

WOMEN'S FIELD HOUSE



Fig. 1. Women's field house 1924. [Meuer photo, vol. 9, p. 51]



Fig. 2. Camp Randall, showing location of Women's field house (see arrow), c. 1949. [Series 8/7 Camp Randall, v2-56]

Built in 1917 at Camp Randall to provide field house space for women's athletics, this building was used as a field house and social center until the construction of the memorial shell in 1954.

In 1914 the director of the department of physical education reports that the only facilities for women's outdoor exercise are nine tennis courts and three acres of Camp Randall memorial park for one small hockey field and several courts for minor games with a capacity of about seventy students. "The use of the athletic field is solely on the sufferance of the Memorial Park Committee ... The women dress at their gymnasium [Lathrop Hall] eight blocks from the field. A tent has afforded slight shelter and a place to remove skirts. In spite of these most serious handicaps successful work has been done in hockey, baseball, archery and other sports." ¹ For the women the fields cannot be located within less than six blocks of their present gymnasium...² Earlier than this time, plans had been made to locate the women's athletic fields near the site of the women's dormitory group, located on the 1908 general plan near the current site of Elizabeth Waters Hall. After the decision to build Barnard Hall, the planning of athletic facilities shifted to the Camp Randall site. In 1915 the state legislature appropriated \$5,000 for a women's field house. The regents approved the getting of plans and bids on September 25, 1915. A building housing dressing rooms, showers and lockers was designed in July of 1916 by the office of the supervising architect Arthur Peabody. Mr. Peabody takes credit for the design but Alden Aust credits it to Albert Gallistell.³ The building, about 250 feet east of the stadium (see Fig. 2) was finished by 1918 and little further is heard of it. It was two stories 32 by 56 feet, stucco with an asphalt roof. It contained an assembly room with fireplace on the first floor, and 24 dressing cubicles with lockers on the second. The field house appears in the Badgers of the early 1920s in the women's athletic sections. It was used as a social center and nursery school for the Monroe trailer colony after WW II. It was demolished in 1954 for the erection of the memorial shell.⁴

1) *Regent's Report*, 1913-1914, p. 286, *Regent's Report*, 1914-1916, p. 253, 1916-1918, p. 326, p. 257. *Daily Cardinal*, October 7, 1915. *Regent's Minutes*, September 15, 1915.

2) *Regent's Report*, 1913-1914, p. 292.

3) Alden Aust "A Tabular History of the Buildings of the University of Wisconsin, 1934.

4) *Regent's Minutes*, August 15, 1946. Burns to Fred, August 12, 1946, series 4/16/1 box 28.