

# PHYSICAL PLANT GARAGE



Fig. 1. Physical Plant Garage 1995, a one-story 78 by 52 foot structure of concrete block; the raised section is visible at the right of the picture. The Stores/Extension-Services building is visible in the background, as are the towers of Ogg Hall. [Author Photo, AP-44]

Starting in 1970 the physical plant rented garage space at 111 Gerry Court for servicing of University owned vehicles. This space was generally unsuitable. Additionally the lease contained an escalation clause that brought the rent to more than \$44,000 per year. The regents authorized a physical plant as part of the 1977-79 building program at an estimated cost of \$540,000.<sup>1</sup>

The original plan was to construct a new building for the garage near Brooks Street and College Court, but by May 1980 the University and the city of Madison had agreed that this area should be reserved for future housing development. The regents then approved the purchase and renovation of an existing facility, and since the new Stores/Extension Services building was already approved to be located at 30 North Murray Street, the planning committees agreed that the garage at 21 North Park Street would make an ideal location for the servicing of University vehicles. At their May 1980 meeting the regents approved the purchase and remodelling of the Park Street garage at a total budget of \$540,000. Included in the purchase was land behind the Park Street lot on Murray Street. The purchase of the garage and adjoining property was closed on July 1, 1980 at a cost of \$300,000 from the Roy A. Ward trust. As later became clear the building had been built on swampy land and its footings had been sinking and settling since construction.<sup>2</sup>

The building was built in 1945 by Fritz Construction at a cost to the owner Ace Buick of \$45,000 and had spent almost its entire life as a garage, first as Ace Buick, then Caves Buick, Ehler's Buick, and Zimbrick Buick, and in the 1970s storage for the telephone Company. In June 1980 the state building commission approved a request to remodel the building at a cost of \$24,000. The main part of the remodelling, by Krueger and Shutter, was the raising of the roof of a 53 by 36 foot section of the garage to provide 20 feet of headroom for large vehicles and for an overhead hoist. The remodelling work was done by the late summer of 1981 and in the fall of 1981 the University operation moved in. The concrete block structure has large glass block windows in the north and east walls. The garage houses mechanics who perform service on all UW vehicles.<sup>3</sup>

1) University Directories; Building Program, Garage Building, series 4/31/9-3 box 6.

2) Memo for regent's meeting, May 1980, Edsall to Shain, June 19, 1980, Roy Ward Trust to Regents, March 28, 1980, series 4/31/9-3 box 6; *Regent's Minutes*, May 9, 1980, October 10, 1980.

3) City Directories; Title records in Regent's vault, Roy Ward Trust file; Agency Request for State Building Commission Action, October 1980, series 4/31/9-3 box 6.