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## Saint Benedict's Buildings, Part 2

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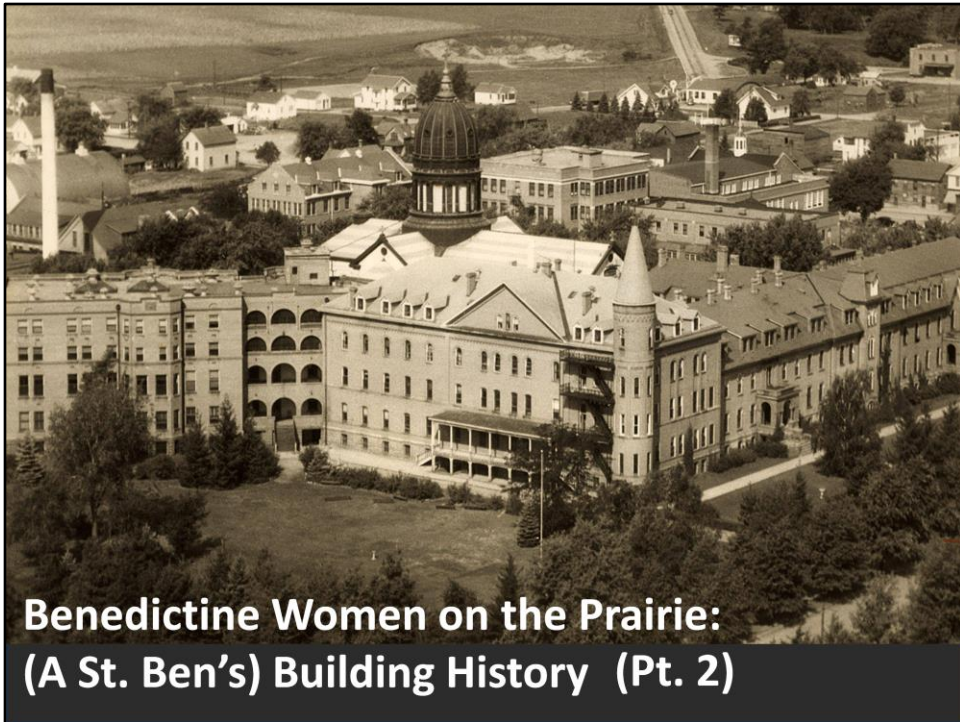
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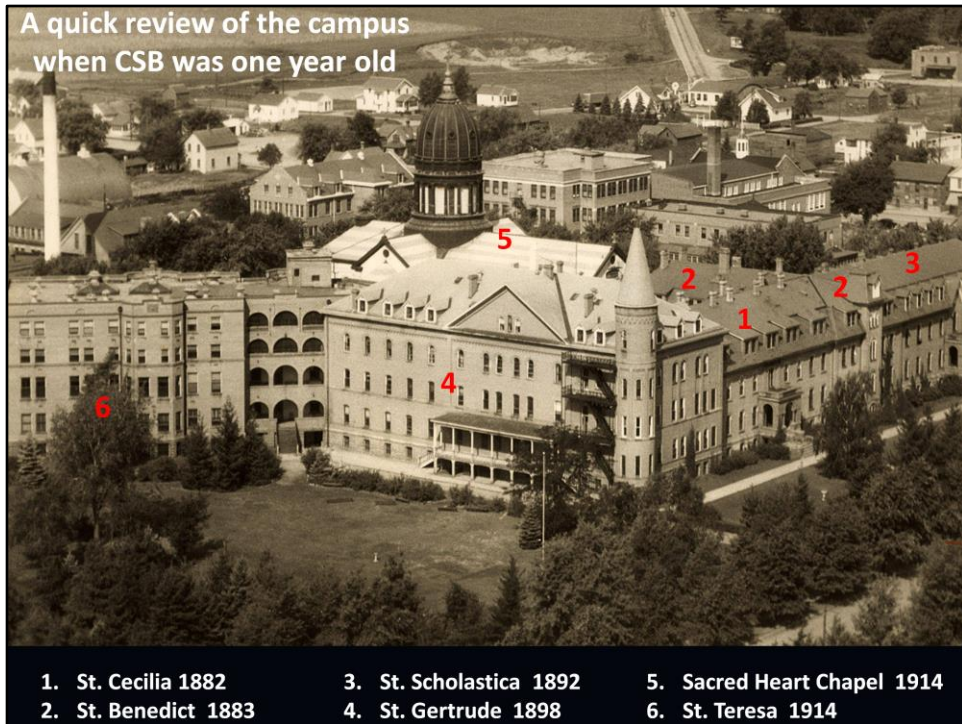


