services building. Braiden Hall was also the second dorm on campus to feature suite style rooms. The only difference between Braiden and Parmelee was the style of fireplace in the main lobby as Braiden had a sandstone wall with a large copper-hooded fireplace in the center. Likewise to Parmelee, a fourth story, pitched roof, and brick façade were added to Braiden in 2012.



Birds eye view of Braiden Hall in 1963. The Exterior looks identically to Parmelee Hall even today.



Sunken main lounge looking towards the dining hall. Circa 1963



Students gathered in front of the fireplace in the lounge.
Circa 1964

EDWARDS HALL & INGERSOLL HALL (1964)



View of Ingersoll Hall from Lake Street. Circa 1964



Front view of Edwards Hall. Circa 1965

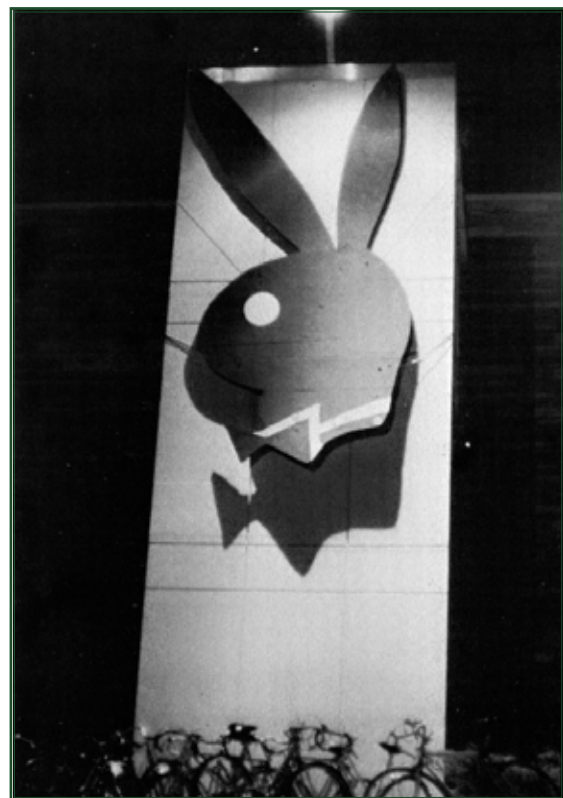
Named in honor of the first and second presidents of the college Elijah Edwards and Charles Ingersoll, both opened in 1964. Edwards Hall was constructed simultaneously with its neighbor to the west, Ingersoll Hall. Both are identical to their predecessors Braiden and Parmelee but did not feature suite-style rooms. According to the *Rocking Mountain Collegian* in October of 1963, both halls “would look like Parmelee on the outside and Ellis on the inside.”

Ingersoll Hall was notorious on campus for hosting a controversial “Playboy Club” dance from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. The organizers were granted legal permission from Playboy enterprises to use official bunny costumes and logos. The Playboy Club was eventually shut down due to growing feminist awareness on campus.

In 2010, both Edwards and Ingersoll Halls had their green tile façades replaced with brick veneer.



