

# WALNUT STREET GREENHOUSES



Fig. 1. The Walnut Street greenhouses range February 1997. Above (north) of the range is Walnut Street, below it is Herrick Drive. The headhouse is at the upper left of the range. [Del Brown Photo, AP-72]

Like every department in the early 1950s, agriculture was bursting at the seams. The departments of Agronomy, Genetics, Horticulture, Plant Pathology, Soils, and Entomology all needed greenhouse space for teaching. In 1953 all were using the banks of greenhouses south of Horticulture, and the smaller set south of King hall. In response to the severe crowding, a committee, headed by professor Robert Muckenhirn, was appointed to plan a new green house range. This committee selected a site on the extreme western edge of campus, near Walnut Street.

Plans were drawn by Madison architects Weiler and Strang, with greenhouse specialist Walter Kelsey of New York. They were approved in the fall of 1953, and contracts awarded in November 1953. The general contractor was Anthony Grignano with a contract for \$197,816. Ground was broken in July 1954, and on November 16, 1954 the final inspection was made and the building accepted. Total cost was about \$360,000. The head house is solid brick, 70 by 120 feet. There were originally fourteen 21 by 83 foot sections of greenhouses in the range serviced by this headhouse.<sup>1</sup>

On July 13, 1957 the regents received an offer from the Wisconsin Cannery Association to donate fund to construct more greenhouses on the Walnut Street range. The gift was accepted, the plans approved, and by March 13, 1958 the new greenhouses were complete. Another expansion took place in 1968 when \$112,448 in gift and grant funds were used to build a greenhouse and connecting link to the Walnut Street range.<sup>2</sup>

The head house is now (1994) used for storage and a few laboratories, there are 69 sections of green house space, with three sections per greenhouse. Space is allocated across all departments in the school of agriculture. Because of the 1995 removal of the horticulture greenhouse range for a biochemistry addition, the Walnut Street greenhouse range will probably be expanded further.

1) *Regent's Minutes*, November 14, 1953.

2) *Regent's Minutes*, January 12, 1968.