## **Benedictine Women on the Prairie: (A St. Ben's) Building History (Pt. 2)**

Convent/College joint facilities, ca. 1940s

Also shown: Pageant venue, future St. Joe Memorial ball park, Linneman's/Loso's stores, & the Creamery

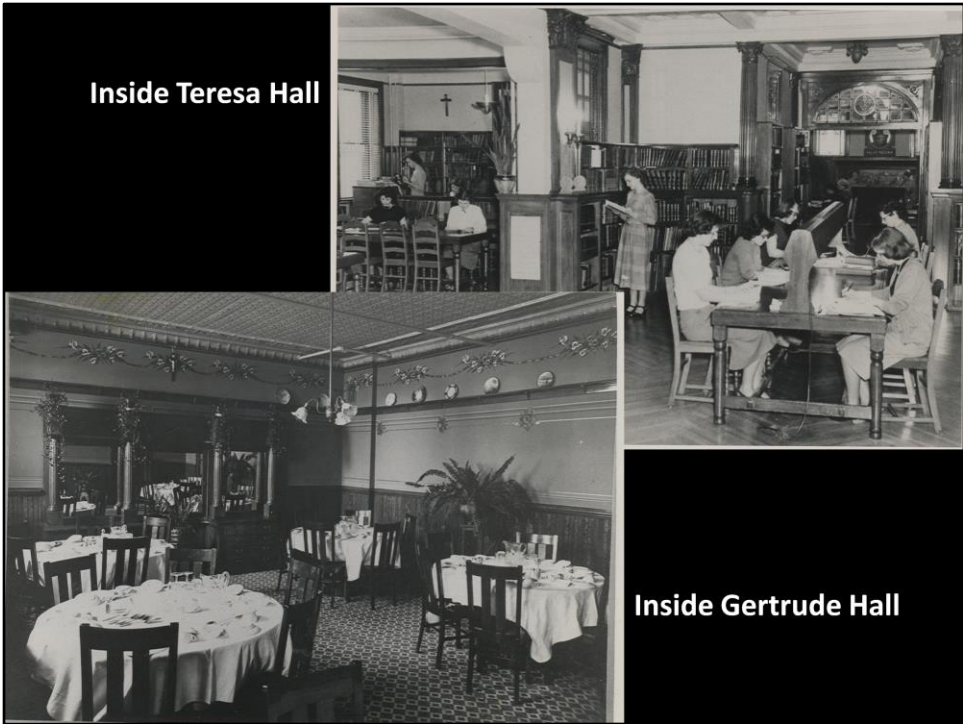
<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/503> SBM.19b01



Convent/College joint facilities, ca. 1940s

Also shown: Pageant venue, future St. Joe Memorial ball park, Linneman's/Loso's stores, & the Creamery