Table Tennis in Ingersoll Hall, 1964



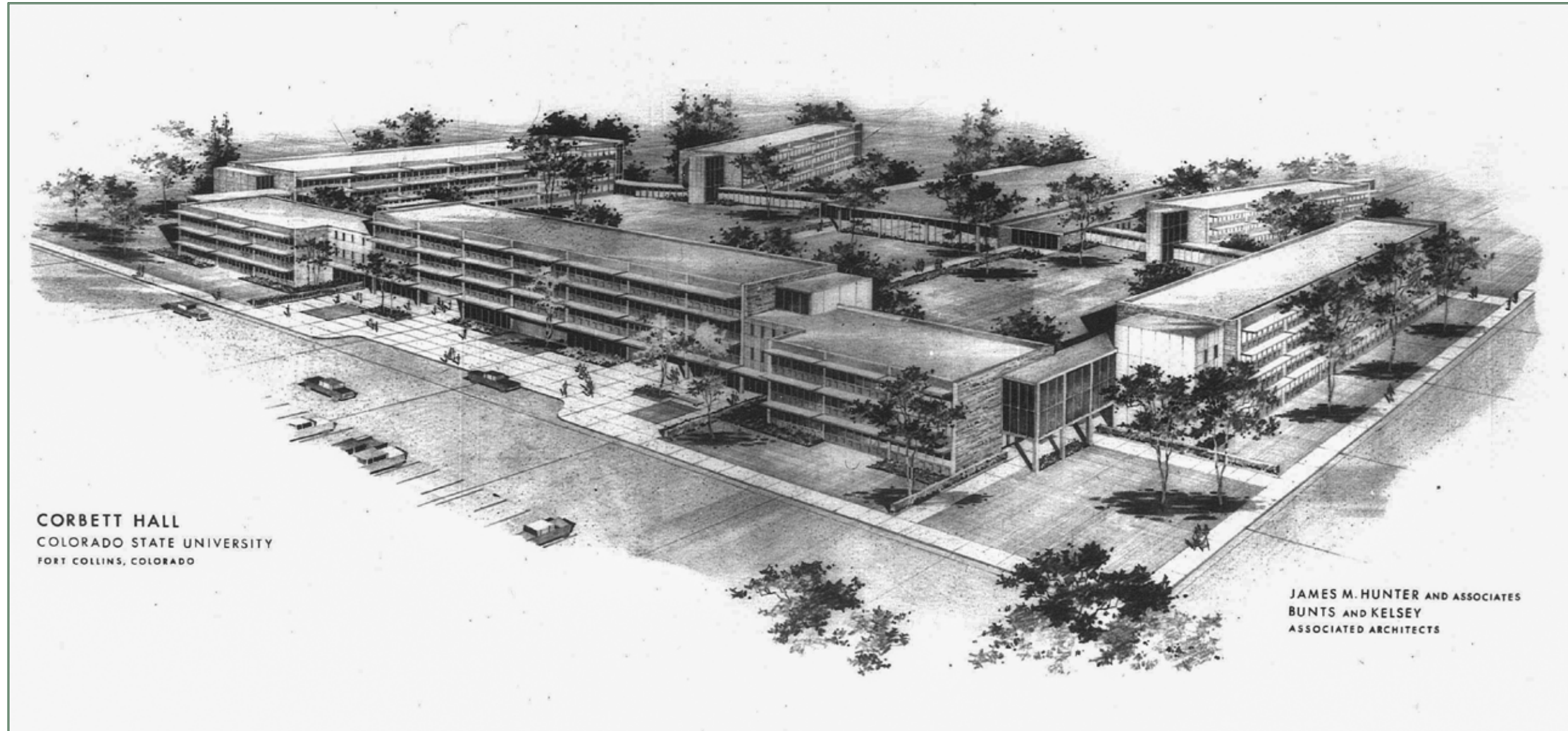
Playboy Bunny sign on the facade of Ingersoll Hall. Circa 1966



Students studying in the lounge of Edwards Hall. Circa 1965



Students playing a vinyl record in the lounge of Edwards Hall. 1965



Rendering of Corbett Hall

CORBETT HALL (1965)



View of the central courtyard and commons wing. Circa 1965

Corbett Hall opened in 1965 and was designed in conjunction with James Hunter and his associate Flyod Lamar Kelsey of Bunts and Kelsey Architects. Named in honor of professor Virginia Corbett, the dormitory was built to accommodate 900 students in suite-style rooms. Due to the increasing number of enrollments during the mid-1960s and limited amount of space, Corbett Hall broke the 'H' shaped model of residence halls in favor of a similar formation. Still retaining the original idea of dividing a large number of students into smaller units, Corbett Hall features seven interconnected buildings surrounding a quad. This formation of dormitory buildings surrounding a central quad or courtyard is actually a historical design for residence halls that was popular at thousands of other college campuses around the country. In keeping with the established design philosophies of the CSU residence hall that featured a central commons wing, and is a unique example of the quad style residence hall.

When Corbett Hall opened for students in 1965, it housed 475 men and 490 women and each floor contained between 24 and 55 students. The main commons wing contained a large lounge with floor to ceiling windows overlooking the courtyard that was described as an immense bay window. Each of the seven dormitory wings contained two pajama lounges as well as studying rooms and laundry rooms. A music listening room was housed in the ground floor of the C wing but was for male students only. When the large dormitory opened, it was scrutinized by the residence life director, Bill Pollard, for its size. Pollard felt that due to the size of the building the sense of unity and community would be sacrificed as opposed to the other h-shaped dorms on campus.

