

## Crescent Corner

Crescent Corner was a series of short articles about important campus features, mostly buildings located in the “Old Crescent” section of campus. The topics and the Wrangler when published are:

Campus Move	2010 Summer
Student Bldg. Tower	2012 Fall
Maxwell Hall	2011 Summer
Student Building	2010 Winter
Master Plan	2012 Summer
Campus Police	2012 Spring
Benton Murals	2013 Fall

# CORNER

## CRESCENT

An 1883 fire almost resulted in Indiana College (now Indiana University) moving from Bloomington, but a \$50,000 grant by Monroe County allowed the college trustees to consider alternatives for rebuilding in Bloomington. Walnut and Second was the original site of the college; that’s where the science building that burned in the 1883 fire was located. The college buildings were located on the west side of Walnut where the parking lot of the Kroger store is now, not on the east side of Walnut, the area now known as Seminary Park, a name that commemorates the original name of the college.

The three sites given major consideration for rebuilding were the original site and areas known as Dunn’s woods and Blair’s woods. On the first trustee vote to choose a new site, one of the eight trustees was absent; the original site and the Blair’s woods sites each got three votes and Dunn’s woods got only one vote. The trustee supporting the Dunn’s woods location gave an ultimatum to the Blair’s woods supporters that he would vote for the original site unless they switched their votes to support the Dunn’s woods site. On Sept. 23, 1883, with all trustees present, Dunn’s woods garnered five votes to the three votes for remaining at the original site. As a result, the college bought 20 acres of Dunn’s woods and development was begun in the area now known as the “Old Crescent.”

*This Old Crescent tidbit is drawn (with permission) from a series of podcasts created by the IU Archives, part of the IU libraries.*

# CORNER

## CRESCENT

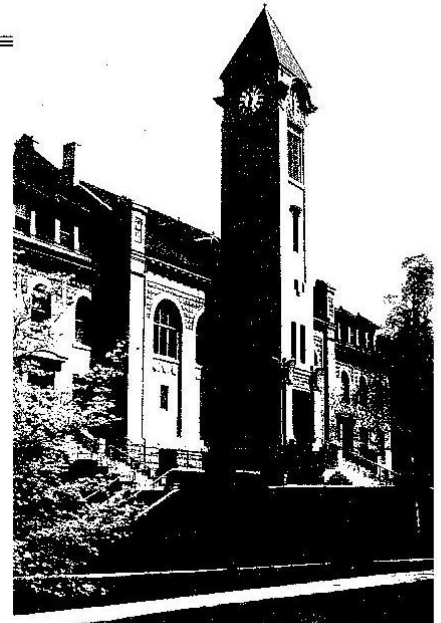
The tall tower of the Student Building makes it one of the most recognized buildings on campus. The building was the result of a request by Frances Swain, wife of IU president Joseph Swain, to have a building for women’s activities. Joseph Swain was the first Indiana-born president of IU. He attended IU, graduating in 1883. He was hired immediately upon graduation and was a professor of mathematics from 1886 to 1891. He married Frances in 1885.

David Starr Jordan was president of IU and left to become president of Stanford University; Swain went with Jordan to Stanford, where he was professor of mathematics until 1893, when he returned to IU as its ninth president. He became president of Swarthmore College in 1902.

Frances Swain’s vision for a women’s activity building was presented for funding to John D. Rockefeller, who insisted that the building have facilities for both men and women. As a result, when the building was eventually built, it included a swimming pool and gym for women, a billiards room and barbershop for men, and a general-purpose auditorium. It served as the focal point for student activities on campus until 1932, when the Memorial Union building was constructed.

In addition to chiming the hour and half hour, the carillon in the tower of the Student Building plays a concert each day at 5 p.m. These concerts inspired Hoagy Carmichael to compose the “Chimes of Indiana.” The building was under renovation in December 1990 when the tower caught fire in a spectacular blaze and the carillon bells came crashing down. The renovation was completed in 1991, including replacement of the bells that continue to entertain regularly.

The building now houses the departments of anthropology and geography as well as computer clusters.



*Student Building, 1992, courtesy IU Archives*

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### CRESCENT

Indiana University's Maxwell Hall was built in 1890 in the Romanesque Revival style at a cost of about \$75,000 to house the library, classrooms, and bookstore. It was the fourth building to be as part of the "crescent" on the Dunn's Wood campus and it was the second location there for the IU library. The building had a capacity of about 60,000 volumes. It is the first building to be funded entirely by the state of Indiana and the first building to be built entirely of limestone. IU President Joseph Swain arranged for electric lights to be added to the building in November 1896 so the library could be used at night.

Since the building housed the main library, it was originally called "Library Hall." It was renamed Maxwell Hall in 1894 to honor Dr. David H. Maxwell, IU trustee, 1820-1837 and 1839-1852, and his son Dr. James Darwin, trustee, 1861-1891; both were Monroe County physicians. In 1907, when the new library (now called "Franklin Hall") was built, Maxwell Hall became the home of the School of Law, which occupied the building until 1956.

