

FRANKLIN ARCHIVES TOUR

(Compiled by Leon Lueck – llueck@southslope.net) Revised: 11-11-2023

EXTERIOR

Beaux Arts (Bo-Zar) architects Bert Rugh & W J Brown combined several styles dominated by English Gothic, which is rich in *plant-like motifs*. English Gothic was considered appropriate for academic institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge and, therefore, for Benjamin Franklin Junior High School (the 1st non-president name instead of the initially-considered Warren Harding which was scandal-ridden).

Brick exterior with terra cotta (glazed clay) to look like cut stone. Terra cotta was substituted for stone at a savings of \$1,000 in the 1st & 2nd junior highs (McKinley-1921 & Roosevelt-1922) and followed in the 3rd & 4th schools (Franklin-1923 & Wilson-1924).

Important features are the 2 Gothic *ventilation stacks, the entrances, two large decorated Twentieth Street panels*. The front entrance has standard Gothics features: *two niches flanking the main entrance (usually to hold sculpture), a Gothic gallery, gargoyles derived from the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and owls symbolizing learning*.

Separation of sexes in 1920's resulted in separate *boys & girls entrances with heads*. Late students had to enter main entrance to Principal Ruby Byers' Office/Attendance, now the Clinic. Why are heads reversed in direction at main entrance? *Open books over side entrances* are symbols of learning.

Only two major exterior additions occurred at Franklin: the 1935 high school addition (no terra cotta trim for middle north entrance). Old Washington High School (white limestone with 4 corner towers & bell tower), site of the current Public Library, closed Spring of 1935 result of structural failure. In those days, 200 trains would pass by school every day & vibrations shook school loose. The train depot was site of current parking ramp. So, instead of building new high school, the district decided to double size of 4 existing junior highs. Financing was assisted through public works funding from FDR Administration. Only other addition was 1980 lower gym 38-foot extension.

Football field was east of Franklin (current tennis courts site) before athletic field at 20th St and E Ave – local garbage dump/swamp at east site before Franklin was built – few houses in area at time – original plan to build Franklin between 18th & 19th Streets & C & E Avenues, but dropped due to proximity to railroad (noise) & Arthur (1914) built too close to RR; 1st Linn Co. public school 21st St & 1st Ave NE

Flag pole: originally next to Norway spruce (southwest corner) – 1955 graduate ran underwear up flagpole, then climbed tree to place rope in tree, preventing removal of underwear – fire dept ladder truck removed underwear – flagpole moved away from tree to present site

Pipe railing steps: installed after 1952 student drove car up steps; *HS principals plaque (1935-57)*

[Enter building through main entrance]

THIRD FLOOR

“Autumn Oaks” (reproduction) by Grant Wood; original hung in Rm 408 – now loan to CRMA Attendance Office left (Clinic prior to 2021; orig. Teachers' Lounge); (2) *John Barry photographs Ben Franklin bust in its original niche* – location of trophy case during high school years
Bas-reliefs (7): “Boys with Trumpets,” “Aurora,” “Boys Singing,” (Series of 4: Painting, Mathematics, Sculpture, Writing)

Plaque dedication (made by woodshop teacher Bill Hagen) to Franklin's WWII dead (48)
Holes in floor for railing which aided traffic during the crowded junior high/high school years before Washington and Jefferson were opened in 1957 -- over 1,600 students attended the junior high in the early 1960's before Harding and Taft opened in 1965

Marvin Cone painting “Iowa Hills” dedicated to Larry Carlson who died in military in 1947
Main Office: *Ben Franklin signature document 1763 (Tom Riley gift), Brown architectural site 1922, Brown architectural elevation addition to Franklin 1935, Franklin watercolor* by Frank Kinney
Students Supports Office (Counseling prior to 2021): *“Country Scene”* by Kay Cooper;
Photo/Painting of Franklin entrance by H.L. Von Cleeve 1932

“Excellence in Education Award 1983-4” – National Award for programs & accomplishments
Currently sixth grade floor is 3rd, seventh grade is on 4th floor, eighth grade is on 2nd floor -- alumni on tours reveal 7th & 8th were primarily located on 1st & 2nd floors, while the 9th & high school students were on the 3rd & 4th floors -- 7th & 8th rarely went to Library except after school – at one time each floor had a different series of two colors to recognize each floor by its colors

Outside Room 343: *“Bridge over Seine”* by Elizabeth J. Carney (dedication to Rachel Witwer, 1894-1941) – many original paintings or prints will have brass dedication plates – many descriptive plaques placed to right of artworks were created by Cindy Lundine (see to right of Carney painting)

Blueprints: pool (cement shell) and rifle range, principal's office and women's teacher locker room, boys and girls lockers (*glass ceiling* in Teacher's Lounge) – had glass block in roof to allow light to flood boys' lockers on third floor north), library, back doors, 2 vents and former chimney top

