

Carthage College Campus in Carthage, Illinois Through the Years

Origins of the College

Carthage College, with different names and in different locations, opened its' doors in 1847. Hillsboro, Illinois was the home of Hillsboro College. After relocating briefly to Springfield, Illinois as Illinois State University, the college was moved to Carthage and named Carthage College in 1870. Classes started in September of that year. The first building on what would become the Carthage College Campus was still under construction at that time, so classes were held in the Burbank Building on the Carthage square. The first building constructed on the campus, Old Main, was completed in 1872. Sixteen students and one professor participated in the first class. Founded by the Lutheran Church, the college opened in Carthage as a preparatory school. In 1873 a college curriculum that offered a "classical education" was implemented, offering a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Arts.

The Growing Campus

Additions were made to the campus throughout the years. The source of fiercest pride, Evergreen Walk, consisted of a long row of Evergreen trees. The walk was a result of a beautification project implemented by the President of the College.

Dormitories were eventually added. A girls' dormitory Denhart Hall was first constructed in 1901 and a bigger, grander building to replace it was built in 1918. Denhart Hall was named for Henry Denhart, a trusted benefactor of the College.

During the early 20th century, Carthage College made a concerted effort to diversify the social opportunities available at the college. An integral part of this plan included the formation of intramural sports teams, including men's and women's basketball, tennis, track, and gymnastics. A gymnasium was built in 1905 to house many of these activities.



"Old Main" was the first building on campus. Constructed in 1872, it was demolished in 1967.



Evergreen Walk was created in 1887 at what was then the main entrance facing Old Main. Notice the "Kissing Rock" in the foreground later moved to Kenosha. The Carthage City Council replaced it with the rock now resting on the north side of Buchanan Street (Hwy 136).



Denhart Hall - Completed in 1918, the building was the largest girls' dormitory on the campus. The building was destroyed by fire in the spring of 1980.

Academic Life

The college had a very strong academic background. Students could study literature, modern languages, life sciences, art, music and physical culture. A professor of particular note was Dr. Alice Kibbe, Dean of the Biology Department from 1920-1956. A well-travelled lover of nature, Dr. Kibbe was noted for her study and academic leadership. Dr. Kibbe was curator of the college museum, which housed many of her specimens and artifacts. These items are housed today in the Kibbe Museum, located at 306 Walnut Street in Carthage.

A Decision to Move

The College faced challenges during the Great Depression and WWII. While enrollment remained solid during and after those years, at one point reaching an all-time high of over 700 students, financial struggles did not abate. In the mid 1950's, enrollment began to significantly decline and a decision was made to once again relocate Carthage College. The administrators of the school chose Kenosha, Wisconsin as the new location. In 1964, the college closed its doors for good in the city of Carthage. The school, still named Carthage College, remains today in Kenosha.

In 1965, Robert Morris Junior College purchased the buildings of the Carthage Campus. It operated as a Junior College until the late 1980's. It was during this time that the buildings on campus were renamed for famous women. After several other owners the college fell into decline and disrepair.

The Campus Revitalized

In June 2007, the campus was purchased by Prairieland Investment Group, LLC (PIG), a Carthage owned and operated company. Their offices are located in the former Memorial/Anthony Hall and house the administrative staff of Carthage Veterinary Service, Ltd. and Professional Swine Management, LLC (CVS/PSM).

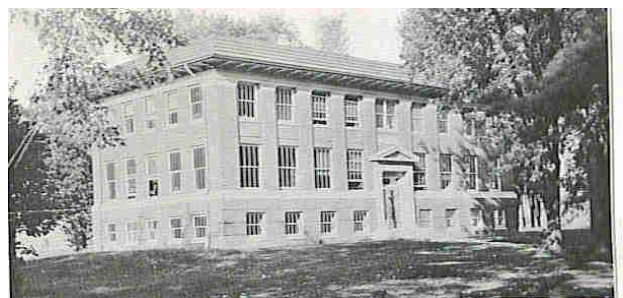
Bryan Auditorium, which was at one time a chapel for the college, was donated to Carl Sandburg College Foundation in December 2008 by PIG. Having undergone modernizing renovations, it is now the Charger Community Center, a 500 seat auditorium equipped to host college and community musical, dance and theater productions.



The first gymnasium, later Biology Hall, was home of the revered Biology Department at Carthage College. This building is scheduled for demolition.

