

An aerial photograph of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Field House, a large, historic brick building with a flat roof. The building is surrounded by a large parking lot filled with cars. To the right of the Field House is a large, open field, likely a football field, with visible yard lines. The background shows a dense residential area with many houses and trees. The text "Executive Summary & Introduction" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Executive Summary & Introduction



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Figure 2: Field House Exterior
(UW Archives c1967)

Project Overview

This historic structure report will serve as a basis for the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of the Field House on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Dane County, Wisconsin. UW-Athletics and the State of Wisconsin are planning to implement various restoration and preservation efforts over the course of the next decade in order to revitalize the Field House appearance as well as implement some much-needed maintenance of the exterior façade and roof. This professional and technical document provides an architectural analysis of the building from its early planning and construction to the time this report was authored. The report includes an analysis of the existing conditions and provides general recommendations for the repair and treatment of this historical asset and its site.

Background and Purpose

This historic structure report compiles several areas of investigation that, when combined, will provide a master plan for future actions to be taken by UW-Athletics for the purpose of restoring and maintaining the Field House.

This document is a work in progress. It should function as a guideline for the architectural, engineering, and artistic implementation plans to follow. New information will be uncovered and a more complete understanding of the history of the Field House will be gained as projects are implemented. This report should be amended and reassessed as the complete story of the facility unfolds.



Figure 3: Field House 'W'
(Wisconsin Historical Society 1958)

Statement of Significance

The Field House displays the characteristics of a unique building type that developed in response to the growing interest in social events, student athletics, and competitive sporting events. Wisconsin Athletics was growing in popularity due to an increase in success in the late 1920s and existing facilities at that time were inadequate for the number of spectators attending.

The Field House at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is a significant representation of a facility that has a deep history from both a social and architectural perspective. Constructed in 1929-1930, the Field House has been a historically and architecturally significant asset to University, the City of Madison, and the State of Wisconsin.

Designed to relieve the constraints in size and amenities of the Stock Pavilion and the Red Gym, the primary goal of the project was to provide adequate facilities for physical training, athletics, and social gatherings. As the interest in UW football increased, so did UW basketball. The basketball program became increasingly popular during the early 1900s, resulting in an increased need for a larger facility.