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/503> SBM.19b01

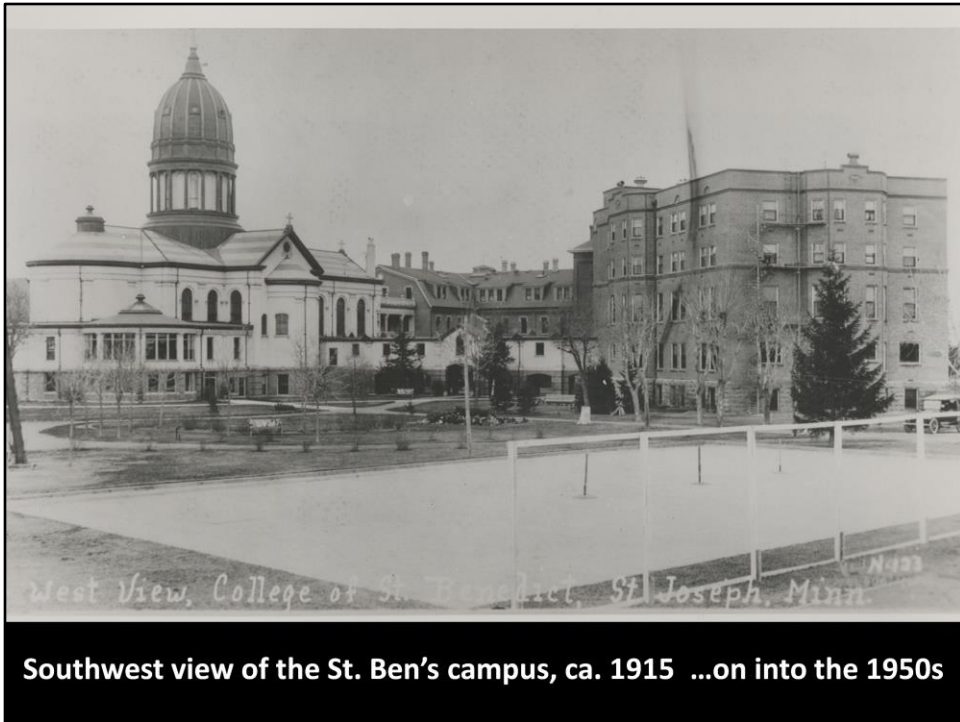


Inside CSB's halls: St. Teresa and St. Gertrude Halls  
Photos from St. Ben's Monastery Archives



Inside Teresa Hall

Inside CSB's halls: St. Teresa Hall  
Photos from St. Ben's Monastery Archives



**Southwest view of the St. Ben's campus, ca. 1915 ...on into the 1950s**

Southwest view of the campus, ca. 1915  
Photo from St. Ben's Monastery Archives



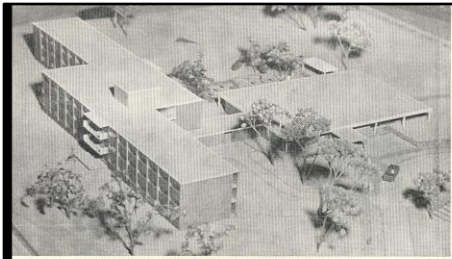
The convent-college joint facilities engendered a joint relationship that mutually shaped them.

- The daily schedule of the two was alike.
- The Sisters lives were intimately bound up with the academy and college students.
- The chief ministry of most of the Sisters living at the Motherhouse was devoted to student services.
- During the first fifty years of the college, 175 faculty members were Sisters--many of whom served on the faculty for 30-40 years.

The convent/college facilities, and the management thereof, were shared as one until the college expanded southwestward and physically separated from the convent.

Convent/College joint facilities

SBM.19b01 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/503>



New dormitory and "commons" accommodations for the College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, Minnesota, are here pictured in the architect's model.

### The College of St. Benedict Plans Needed Expansion

The urgent and growing need of collegiate accommodations felt everywhere in America today has become acute at the College of St. Benedict and has necessitated the construction of a million-dollar addition. Construction work is to begin early in the spring of 1955 and its completion, by the school term of 1956, will mark the beginning of the centenary observance of the Sisters of St. Benedict in Minnesota.

At present Minnesota's smallest college, St. Benedict's liberal arts college for women, has been forced for some years to close its registration long before each fall term. Students are applying in increasing numbers and the present increase is but the beginning of a nation-wide trend. Further, the college is the educational center providing the liberal and professional training for the Sisters of St. Benedict, a religious community of nearly a thousand members whose principal work is the education of American youth for this facet of the collegiate population, so, existing facilities are inadequate.

To meet the critical need, a dormitory and commons building have been designed by architects

Richard Hammel and Curtis Green of St. Paul. Working with a building committee and conferring with alumnae and students, the architects have presented plans for a simple and serviceable residence unit.

A three-story, completely fireproofed building will provide living quarters for 200 students in single, double and triple rooms. Each unit of thirty-three students will compose a social group with its own living room, laundry, bath and other facilities. Provision is made for each student's study desk, wardrobe, bureau, bookshelves, tackboard and sofa bed. A perfect resident on each floor.