Likewise to Braiden and Parmelee, a new pitched roofline and brick veneered façade was added to Corbett in 2012.



One of the wings under construction. Circa 1964



A stairwell between wings under construction. Circa 1964



Exterior of the rear row of wings that face the Towers complex. The blue tiles were replaced with red brick in 2012. Circa 1966



View of the quad facing northeast. Circa 1965



Main lobby in the commons wing. 1965



President Morgan at the dedication. 1965



Students seated in Eero Saarinen Tulip chairs in the lounge. 1965



Students relaxing in the lounge. 1965



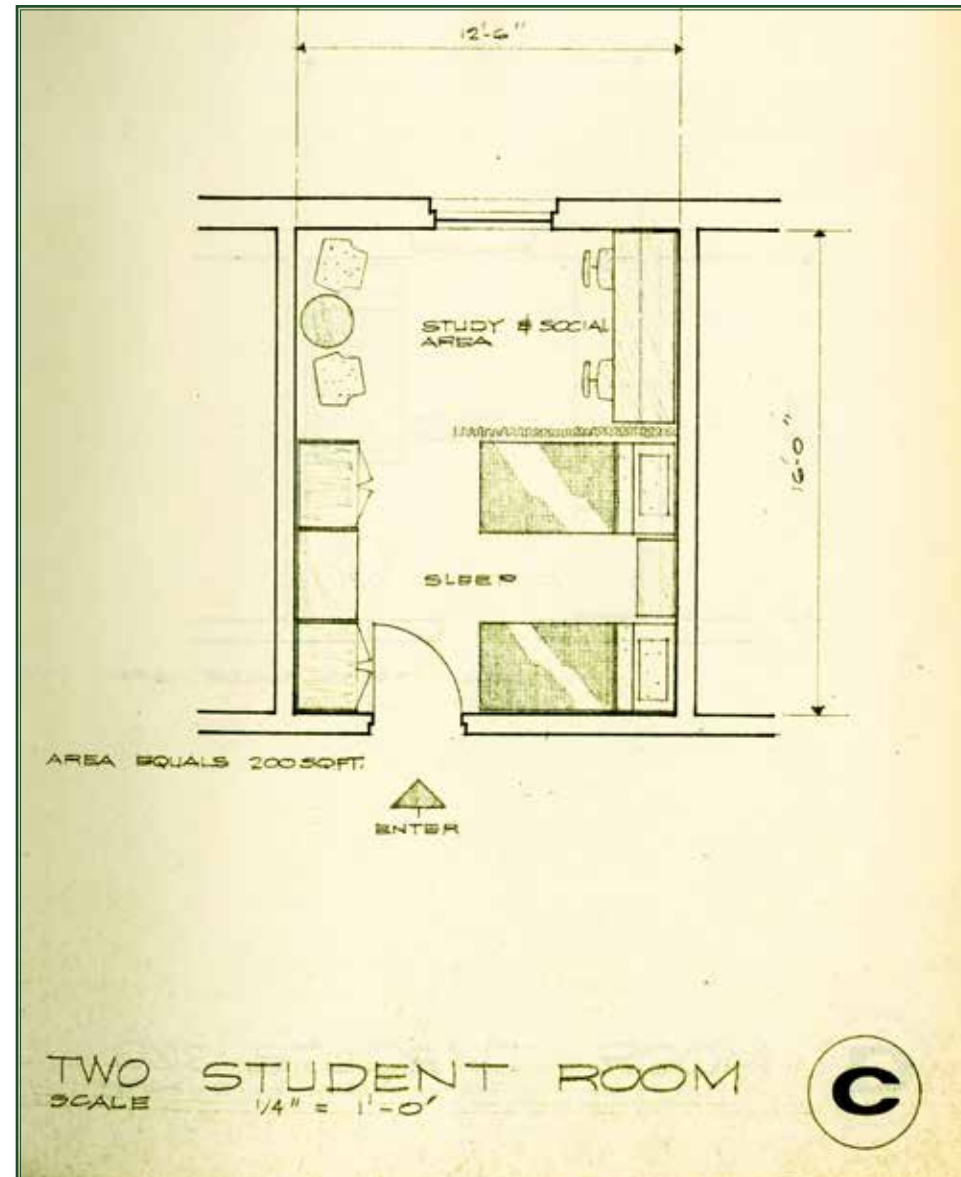
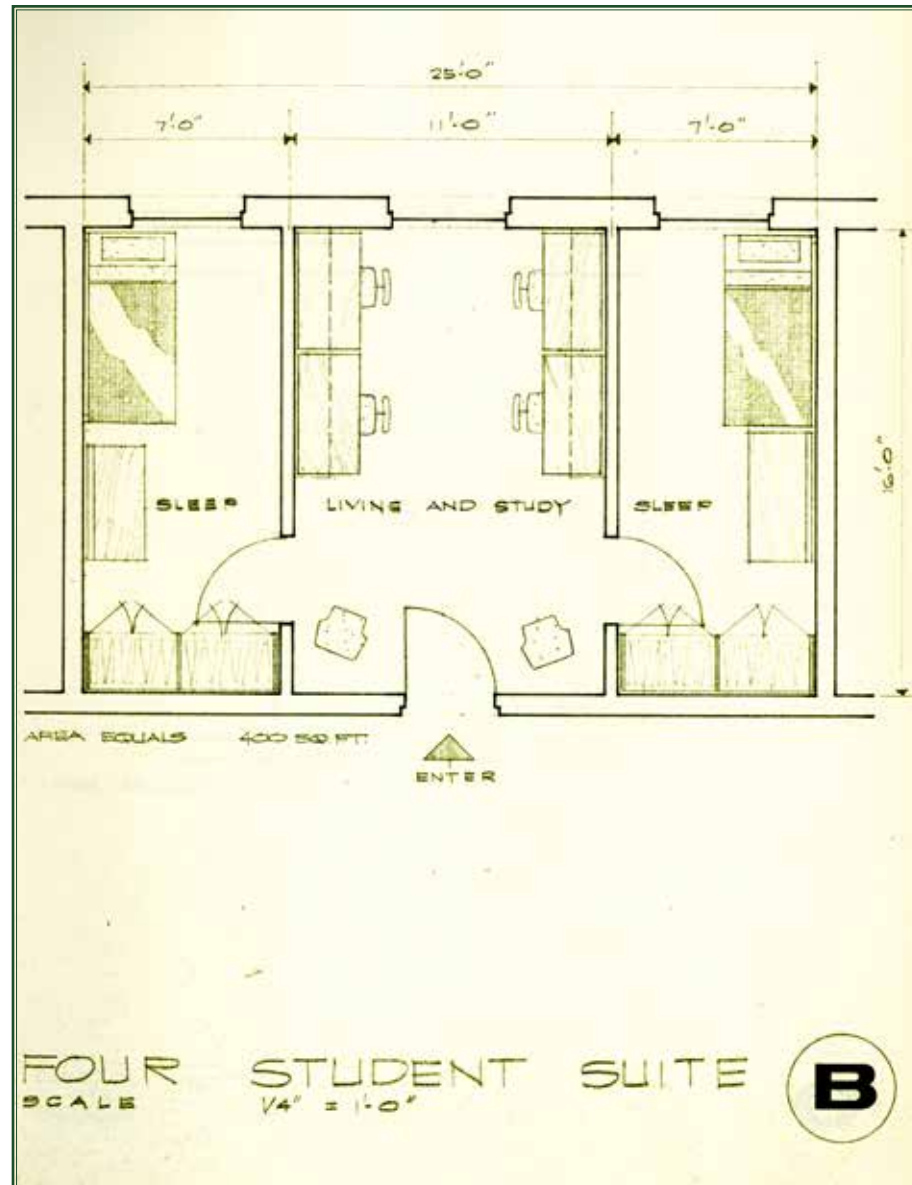
One of the ground floor study lounges of wings. 1965



The Dining Hall, currently known as the Foundry. Circa 1965



THE TOWERS COMPLEX



Due to the unprecedented spike of enrollment experienced in the mid 1960s, the State Board of Agriculture under President Morgan's direction decided that they needed to act quickly to construct two highrise dormitories in order to address the student needs of more housing. From the beginning of the housing project directed by President Morgan, every effort was made to avoid constructing a highrise dormitory because of its perceived problems with socialization and education. However, the existing dormitories were beginning to become overcrowded as many of the pajama lounges on the floors of residence wings became used as temporary housing. As a result, the board approved the preliminary plans presented by Flyod Lamar Kelsey of Kelsey and Bunts architects, who was a former associate of James Hunter.

