

Bond Hall (1966)

Glenn Bond was a Board member from 1961-1965. Bond was an officer at the Upjohn Company and had worked on biological programs for the Navy during World War II and taught biology and other science courses.



Masselink Commons (1955)

This complex was the first residence hall to open at Ferris. Previously, students rented rooms in town. Gerrit Masselink was Ferris's second president from 1928-1929. He also taught mathematics, science and bible study and was vital in the creation of the athletics program.



Star Educational Center(1962)

Raymond Starr ('07) was instrumental in getting the state to accept the school as a state institution. Starr became the first chair of the Board of Trustees in 1950. Starr also served as Michigan's attorney general, an associate Michigan Supreme Court judge and a federal district judge.



Brophy Hall (1962)

Byron Brophy served as president from 1946-1952. He implemented the transfer of the school from private institution to a public one. During his tenure, two-thirds of the campus was destroyed in a fire and enrollments increased because of veterans programs.



McKessy House (1989)

Housing the General Counsel's office, this property was purchased by Ferris in 1989 from the Miles family. Gerald McKessy ('29) donated the money used to purchase the property. He was a respected lawyer with private practices in both Kalamazoo, and Detroit, Michigan.



Swan Building (1966)

This building has long housed College of Technology classrooms and labs. It was named after Dean Fred Swan, who oversaw the creation of the School of Technical and Applied Arts in the early 1960s. He died suddenly while the building was being constructed.

Carlisle Hall (1957)

Carlisle Hall serves a second residence for Honors students. Charles Carlisle was a Ferris faculty member for 45 years from 1892-1937. His subjects included elocution, physical culture and public speaking. He also helped to organize the first library.



McNerney Hall (1962)

This hall was named after Mary J. McNerney, faculty member for both German and Latin. McNerney also coached women's basketball and served as the first Dean of Women.



Taggart Hall (1964)

Gertrude Gates Taggart ('10) was married to W.C. "Top" Taggart and was an active civic resident of Big Rapids. She and her husband gave generously to the community including the church, hospital, library and Ferris.



Clark Hall (1960)

Emmanuel M. Clark served on the Ferris faculty for 40 years. His subjects included history, geography, civics, art and agriculture. He also served as interim president (1935), business manager, and Dean of the College Preparatory division.



Merrill Hall (1961)

This residence hall was named for Karl D. Merrill ('04) who both attended and taught at Ferris in commercial subjects. Merrill also was Dean of Commerce, Dean of Men and vice-president (1937-1941) and acting president (1952).



Timme Center for Student Services (1967)

The Timme Center for Student Services reopened in October 2002 after extensive renovation. It previously served as the campus library. Abigail Smith Timme ('11) attended Ferris Institute's shorthand program. She worked with her husband Ernst Timme on development projects. In 1976, she received an honorary doctorate from Ferris State College.

Cramer Hall (1968)

Cramer Hall was the first of the "skyscraper" dormitories. It was named for William Cramer who taught botany and biology at Ferris. Cramer was known to spend hours searching the woods for specimens and maintained a greenhouse in the Old Main building.



Miller Hall (1963)

Judge William Miller ('02) served on the Board of Trustees from 1950-1962. He also had a private law practice, served as Delta County prosecutor (1932-1940) and as a probate judge from 1943-1956.



Top Taggart Field (1957)

William Clinton "Top" Taggart ('11) played football for Ferris as an end and halfback. He went on to coach the team in 1912. Taggart formed the Petroleum Oil Company and remained a strong financial supporter. Ferris granted him an honorary doctorate in 1964 and a distinguished alumni award in 1968.



Ewigeben Sports Complex (1974)

Robert Ewigeben served as president from 1971-1984. The complex was built during his tenure, and renamed for him in 1986. Ewigeben oversaw the creation of over 40 new programs including professional golf management and optometry.



Pennock Hall (1967)

In the 1970s, when Ferris began the College of Optometry, Pennock Hall was converted to classroom and office space from a residence hall. Ebon Pennock ('16) taught commercial subjects and served on the Ferris athletic board, keeping financial records for the teams.



Travis Hall (1961)

Bert Scott Travis ('92) was another early graduate who returned to teach at the school. Among his subjects were civics, mathematics and spelling. He also worked in the business office. He co-owned part of the school between 1921-1931.

Granger Center for Construction and HVACR (2004)

This facility is the newest building on the Big Rapids Campus. It replaced the Construction Technology Center. Alton and Janice Granger own the Granger Construction Company (founded in 1954) and wished to support the future of the construction industry. Several family members and company employees have graduated from the construction program.



Pickell Hall (1964)

Pickell Hall was another residence built during the expansionist period of the 1960s. Dr. Charles Picknell ('05) was an early Pharmacy graduate who later was a faculty member and Dean of the program. He left Ferris in 1911 to practice dentistry.



Vandercook Hall (1957)

Vandercook Hall is named after Colonel Roy C. Vandercook who was the original vice-chair of the Board of Trustees after Ferris became a state school in 1950. Vandercook was a friend of Governor Woodbridge Ferris. He also was instrumental in the formation of the Michigan state police and served as the first police commissioner.



Hallisy Hall (1958)

Hallisy Hall is one of several residence halls constructed in the late 1950s. This hall was named after Richard Hallisy, who was the Dean of the School of Commerce between 1954-1957. The 1957 Ferriscope yearbook was dedicated to his memory.



Prakken Building (1951)

Prakken Building was originally named the East Building and renamed for Lawrence Prakken in 1976. Lawrence Prakken of Ann Arbor, Michigan served on the Ferris Board from 1950-1977. He was an educational publisher and a newspaperman. He was involved in the formation of the Michigan College of Optometry.