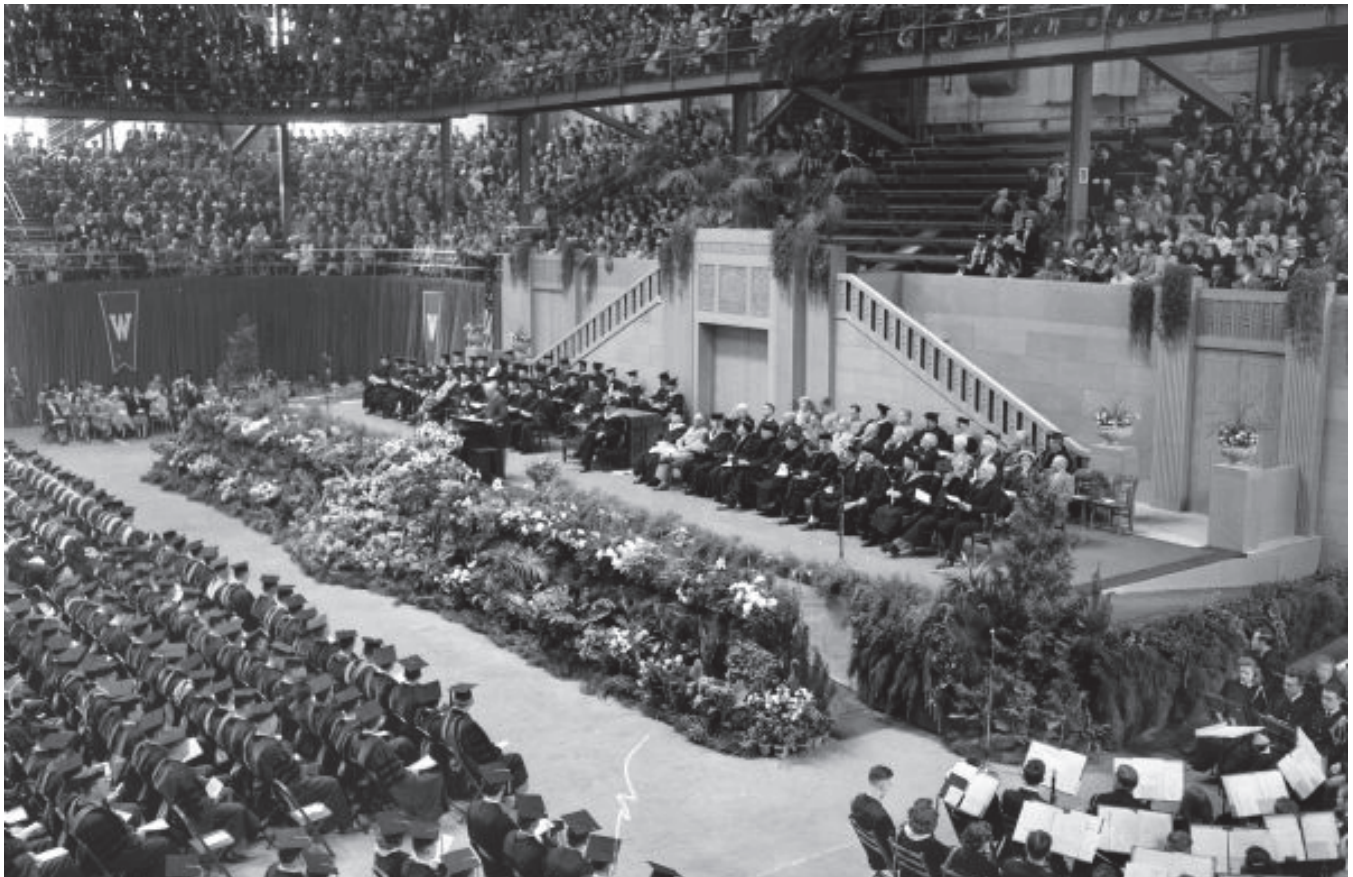


Figure 4: Graduation
(Wisconsin Historical Society 1948)

Designed by State Architect Arthur Peabody and his staff of William Stevens and John Knudson, the rectilinear structure done in Renaissance Revival style reflects the influences of the earliest architecture on the UW-Madison campus. Architects Warren Laird and Paul Cret were major contributors to the university's earliest building designs. Peabody's collaboration with Laird and Cret provided a lasting influence to the architecture of the campus and resulted in design uniformity among the various buildings during these early years.

Dedicated in 1930, the original structure featured a dirt floor, one-eighth mile running track, and a single balcony level. By 1939, the second balcony was added as originally designed, bringing the total seating capacity to 12,000. By the 1970s, the Field House was beginning to show its age, resulting in the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) threatening to seek a different venue for its state tournament. Consequently, a large remodeling project took place in 1976 to address these concerns. Permanent lower level seating was installed along with hospitality areas, dressing rooms, a concrete floor, as well as cosmetic updates. It was during this project that the red paint was added to the interiors.

Similar to the complaints heard during the 1970s, the 1990s also brought concerns regarding the adequacy of the Field House to hold large sporting events due to the increasing success of Wisconsin Athletics. As a result, the Kohl Center was constructed and opened in 1998, providing state-of-the-art facilities to host both men's and women's basketball events as well as men's hockey. Due to safety concerns, the upper level seating in the Field House has been closed to the public since 2007 with an anticipated re-opening of a portion of the upper level balcony planned for the 2018 women's volleyball season.

Standing as one of the most prominent buildings on campus, the Field House is a highly recognizable landmark and has been in continuous use since its construction, underlining its importance to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Stylistically, the building is a wonderfully intact example of Renaissance Revival architecture, designed by noted state architect Arthur Peabody and his staff. The structure sits in a prominent location at the edge of campus and fronts the highly sought Camp Randall Stadium. The University and UW-Athletics have determined to restore this unique structure and continue to utilize its significance in the context of Division 1 athletic competition. By renovating this historic asset and safeguarding its architectural integrity, the University is both acknowledging and preserving its significance in history. The building was and is indisputably a vital part of the UW-Madison campus and the City of Madison.

