

PRIMATE ANNEX



Fig. 1. The Primate Annex, 1994. The Orchard Street section is at the left, and the camera is looking down Capitol Court. [Author Photo, AP-28]

Built as commercial warehouse space in the 1940s, the primate center first rented space here in the 1970s. The buildings were purchased by the University in 1986. Major remodellings took place in 1988 and 1993.

The federally funded Primate Center was too small almost as soon as it opened in the spring of 1964. Its mission—to provide research space to scientists from other academic disciplines and from other institutions in the Midwest—required more space. As early as 1966 Dr. Harry Harlow began planning an expansion of the center building to the north to cross Capitol Court.

The property on the north side of Capitol Court was occupied by a pair of buildings owned by Edward and Charles Carpenter, who had built a warehouse at 1220 Capitol Court in about 1947 and rented it to a series of businesses. The primary resident of the building was the Wisconsin State Selective Service Office, who arrived in 1947. The Moser Paper Company began to rent part of the space in the 1960s. The location was profitable enough that the Carpenters built another building on the property in 1954 that faced on Orchard Street. This building was rented by a series of aluminum window manufacturers and Madison Casket Wholesalers.¹

In 1971 the Primate Center began to lease parts of the buildings as an alternative to expanding the center. Through the 1970s the Center leased increasing amounts of the Carpenter's buildings, and by 1984 the Center occupied more than half of the Capitol Court building, sharing the rest with Moser Paper. In 1983 after eleven years of occupancy, discussions began to purchase the building. Besides the money lost by the University in leasing rather than owning building space, Federal grant money, the lifeblood of the Primate Center, forbade the expenditure of grant funds on leased facilities. Another serious consideration was that international concerns for the care and feeding of primates periodically threatened to cut off the supply of experimental animals. The Federal Primate program encouraged its regional centers to develop breeding programs. For all these reasons the University placed the acquisition of the Capitol Court property on the priority building list for the 1981-83 biennium, but because of budget considerations was deferred until the 1985-87 biennium.²

Fig. 2. This picture was taken in August 1970 just after the firebombing of the primate center. The camera was looking west on Capitol Court. The Wisconsin Selective Service Building, the target of the firebomb is at the right, under the fire-escape. The Primate Center is just out of the picture at the left. The group of soldiers is standing at Capitol Court and Orchard Street. [Photo courtesy of Helen Le Roy]



In March 1985 the state building commission agreed to allow the University to sell their unused property at 1954 East Washington Street, to raise money for the purchase of the Primate Center project. In August 1985 Dr. Robert Goy, the director of the Primate Center was informed that the Center had been awarded a Federal grant of \$350,000 for remodelling purposes with another \$100,000 per year available, which had to be committed prior to April 1986. This meant that if the buildings were not acquired by that time the grant money would be forfeited. Because the East Washington Street property was not yet sold, the regents received permission from the state to borrow money to buy the Capitol Court property remodel it with federal grant funds, and pay off the loan with the proceeds from the eventual sale of the Washington Street property. Negotiations with the Carpenters proceeded and on September 23, 1985 an agreement was reached that the properties (including both buildings) were sold to the University for \$510,000. Final date of possession was January 11, 1986.³

There were two major buildings on the property. The main one, at 1220 Capitol Court was an 85 by 114 foot warehouse of a basement and two stories of reinforced concrete and concrete block walls. The second, at 33-35 North Orchard Street was a one story brick and glass commercial building. By March 1986, architects Tavarez and Associates had developed a plan in five phases to be constructed as grant money became available. By October 1986 another \$780,000 in federal grant money was received, and phases I-III were combined into the first phase. This work, by J. H. Findorff (for \$454,750) was finished by early 1988 and principally involved the basement area for animal housing, and the entire building's HVAC system. Total phase I cost was \$1.13 million.⁴

Late in 1988 the Primate Center requested permission to finish remodelling the buildings with more federal grant money. This phase developed the first and second floor of the warehouse building into offices, a small animal complex, storage and laboratories. This construction also made convenient and permanent the connection between the warehouse building (Capitol Court side) and the shop building (Orchard Street side). The exterior was remodelled at this time also. This work was approved by the state in July 1990. As more grant money arrived the budget for the work was revised upwards to a final total of \$1.67 million. Governor Thompson spoke at the dedication on May 6, 1993. The shop building remains substantially as it was originally built.

As of the spring of 1995 plans are well advanced to provide more space for the Primate Center, by purchasing the building between the Capitol Court building and Charter Street, and erecting a new multistory building in that area.

1) Madison city directories, Dane county register of deeds.

2) *Regent's Minutes*, March 11, 1983, February 11, 1985, September 6, 1985.

3) *Regent's Minutes*, September 6, 1985, Regent's legal papers, in regent's vault, "Carpenter" file.

4) plans in plans room of physical plant. *Regent's Minutes*, October 10, 1986, February 5, 1988, March 6, 1992, June 7, 1991.