Thanks to Indiana's skilled stonecutters, Maxwell Hall has one of the most unique and intricate external designs of any building on the Indiana University campus. The gargoyles and other intricate carvings on the building are believed to be the result of the imagination of the stonecutters and were not designed by an architect or artist.

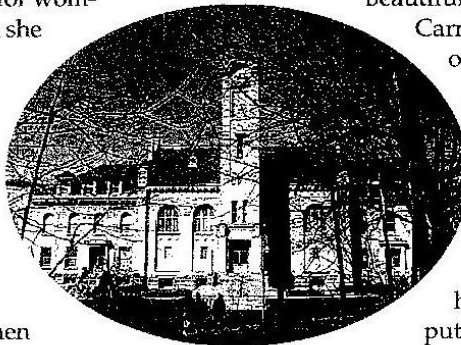
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## CORNER

### CRESCENT

The Student Building is the result of the effort of Frances Morgan Swain, wife of Indiana University's ninth president, Joseph Swain. Mrs. Swain was eager to support women students at IU, who comprised about 25 percent of the students in 1900. She was instrumental in getting two structures built on campus, Alpha Hall, the first residence hall that was created for women, and the Student Building, which she conceived as a center for women's activities. To build the Student Building, Swain originated the university's first fundraising effort. John D. Rockefeller, a major donor to the project, insisted that the building have facilities for men as well as women. So, the building housed a swimming pool, gymnasium, parlors, and day rooms for women and a billiard room and barber shop for men. The building's auditorium housed many campus events and was the center of student social life.



The Swains left IU in 1902 when Professor Swain became president of Swarthmore College. Mrs. Swain returned to campus in 1906 where she was honored as part of the dedication of the Student Building. The chimes in the Student Building tower sound every quarter hour and play a concert at 5 p.m. This beautiful campus music inspired Hoagy Carmichael to write "The Chimes of Indiana." During a building renovation in 1991, fire destroyed the tower and its chimes, but the tower was quickly restored and the chimes were promptly replaced. Today, the building houses the departments of anthropology and geography and has a four-room cluster of computer facilities.

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## CORNER

The Indiana University Bloomington master plan is available for your inspection. It is very detailed and richly illustrated but somewhat hard to find. It's worth the effort to see what is planned for the beautiful campus we fondly recall.

Go to [www.iu.edu](http://www.iu.edu). Then, click on University Architect's Office. The next step requires a careful look. Click on Master Plan. It is near the left border of the home screen. Then choose Bloomington and, finally, click on Bloomington Master Plan. From the table of contents, you can find everything that is in the plan. Lynn Coyne, assistant vice president for real estate, confirms there is NOTHING in the plan for Greek housing. I could find NOTHING about plans for the Third Street area near the intersection with Jordan where the Delta Upsilon chapter house is located.

The plan shows the principal north/south access to campus along Woodlawn that will be extended north to the bypass where there will be a major intersection. The route is between the football stadium and Assembly Hall, but the plan shows a much smaller replacement of Assembly Hall. Baseball and softball facilities are presently being created north of Assembly Hall along the bypass. The plan describes an effort to reclaim the "Crescent Corner" as the academic center of campus; work to renovate Franklin Hall (the former main library) to this purpose is already in process. Also, to link student housing and academic space more conveniently, the "Well's Quadrangle" (Memorial Hall and its related buildings) will be restored to residential space. All this makes the DU decision to retain its Third Street location even more appropriate.

## CORNER

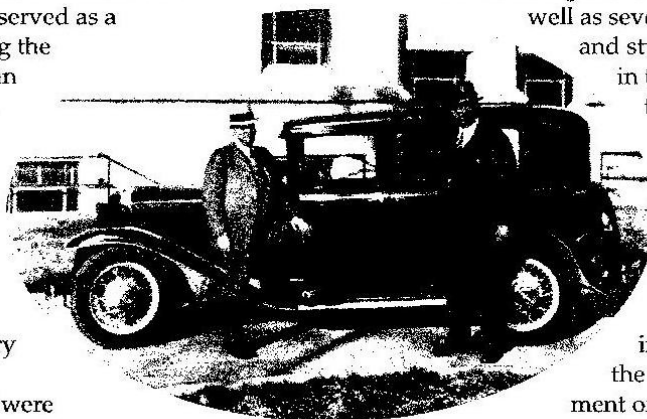
As the Bloomington campus grew, essential services were added. An important addition was establishment of a police function in the early 1920s. Walter "Pete" Peterson was the first police officer. He was first a "car blocker" and veneerer at Showers Furniture Factory and had served as a county sheriff before joining the university. Merle Clay began as Pete's part-time partner, forming the Pete and Clay duo. Clay had been a fuel truck driver, a chauffeur, and a policeman before becoming part of the IU police team. When Clay was appointed a "regular" officer, he was given a salary of \$30.75 per week.