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Outside Room 340: *"The Lilith Summer"* by Mizuki Katakwa (student 2003)
"Maidens Bearing Water Jugs" bas-relief across from Room 336
1935 addition: change in terrazzo floor & light switch in middle of hallway (why?) = indicates location of old staircases. Light-well out window – notice brick difference – back of Franklin like Wilson 1983 bricked in stage gym windows; 1970's failed bond issue plan to fill light well with rooms
John Barry photograph gift "Reflections" to Franklin; *other photograph John Barry also?* Barry was the Grant Wood photographer, as well as a renowned graduation photographer
Four framed Franklin Press (school magazine) covers up stairwell landing
Rooms 334 and 332 vocal music in 80's-90's; networked computers in 1998; Learning Labs 2021
1970's failed bond issue plan to build library with outdoor reading deck over lower gym 3rd floor
Original built-in lockers in hallway 1935; new lockers & elevator 2008-2009
Room 324: former typing room and vocal music – notice *typing paper drawers*
Room 322: former orchestra room -- sloped dropped ceiling previously existed before current dropped ceiling which was installed during geothermal renovations
Outside Room 322: *"Under the Cherry Blossom Tree"* by Mizuki Katakwa (student 2003)
Room 320: former band room – notice band instrument storage cabinets
Fire doors installed in 1991 – windows added because of student petition to Board of Education
Bas-relief *"Declaration of Independence"* – down stairwell; *John Barry photographs – 2 Nurses*
Student Lounge and Student Store – former location of girls' lockers (south hallway) – also glass ceiling and glass block – *enlargements of collages from The Franklin Key* yearbook
Jr. High Student Council enlargement
Outside Room 302 (Counseling): *"Ben Franklin"* by John Wentworth; inside Rm 302
Photographs by John Barry & former Counselor Howard Israel Rattner
Inside Rm 300 (Clinic) – original Principal's & Attendance Office; (prior to 2021) Activities –
"Shoreline at Perce" by Edwin Bruns, CRCSD Art Director (honor of Malcolm Hallman) – (formerly in Martha Washington Room) and *"Tidepool"* by David McCosh (Grant Wood Art Colony, U of Oregon)
"Indian Creek" by Grant Wood (formerly in M. Washington Room)
"Pioneer Women" bronze by Bryant Baker – dedicated to first principal Ruby Byers
Principal enlargements: Hallman, Byers, Abbott
"Thunderbolt Battle Cry" by Dale Barnhart, 1936 graduate of Franklin H. S. – Disney animator
"River Bend" by Marvin Cone (memorial to Abbie Abbott, formerly in Main Office)
Play poster of "Tom Sawyer;" Play production enlargement of "The Gypsy Trail" written by Ruby Byers; Orchestra enlargement; Band enlargement;
Boys Glee Club 1924 – tall Karl Thompson installed Auditorium seats as a Polk Jr High student
Franklin staff 1935-1936 (enlargement)
"Orange Abstract" by Stuart Edie, U of Iowa art professor (1963) donation to educate students about abstract art -- stairwell landing between 2nd & 3rd floors
Ink drawing of Franklin – foot of NW stairs – Can you identify the artist?
[Ascend northwest stairs] – *"Spanish Landscape"* by Stuart Edie 1963 in stairwell landing between 3rd & 4th floors

[Alternate Starting Point]

FOURTH FLOOR

Bas-relief dedication to Jeffrey Hrbek – graduate of old Washington H. S. – started Czech Language Program at University of Nebraska

Native American Sand Art; "Altered Brayer" by Joel McMillan, former art teacher

[Enter Room 440 (Library Annex)]

Library remodel in 1980 – took 3 classrooms; *Wurlitzer amplified reed organ* dedicated in 1947 in honor of those who served in WWII (1,143) (below stage in Auditorium); *Mural: Equal* by student Janelle Colbert; *Bronze bust of Lincoln* by August Saint-Gaudens in 1922; *"Mexican Village"* by Ed Bruns (honor of Lucile Powell); original *ceiling* reproduction of Bromley Palace, England – same as Wilson Auditorium; leaded west windows are no longer; 4 Richard Pinney works: *"Funny Hat," "Luncheon," "Headless Sailor," "He Gave His Best"* (dedicated to deceased 7th grade Library worker Rory Rstom); in Library storeroom *Senior High Student Council meeting enlargement* – notice size of original library; *Dragon Lamp & Brass Lamp* (gifts from 1952); *Entry door frieze features a lighted lamp* symbolic of wisdom
Trophy case originally in main entrance – hidden door behind which opens to light booth
Framed Tiles by Class of 2016-17; *Rug Weaving* by Class of 2017-18
"Steps to Torc Waterfall" by David Lueck; *"Four Tiles"* by Amy Gruhn-Farnum (art teacher)