On June 1, 1966 work began on one of the 12 story residents halls for a complex that was originally intended to be called just Durward. In April of 1967, the board decided to select separate names for each of the four main structures, Durward, Westfall, Palmer, and Durrell. The complex is most commonly referred to as 'The Towers' and is loosely inspired by the form of the dormitories built prior. This is due to the fact that the central commons wing was incorporated into the design to provide dining, meeting, and social spaces for the residents of the two highrise dormitories. The dormitory rooms in Westfall and Durward Halls featured a unique variation of student rooms that were essentially suite-style but lacked a private bathroom. In place of a shared bathroom in the center of two dorm rooms was a lounge or study room. This design feature reinforced the sense of unity and socialization in communal student living that were important considerations to residence halls since the beginning.

The exterior façades of Durward, Westfall, Palmer, and Durrell features a sandstone veneer to match with the rest of the campus as well as large overhanging flat roofs. Durward and Westfall Halls, features rows of concrete beams that separate the dormitory windows on the front and rear sides of the buildings. The beams extend from the roof to the ground and have unique curved cut-out on the top and bottom ends. In the courtyard facing façades of the buildings the central windows which contain each floor's lounge, feature concrete overhangs similar to the form of other dormitories constructed in the 1960s beginning with Parmelee. When the dormitories both opened in the fall of 1967, they originally were divided by sex as Durward was all women and Westfall were all men.

Top: Two floor plans of dorm rooms in Durward and Westfall Halls

Opposite: Two renderings of the Towers Complex featuring Durrell Center, Durward Hall, Westfall Hall, and the Palmer House. Circa 1966



Northeast view of the Towers Complex from Plum Street. Circa 1968



Durward and Westfall Halls under construction Circa 1966



Northwest view of the Towers Complex from Plum Street. Circa 1975



North view of the Tower Complex Courtyard. Circa 1980



Westfall Hall from parking lot. Circa 1970



Floor lounge in the Towers. Circa 1968



One of the multipurpose rooms in Durrell Center. Circa 1968



Main Floor Study Room in the Towers. Circa 1968



The Towers Taps in 1968, Durrell Center's 3.2 Beer Bar.
The bar stopped serving alcohol when the drinking age was raised to 21 in 1984.

EPILOUGE

The main takeaway I have found from this extensive research study on the architectural history of residence halls at Colorado State University is that the architecture of these structures were carefully crafted to enhance the wellbeing and socialization of the students that they inhabit. According to a speech made by the campus' architect James Hunter, the architecture of residence halls should produce an emotional response from its uses by creating the aesthetic elements in a way that will embody the spirit of wellbeing, joy, general graciousness and downright fun. In many respects, the original intentions for these unique residence halls are still embraced by students today. When I lived in Allison Hall my freshman year I immediately felt the sense of community with the thirty other students who lived in my hall. I am not sure I would have the same socialization if I had lived in a large residence hall such as the more recently constructed halls. My friends who lived in the newer halls such as Summit Hall and Laurel Village were often envious of the relationships I had with my hallmates. While the facilities were much more improved than those of the older dorms, my friends often complained that they hardly interacted with others who lived on the same floor as them. Their main complaints with these newer residence halls was the hallways were often too long and confusing to navigate and created sound pollution throughout the buildings. Ironically, these issues were exactly what James Hunter and the State Board of Agriculture wanted to avoid in the early 1950s when researching and planning for the residence halls that they constructed. In conducting this research and writing this book, my hope is that the importance of the architectural intentions and designs of the residence halls will be recognized and praised by the current administration, faculty, and students of Colorado State University.

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