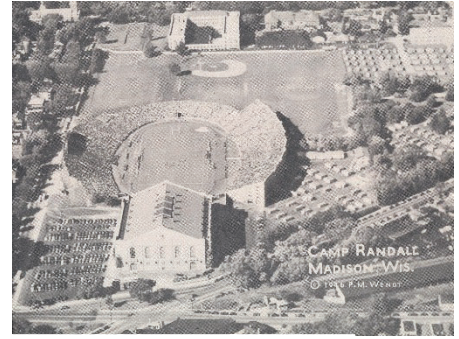


Figure 5: Field House Exterior
(UW Archives c1946)



Figure 6: War Convocation
(UW Archives December 12, 1941)



Figure 7: New Bleachers
(Wisconsin Historical Society 1949)



Figure 8: Field House Interior
(River Architects July 12, 2018)

Historic Designations

Nominated in 1986 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998, the UW-Field House has played a significant role in the growing success of the athletic programs and has also served the community as a venue for various events and purposes.

As the nomination form indicates, “the Field House has become a symbol of the competition for excellence.” Because of its share in history of organized sports at UW-Madison and its connection to the community, this vastly intact, original large-scale Renaissance Revival structure, is a unique asset and the University should be acknowledged for putting forth the effort to preserve this exceptional structure.

With its nomination and acceptance into the National Register of Historic Places in 1998, the retainage of nearly all of its original character, and its overall fair condition, the UW Field House has continued to play a significant role in the history of the University.



Figure 9: Field House NRHP Plaque
(River Architects May 3, 2018)

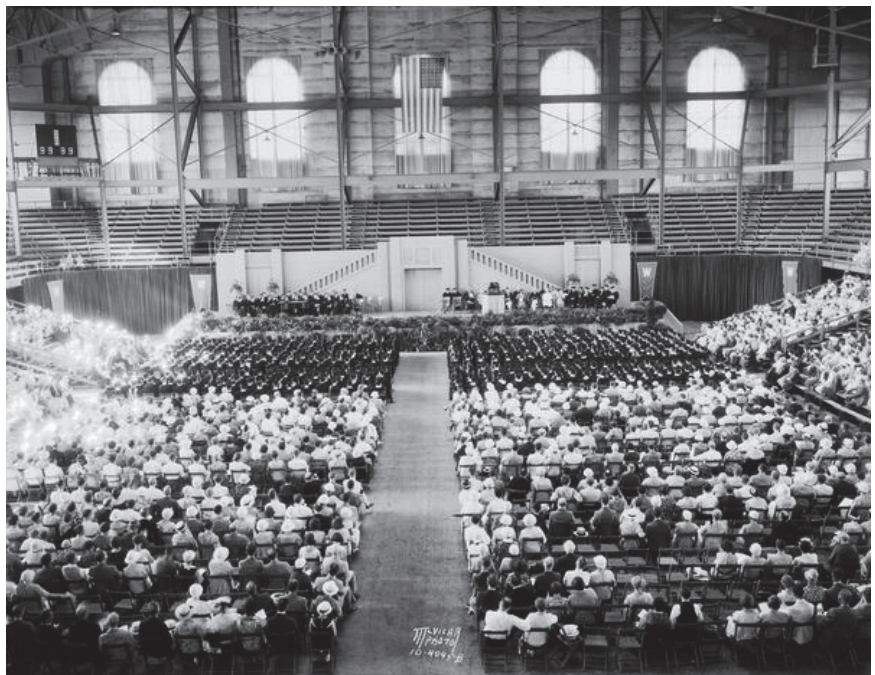


Figure 10: Graduation
(Wisconsin Historical Society 1933)

Administrative Data

Property: UW-Field House
University of Wisconsin – Madison
1450 Monroe Street
Madison, WI 53706

Dates of Construction: 1930, 1978, 2004

Cultural Resource: National Register of Historic Places, 1998
City of Madison Landmark, 2009

Period of Significance: 1930-1947

Methodology

The investigation of the history of the Field House consisted of three phases: intensive literature and archive research, field survey, and preparation of the report. During the archival and literature review, the Field House files, papers, and records housed at the UW-Archives were researched extensively, including yearbooks and local newspaper articles. Photographs of the Field House and Camp Randall Stadium along with subsequent alterations were collected through the UW Archives and the State Historical Society.