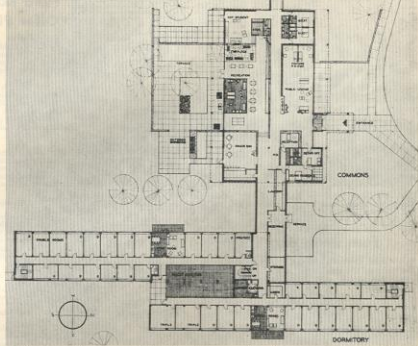
Adjoining the dormitory building will be the commons building. Under its large overhanging roof will be all the larger social rooms. With very inadequate provision at present for visitors' lounges, commuters' accommodations, guest rooms, snackbar or recreation room, the commons will fill an urgent need of long standing. The office and living quarters of the Dean of Residence will also be located in the commons.

A brick exterior, similar to that of existing buildings, is planned for the dormitory. The commons

of glass, and into a fascia will be the future needs of architects Hammel campus vitas with rest of the present

Richard Hammel, for a fine interior been planned to the "family spirit" of a goal of Benedictine centuries in many features symbolically wide, common.

the dormitory and area of \$700,000. to plant area and to provide utilize the total estimate a financial need must turn supporters of the is that for the instance, the Commons to all who can extension of the



The dormitory building (lower section) is planned to accommodate 200 students on three identically constructed floors. Living room, laundry, bath and other facilities will be provided for each unit of 33 students. West of the dormitory building a "commons" is planned to provide needed reception rooms, lounge, guest rooms, commutator room and snack bar. South of the commons will be a terrace with a view across the gardens to the woodland. The new structure will be located southwest of the present buildings with the east exposure of the dormitory parallel to the Counts Walk.



Dormitory for the College of St. Benedict, Saint Joseph, Minnesota.

• Sisters of St. Benedict . . . Building Fund Committee . . . St. Joseph, Minnesota •

## Expansion plans begin

From a fundraising pamphlet in the CSB Archives





**St. Florian Hall, 1954**

“Before Mary Hall or any more buildings could be constructed on the monastery-college campus, a new power house was needed. Since the college was destined to move southwestward, the new plant was constructed south of the existing power house so as to be able to service both the monastery campus and the southward-moving college campus.”

New power plant, St. Florian Hall 1954-1955

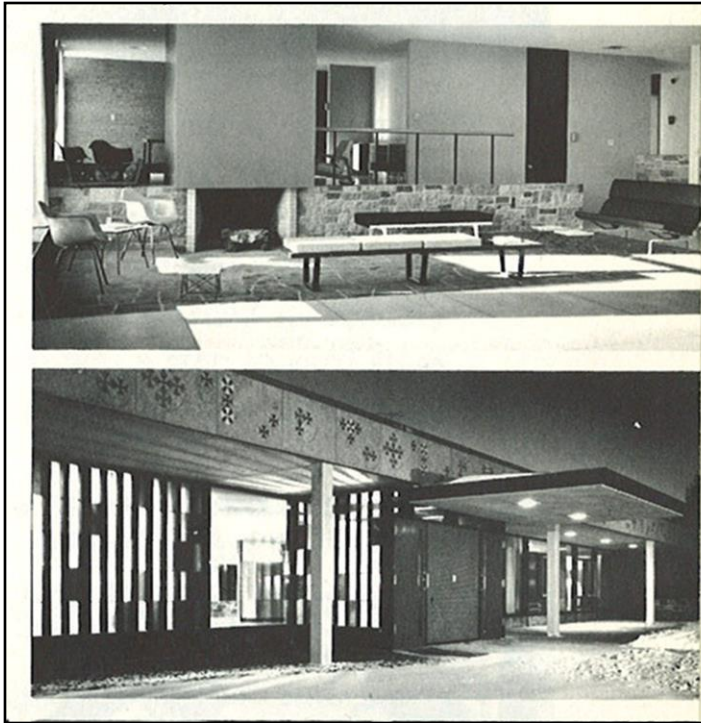
SBM.17d01 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/489>



**With a new power plant in place, the former power house, Loretto, was renovated and rented to the college for the Education Department and, as enrollment grew, student housing.**

Education Department moved to Loretto Hall (1963)

