

Hidden and Forgotten Treasures at Florida State University





College Hall/ Administration Building/ Westcott

College Hall, the site of Westcott Fountain today, was the main building on the early campus. Built in 1855, this two-story brick building was the place where most of the classes were held. There were thirteen classrooms, four science labs, four study rooms, a chapel and a library. In 1905, College Hall was condemned because of numerous cracks in the building. Plans for a new Administration Building were put into play. The building would sit just behind College Hall. While work was being complete on the new building, College Hall was fortified to withstand a few more years use. In 1910, the new Administration Building was completed and College Hall was torn down. In 1936 the Administration Building was renamed after James Westcott, a man who donated his estate to the college in 1887. Today, the Westcott building is home to the Ruby Diamond Auditorium, and the Office of the President.

East Hall/ Science Hall/ Diffenbaugh

Before this was Diffenbaugh and home to the modern languages program, this site was home to East Hall. East Hall was one of the dormitories used by the girls attending Florida State College for Women. Students paid a \$100 boarding fee, which entitled them to meals, fuel, lights and a furnished room. There were forty rooms which housed eighty students. Once known as the social center of campus, this changed when Bryan Hall was built after the building once sitting there, West Hall, burned to the ground. On October 31, 1920, East Hall caught on fire and burned to the ground. No one was hurt, but many girls lost all their possessions. In 1923, Science Hall opened up where East Hall used to stand. Science Hall was the home for the home economics department and the chemistry department. The building known as Science Hall was enlarged and modernized and is now the Diffenbaugh building.



Library/ Dodd Hall/ Werkmeister Reading Room

In 1923, the Florida Legislature granted the Florida State College for Women an extra \$200,000 to use for new construction. Most of this money went to building a new library. Dodd Hall (named after William Dodd, a former English professor and former Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in 1961) held the library until 1956, when Strozier Library was built. Since the library moved, the building has housed the College of Arts and Sciences, WFSU-TV, the Philosophy Department and the Mildred and Claude Pepper Museum and Archives. In 1991, the building was renovated to improve structural integrity. The stained glass window in the Werkmeister Reading Room was designed by Ivan Johnson, Professor Emeritus, and built by Bob and Jo Ann Bischoff. The window is approximately twenty-two feet tall, ten feet wide and contains more than 10,000 pieces of glass.



Ruge Hall

Ruge Hall, also known as the Chapel of the Resurrection, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1997. This building is in the Late Gothic Revival. Ruge Hall was designed by Edward Fitchner. In 1931 by John Ruge had the building built in memory of his wife Fannie. Ruge Hall has served as a place for worship since the very beginning. Today it is the home of Episcopal University Center. The Episcopal Center began at the Florida State College for Women in 1927. At the time of its conception, the Center was housed in a small house just down the hill from the gates of FSCW.



Kissing Bench

*"If this bench could talk,
oh the stories it would tell,
of kisses young and old,
if you sit, beware the spell."*

The Kissing Bench. A romantic part of Florida State history, right? Well, no. The bench is more fiction than fact. The story of the kissing bench was started as the story of a Florida State president who once sat on the bench and kissed his future wife. The bench is non-descript, made of wood and stone. Unlike some of the other benches scattered throughout the campus, this bench is not the product of the Master Craftsman Program. The plaque placed next to it is, the bench, however, is not. Soon, like so many other myths and legends, the story of young lovers sitting on the bench stealing a kiss or two will become just another story believed to be true with no one questioning it. I point this bench out because people walk by it everyday and many never notice it is there.



Dining Hall/William Johnston Building

The dining hall was built in 1913 when the need for a newer, larger dining area became apparent after an increase in student numbers. Located in the William Johnston building, the dining hall seems to come straight out of Oxford. A creamery, a cannery, and a bakery were housed in the hall. Inside the hall was an informal dining area as well as two large formal dining rooms and the President's private dining area. In the early part of the 1980s, the hall was named after William H. Johnston

There were certain formalities that had to be observed while at meal-time in the dining hall during the time of FSCW. The girls were expected to show up for dinner dressed appropriately and on time. Those who didn't show up on time were shut out of the dining hall and went without food for that meal.