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DISPLAY CASE: “*Clown Mime*” by Sally Fairchild; “*Liz ard l’orange*” by Joel McMillan; “*Resilience*” by Annaliese Tisdale (German/French teacher – as teenager, interrogated Nazi prisoners); “*Jacket*” by Pat Hermann; “*Wood Instruments of Instruction*” by Leon Lueck; “*Paper Assemblage*” by Paulette Reed; “*Chinese Carvings*” by E. Boyd Smith 1937 (Canadian illustrator & author)
“*Leaf Assemblage*” by Paulette Reed; “*Theater CR Musicals*” by John Ryal; “*Daughters of Revolution*” by Harriet Souder “*Legend of Sleepy Hollow*” poster; “*RR Photograph*” by Howard Rattner
“*What’s in a name?*” by Joel McMillan; *Franklin Press* (1925-26) and *The Newspaper* (2000-01) enlargements

Outside Art Room 442 “*Autumn Oaks*” by Raymond Eifert, Franklin art teacher for one year in the 1920’s (M. Washington Room) with *Arizona Sage Brush* (Honor of Blanche Hunter) on the left of Eifert and *Desert in Arizona* (Honor of Faith McMurray) on the right (both, including a third titled *Arizona Mountains* which is lost, were painted by Theodore Daniels, Cedar Rapids artist.) Both paintings were retrieved from the stage props room and restored by removing the black and white latex painted scenes (used as on-stage prop pieces) which covered the originals.

“*Calligraphy: Oh, what a tangled web*” by Joel McMillan, Art Teacher; “*Calligraphy: Theodore Roosevelt Quotation*” by Ida Martin Sorensen; “*El Cid*” by Salvador Dali; “*Happy Trails*” by Larry Welo; “*Mount Carol Snow*” by Zora DuVall, Coe & Univ. of Iowa Art (Honor of Eleanor Wilson); “*Blue Bird*” by Bruno Ertz; “*Horse*” by Catherine Neely (student); “*Upper Stone School*” by Leon Zeman, Art Teacher 1939 – supervised murals in Room 420; “*This little piggy*” by Stanley Mouse (Grateful Dead album covers designer); “*Spring Creek*” print by Fred Easker

Former Art Room 440 has a remaining visible skylight in closet

“*Maine Landscape*” watercolor by James Green

Art storage rooms formerly boys’ locker area with skylight

“*Jackson Pollack Tribute*” by Lisa Waite (student); “*Expresso Royale*” by Velga Easker

“*Spring Amaryllis III*” print by Priscilla Steele; “*Unum Bed*” construction by Craig Campbell

John Barry photographs (2)

“*Grove*” by Marvin Cone (reproduction – original given by PE Teacher Eugene Pinney’s uncle to Coe College’s Stewart Memorial Library

Bas-relief: “*Triumphant Entry of Alexander the Great into Babylon*”

Photographs by Leon Lueck: “*Corn Detasseling*,” “*Corn Detasseling Chips Away*,” “*Root River Ride*,” “*Cedar Rapids Clean-Up*”

Room 435 (outside) – “*Two Murals – O Beautiful for Spacious Skies*” by Erma Oberg (art teacher) and students 1952 (second one lost)

Room 435 – *view of Mount Mercy College from Mount View neighborhood* – former office of High School Athletic Director Orville Rust

2 Frames of 8 photographs of Carl Van Vechten – CR native, New York City art & theater critic

Science rooms: Room 420 has biological murals done by students of Leon Zeman (1936) –

“*Warthogs Mural*” by Dale Barnhart; *Greenhouse*

Room 413 -- former Counseling Office with career & college pamphlet racks

Three watercolors by Dale Barnhart (1936) wrote the school song “*Thunderbolt Battle Cry*” down stairwell – worked as animation artist for Walt Disney (Memory of Ina Hibbard)

“*History of Music*” by Franklin Senior Glenn Kemper in January 1943: Figures in painting are Apollo, Egyptian, Native, Pan, Caveman, Beethoven, St Cecilia, Mozart

Red oak cabinet like in many original classrooms; Red oak cabinets also on 2nd & 3rd floors

Outside Room 412: “*Boys Singing with Scroll*” Bas Relief; Outside Room 410: “*Mayflower Compact*” Bas Relief; Room 409: roof access; Outside Room 408: “*Summer and Autumn*” Bas Relief
Martha Washington Social Activity Room (408): *Dedication reproduction featuring art in room:* “*Mexican Village*” by Edwin Bruns -- visible as first on left in enlargement followed to the right by Cone’s “*Street Scene in Paris*” [“*Rue Sufflot*”] – on loan to CRMA, Eifert’s “*Autumn Oaks*,” Wood’s “*Indian Creek*”; room also contained “*Autumn Oaks*” by Grant Wood on loan to CRMA