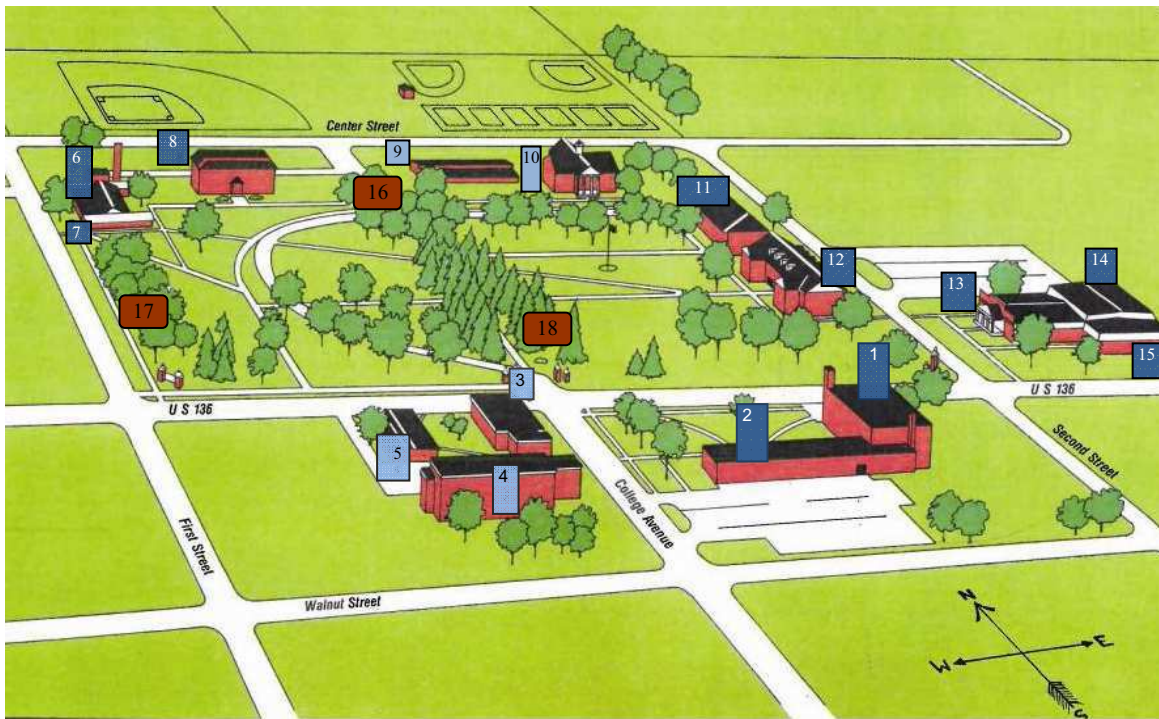


Memorial Dormitory for Men as it stands today at 303 N Second Street was home to many returning WWII veterans attending college under the GI Bill. The name was changed to Anthony Hall under Robert Morris ownership. As of 2009 it is now the home office of CVS/PSM.



Carnegie Science Hall is shown from the 1930 edition of "The Rambler", the official Carthage College yearbook. The photo was accompanied by the following quote: "Problems of the future shall finally here rest. The crucible mighty of truth's acid test."

The Carthage College Campus: Yesterday and Today



MAP KEY

1. Charger Center Auditorium was originally used as a chapel by Carthage College, it was changed to Bryan Auditorium by Robert Morris College (RMC). It is now owned by Carl Sandburg College.
2. The Douglas Building at RMC was first used by the music department of Carthage College.

3. Blackwell Hall is used today by employees of CVS/PSM. Known as Lewis Dormitory during the Carthage College years, it was a dorm for men.
4. Clark Dormitory was also used as a dorm for men. It was later renamed Keller Hall by RMC.
5. Site of the Moser Center, the building has been demolished.

6. Former site of the Boiler Center, the building has been demolished.
7. Former site of Mead Dining Hall, the building has been demolished.
8. Carnegie Science Hall, later called the Michelson Center, still stands on the northern section of campus.

9. The Home Economics Building at Carthage College was later renamed Stanton Hall by RMC.
10. The original library at Carthage College was renamed Earhart Student Center by RMC.

11. Planned for demolition, this building was the original gymnasium at Carthage College. It later served as the Biology Building and finally a maintenance building.
12. Memorial Hall Residence for Men was renamed Anthony Hall by RMC and is now the main office of CVS/PSM.
- 13-15. The former Field House at Carthage College, RMC added the gym wings of the Didrikson Center and Tubman Hall. This building is planned for demolition.

16. This is the former site of Old Main.
17. This is the former site of Denhart Hall.
18. This is the entrance to campus and beginning of the former Evergreen Walk.