Evidence that was gathered by the architectural project team includes photographs, field measurements, observations of existing conditions, and the physical evidence of change. This evidence has been gathered visually with limited destructive investigation. This report does not signify an end to the information gathering process, but is rather a piece of the ongoing research and should be supplemented by future information.



Figure 11: Dedication Ticket
(UW Archives December 18, 1930)

Organization of Document

This Historic Structure Report provides both theoretical and practical recommendations for assessment and treatment of the Field House and is supported by historic research and evaluation of existing conditions. The report is organized as follows:

Executive Summary & Introduction

Presents the statement of purpose and project goals, project team members, investigation methodology, report organization, and a summary of findings.

Part 1: Developmental History

- A. Historic Background and Context
- B. Existing Conditions

Part 2: Treatment and Use

- A. Treatment Recommendations

References

Presents an index of sources used in the development and preparation of this report.

Appendices

Includes drawings, nomination forms, consultant analysis, and other supplementary materials.

Project Team

The State of Wisconsin, Department of Administration has retained the professional services of Berners-Schober to lead the design efforts for any future restoration projects at the Field House while River Architects of La Crosse, Wisconsin, was selected by Berners-Schober to author this Historic Structure Report.

The investigation, research, and evaluation encompass several areas of examination including architectural, historic, structural, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, and decorative finishes. River Architects collaborated with a team of engineers and preservation consultants to generate this report. The team and their areas of expertise and contributions are as follows:

Berners-Schober Associates

Joe Dettlaff, PE
Ian Griffiths, AIA
Bob Van Lanen
Mike Leibham

Green Bay, WI

Principal-in-Charge/HVAC
Project Management
Plumbing
Electrical

River Architects, Inc.

Valentine J. Schute, Jr., AIA
Michael J. Adler, Associate AIA

La Crosse, WI

Historic Architecture
Publication Design + Research

Mead & Hunt, Inc.

Christina Slattery
Katie Kaliszewski
Angela Hronek

Middleton, WI

Cultural Resource Specialist
Cultural Resource Specialist
Cultural Resource Specialist

Building Arts & Conservation

Ron Koenig
Peter Ellison

Lansing, MI

Materials Analysis
Masonry Conservator

raSmith

Steven Roloff, PE

Madison, WI

Structural

SmithGroup

Bill Patek, ASLA

Madison, WI

Landscape Architecture

JP Cullen

Samantha Potts
Dave Baran

Janesville, WI

Construction
Construction

Building Envelope Professionals Group

Thomas Gernetzke

Oregon, WI

Roofing

Lake City Glass

Mark Sheskey

Madison, WI

Glass

Summary

In summary, the general purpose of this Historic Structure Report is to identify and prioritize the historic features of the Field House and to assess its existing conditions in regard to projects moving forward. Although various projects have adapted the Field House to meet the needs and expectations of an elite Big 10 school, there has not been a comprehensive restoration project completed to date.

Although the list of potential projects at the Field House is still in development, prioritization will likely be focused on the stabilization and restoration of the exterior envelope. This Historic Structure Report will provide the necessary documentation and reference material for future projects.

It should be made clear that UW-Athletics has no intention of fully restoring the Field House in one major project, but rather to implement various projects in multiple phases so as to provide a better facility for the student athlete and spectator. Upon completion of the various restoration efforts, the Field House will remain a central and widely used athletic facility on the UW-Madison campus and will provide many more years of use to both UW Athletics and the State of Wisconsin.



Figure 12: Field House South Elevation
(River Architects July 12, 2018)



Figure 13: Field House Interior
(River Architects July 12, 2018)