Archives (Room 409): *classes of 1930 and 2000 enlargements*; (original to M. Washington Room: *silverware, dishware, lamp, silverware cabinet*); *yearbooks* (in Library office), *newspapers, decades memorabilia*); formerly girls’ locker area with sky lights visible behind door in Room 409

[Descend southwest stairs two floors]

B Avenue exterior Girls’ Entrance – terra cotta (glazed clay) bas-relief heads of 2 girls & open books (symbols of learning) – 3rd Floor; heads of 2 boys & books northwest Parking Lot entrance

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SECOND FLOOR

“The People of Amana” by John Barry

South Cafeteria – cement shell pool but never tiled due to cost of ceramic tile from Italy after World War I – but can see southeast door outline to enter from locker room (now food storage) which has trap door access to heat/electrical/water tunnel around perimeter of shell which parallels front of building continuing under N Cafeteria & Band Room, exiting into former coal room – S Cafeteria was girls’ gym and boys’ wrestling practice room – termed “Bucket of Blood” due to slamming into wall after basketball layups & strenuous wrestling workouts (sweating blood) – current remodel done in 1980 with built-up floor (notice hollow sound when stomping compared to North Cafeteria)

North Cafeteria – (notice solid concrete floor) remodels in 1957 and 1980 – far north section was originally a woodworking room – near north original small cafeteria because in early years more than one-half went home for lunch – high school committee meetings would take place during noon hour

Band Room was originally woodworking shop on boys' side of building – “Wild Bill” Hagen (shop teacher) would throw 2x4’s at disruptive students – Oscar Stabenfeldt (hand woodwork teacher)

Room 236 – formerly tinsmithing and soldering

Original Boys’ Locker Room – did contain (*Chris Ashton Kutcher’s* signature from play cast *Stage* from side entrance: Neo-classical style – ceiling is reproduction of ceiling from Grilling Castle in England – ceiling painted in 1996 according to original color scheme – acoustical tiles now cover panels similar to those above exits flanking the stage – competition gym until 1980 when lower gym was expanded by 38 feet – original green-striped cloth upholstery for seats (also were in Room 224) – original seating of 750 installed in Autumn 1923 by 9th Grade students from Polk Junior High as related by Karl Thompson (paid 25 cents for each seat installation)

Original Girls’ Locker Room (now restroom) – original towel handout door, as with boys

Outside Room 216: “Rolling Hills” by Gordon Kellenberger – Gift of family in honor of Dr George Ross, former English teacher taught in Room 216; *Original red oak classroom cabinet*

Little Theater (Room 224) – originally called Visual Education on blueprints

Colored pencil drawing by Catherine Neely (student)

[Descend middle south stairs]

FIRST FLOOR

Room 122 formerly metalworking room – now Engineering Technology

Visitors’ Locker Room – formerly girls’ locker after 1935 – sky lights above

Lower Gym – build in 1935 as a PE gym – added 38 feet in 1980 to make competition gym – *Aerial photo of Franklin* during 1980 gym extension; *Iowa-shaped plywood with Grantland Rice quotation* originally located outside Athletic Director Orville Rust’s office (Room 435)

Boys’ Locker Room – added in 1935 – originally dirt floor for rifle range – remodeled 2003

Girls’ Locker Room – added in 1980 (competitive sports for girls) along with *wrestling practice room* – originally classrooms

Enlarged photos of 1928 boys basketball team; boy/girl basketball game 1951-52

Landing between 2nd & 3rd floors: *Photo of custodians Mary Breen and Sam Sedlacek 1999*

Coal Room with sloped floor and sealed coal unloading doors

Geothermal Room (former Boiler Room) – underground pipes in north PE field warming water to 55 degrees – cooling/heating units in each classroom -- *to metal storage rooms to “Dirt Room”* (with tunnel network) under Auditorium -- *out second floor hallway door by Room 206*

[Ascend dirt room stairs]

SECOND FLOOR

Science Rooms (formerly Family and Consumer Science Rooms and, previous to that, Home Economics on girls’ side of building); Across from *Room 208: Bas-relief of “Baccantes Dancing”*

John Barry photographs (4)

Imagined school uniforms (8) by Jon Johnson 2000 – modeled on classmate girl of his fascination

Old Washington High School (current site of Public Library) [Mascot = Tiger] (colors *Black & Orange*) → McKinley High (*Black & Gold*); Franklin High (*Orange & Blue*)

[Ascend southwest stairs]

THIRD FLOOR

[Return to Main Entrance]