Duties of the police staff were diverse. In 1923, Peterson was charged with the responsibility of inspecting the safety and upkeep of the rooming houses where students lived. In January 1925, Peterson was assigned to assure that regular fire drills were held in fraternity and sorority houses; he found that some houses did not have adequate fire escapes or even rope ladders. In July 1925, Peterson was ordered by the trustees to arrest any person caught fishing in the university lake or trespassing on the watershed. Pete and Clay had an office in the basement of Maxwell Hall and in 1925 asked to have a telephone, but the trustee minutes

show "action deferred" on this request. Pete and Clay kept their eyes on campus safety until the 1950s; Clay died in 1951 and Peterson in 1954.

Today, the IU police department has a total staff of 113 including 44 full-time police officers as well as several part-time officers and student cadets. Housed in the first two floors of the building originally constructed as the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity on 17th Street, the IU police department is one of the larger university police organizations in the U.S. and is among the 12 largest law enforcement organizations in the state.

Indiana University is also home to the only police academy in Indiana. Several members of the Indiana Chapter of DU have been affiliated with the academy, including current members Chris LeBlanc and Kyle Ovanek. Both are currently cadets and are planning on going through the academy this coming summer. Recent DU alumni Jordan Malm and Doug Murphy completed the academy in the summer of 2009 and were part-time officers for IUPD until they graduated in 2010. The academy has a distinguished alumnus in Keith Cash, current chief of the IU police department.



*Pete and Clay with the campus police car as shown in the 1934 Arbutus.*

## CORNER

One of the great art treasures of the state is located on the Indiana University Bloomington campus, thanks to the vision of Herman B Wells. The Thomas Hart Benton mural depicting the *Social and Industrial History of Indiana* was created to decorate the Indiana Hall at the "Century of Progress" exposition at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. The mural is 12 feet high and about 250 feet long including two sections: cultural progress and industrial progress. Indiana Hall was ranked the most artistic at the fair and transformed the image of the state from a back-woods frontier to a cultural center.

Benton was a relatively unknown 33-year-old artist from Missouri who received the \$50,000 commission from the state legislature. He traveled throughout Indiana for nearly six months to view the society and culture of the state before beginning the project in Indianapolis. Benton did all of the actual painting himself using egg tempera paint and went through nearly 10,000 eggs during the project. After supplies, shipping, and other expenses, Benton earned only about \$8,000 for more than a full year's work on the project.

Following the fair, the mural was stored in a barn at the state fairgrounds in Indianapolis. In 1938, then new Indiana University President, Herman B Wells, conceived of an art complex for the campus. In 1940, he persuaded the State Legislature to donate the murals to the university to be housed in the new art complex. The university's auditorium building and a nearby classroom building were designed to house the mural.

The majority of the mural is in the IU Auditorium's lobby area known as the "Hall of Murals." Four panels are displayed in the University Theatre part of the auditorium building (this area is now the Indiana Cinema). Two panels are located in the largest lecture room of the nearby Business and Economics Building (renamed Woodburn Hall in 1971). Benton himself assisted in the installation and retouching of the mural and was present at the Auditorium on "Mural Day," Dec. 9, 1941. In February 2000, the auditorium was reopened after a 22-month, \$10 million renovation including the restoration and relighting of the mural.

Benton described the Indiana mural as "a dream fulfilled." While his "regionalist" style (also called "Okie baroque") was always controversial, he was recognized as an artistic leader and was pictured

on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1934. Much more recently, Ken Burns was inspired by Benton as "a perfect mirror of the American character." Burns's film about Benton shows him, warts and all, as an artist who took pleasure in the profane. His painting *Susannah and the Elders* depicts rural clergy peering at a nude that infuriated the clergy, and his nude of *Persephone* got him fired from his job at the Kansas City Art Institute. Burns concluded, "If nothing else, Thomas Hart Benton is a hell of a good story."

One of the mural panels in the Woodburn Hall lecture room depicts a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) cross burning with members in full regalia. While the KKK is not a proud part of Indiana history, it did happen; about 30 percent of adult males in the state, including the governor and other public officials, were Klan members in 1924. Similarly, in his mural in the Missouri capitol, Benton included such unsavory state sons as outlaw Jesse James and political boss Tom Pendergast.

The recognition Benton received from the Indiana mural prompted him to go to New York, where he painted and taught. His most famous student was Jackson Pollock, whose abstract expressionist paintings are the antithesis of Benton's work. But, another mural project attracted him back to the Midwest, where he painted an autobiographical mural in the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City in 1935 and was named head of the painting department at the Kansas City Art Institute.

In addition to being a great artist, Benton was an innovative musician. To encourage his son's interest in music, Benton bought him a harmonica. While son T.P. did not like the harmonica, he became one of the country's most talented flautists. Benton became a harmonica virtuoso; he cut a three-record album, released by Decca, titled *Saturday Night at Tom Benton's*. He also devised the method for writing music for the harmonica that is still the standard.

Benton's harmonica talents called him to the attention of the Country Music Hall of Fame who commissioned him to do a mural for their new facility in Nashville, Tenn. *The Sources of Country Music* was painted in Benton's studio in Kansas City, Mo., and was complete except for his signature. With his brush in his hand to inscribe his signature, he died instantly of a massive heart attack on Jan. 19, 1975.



Courtesy of Indiana University