Ward Hall (1963)

Mary Rood Ward was the Dean of Women from 1943-1951. She had worked her way up through the administration after starting as the business office assistant in 1931. In 1931, Ward was appointed as a faculty member.

Helen Ferris Hall (1956)

This is the second oldest residence hall at the university and currently hosts the Honors program. Helen Gillespie Ferris was Woodbridge Ferris's first wife, and was one of the original instructors at the school. She was a teacher every student loved and never wanted to disappoint.



Puterbaugh Hall (1965)

Puterbaugh Hall also houses Honors students. Allen Puterbaugh taught physics and mathematics for 19 years. He also was Dean of the College Preparatory program from 1944-1963.



Wheeler Pavilion (2001)

Both Frank Wheeler ('76) and son John Wheeler ('76) applied for the same spot in the HVACR program. Frank Wheeler was admitted, but John Wheeler attended the architectural technology program. John Wheeler was a 1997 winner of the distinguished alumni award, and has contributed substantially as an alumni.



Henderson Hall (1965)

William D. Henderson ('92) was a student and friend of founder Woodbridge N. Ferris. After teaching at Ferris from 1892-1902, Henderson went on to teach physics at the University of Michigan and direct their extension division.



Rankin Student Center(1958)

The student center was renamed for Donald Rankin in 1972. Donald Rankin had a long career in student services including Dean of Men (1945-1962), Dean of Students (1953-1968) and Dean of Student Services (1969-1972). He was the first combined dean of students. Rankin also was mayor of Big Rapids.



Williams Auditorium(1962)

Originally named Starr Auditorium, this facility was renamed in 1986 after Michigan Governor G. Mennen Williams. Williams was the governor who accepted Ferris as a state school in 1950. He later served on the Michigan Supreme Court.

Johnson Hall (1959)

Johnson Hall has offices and classrooms used by both Arts and Sciences and Technology. Frank Johnson ('92) both attended and taught at Ferris Institute in the 1890s. Later Johnson became an automotive engineer for Cadillac Motor Company and Ford Motor Company. He designed both the V-8 and Lincoln engines. During the Depression, he supported the school financially.



Spatthelf Center for Allied Health (1979)

Victor Spatthelf served as Ferris president from 1952-1970. During his tenure, the student body grew from 700 to 9000 and the faculty increased from 70 to 550. Ferris became Ferris State College and was accredited for the first time by the North Central Association.



*We hope you've enjoyed our
Tour of the 35
Named Buildings of
Ferris State University.*



GET TO KNOW... THE HISTORY OF FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY'S NAMED BUILDINGS

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY *A Humble Beginning*

Ferris State University first held classes in 1884 under the name of the Big Rapids Industrial School. It was located on the Vandersluis Block and provided a vocational education to lumberjacks, miners, farmer's sons and daughters, and factory workers. In 1885, it became the Ferris Industrial School and moved to the northwest corner of Michigan and Maple Street. Old Main, the first permanent building, was built in 1893 on the corner of Oak and Ives Street. The name was changed to Ferris Institute in 1900. In 1924, Ferris Institute converted into a non-profit stock company. 1950 saw two major changes to Ferris. Ferris Institute became a state institution as a gift by the stockholders. Additionally, two of the three school buildings (Old Main and Pharmacy Building) burned, destroying much of the physical campus. The Alumni Building, built in 1929, was spared. The Institute was renamed Ferris State College in 1963. In 1987, the name changed to Ferris State University.

TAKE THE TOUR

Alumni Building (1929)

This building was opened in October 1929 and is the only building to have survived the campus fire of 1950. It was built as a multipurpose building next to Old Main. The decision was made to name the building after the thousands of alumni who contributed funds for its construction.



Birkam Health Center(1957)

The first health center was built in 1957, replacing an earlier Ferris Institute hospital which had burned. Dr. Frederick Birkam served as staff physician from 1969-1976. In 1976, he became Chief of Medical Services. The building was renamed in his memory in 1988.



Bishop Hall (1967)

Bishop Hall was originally built as a residence, but has also housed the President's offices and the College of Education and Human Services. Ora Bishop taught chemistry at Ferris from 1907-1920. He moved to Florida and remained a teacher until age 89.



ABOUT UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

The University Archives exists to preserve and present the historic record of Ferris State University.

The archives is the official repository for all university records, including artifactual objects. Additionally, the archives collects supplementary material which relates either to the university or the immediate geographic surroundings.

The University Archives began in the aftermath of the 1950 fire, with a few shelves of historic material placed in the library. In 1964, Lillian Masselink Wright was hired part-time as the curator for the historic collections. With the completion of the new library in 1967, the archives moved into the "Historical Room." In 1975, R. Lawrence Martin, a librarian, was transferred into that area to assist Mrs. Wright. The 1984 centennial celebrations led to a renewed interest in the archives and a large amount of material was received.

The University Archives is currently advised by the Academic Senate committee on Library/ Historical/ Archival Committee. To reach the University Archives, call (231) 591-3731 or email archives@ferris.edu.

For more information

please contact: University Archivist
Melinda McMartin (231) 591-3731

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FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY



In 1884, Woodbridge N. Ferris and Helen Gillespie Ferris, his wife, came to Big Rapids and opened the Ferris Industrial School. Woodbridge Ferris was the Governor of Michigan from 1913-1916. Helen Ferris died on March 23, 1917. Ferris remarried in 1921 to Mary Ethel McCloud. In 1922, he became a member of the US Senate and moved to Washington D.C. On March 23, 1928 W.N. Ferris died. Ferris was the president of Ferris Institute until his demise. Eastern Michigan University (Michigan State Normal College), Oliver College, the University of Michigan and the University of Notre Dame all awarded Ferris honorary degrees during his lifetime.

WOODBRIDGE N. FERRIS *Founder and Educator*