SBM.17d02 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/490>



**Construction of the Mary Hall Commons and dorms in the late 1950s marked the beginnings of a “boom” at CSB**

Expansion begins with Mary Commons



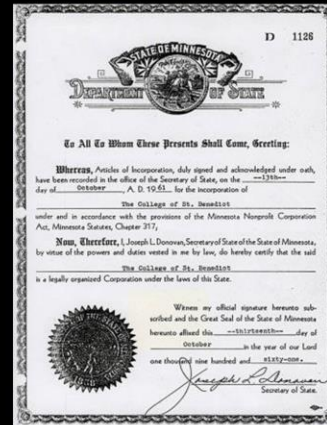
Mary Commons – early photos



Aurora Hall opened in 1956



As its enterprises expanded, the Convent (now Monastery) and its hospitals were separately incorporated from the College, in 1961

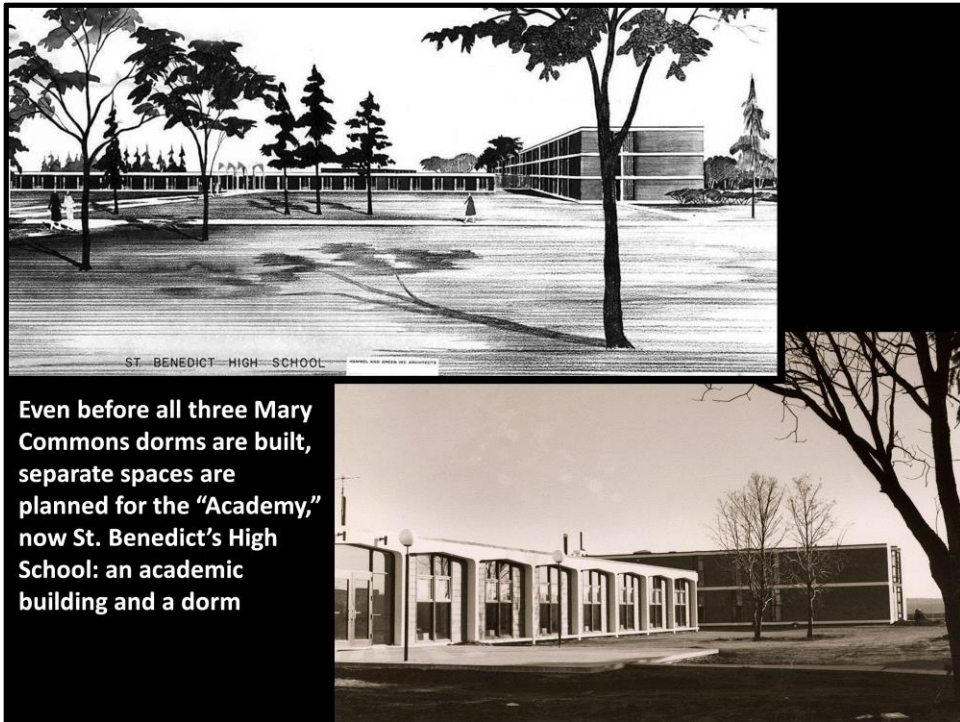


Aurora Hall in 1956; CSB is separately incorporated from the Monastery in 1961 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/485> SBM.17b04 Aerial view of the completed Mary Hall in 1957

From the 1969-70 Combined Catalog, p. 8: In 1913, the institution expanded its program to include a junior college course. The corporation was then changed to Saint Benedict's College and Academy. Two years later it introduced a full collegiate curriculum. By 1917 it had granted its first academic degree. Eventually the high school and college programs of study were placed under separate administrations and teaching faculties. Along with the division came another new name. In 1927, the College, as an independent unit, adopted its present, official name, The College of Saint Benedict. In 1961, the College was separately incorporated for the first time; its affairs placed under the direction of a seven-member Board of Directors, composed of the Mother Prioress, Sub-prioress, Treasurer, and Procurator of Saint Benedict's Convent and the president, Academic Dean and Dean of the Students of the College.



Aurora Hall, exterior & interior



New St. Benedict's High School (1961)

SBM.17d04 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/492>

At first, when the college was established in 1913, the academy enjoyed many benefits in its close association with the college. Classrooms, faculty and enrichment programs were shared. However, as the college enrollment grew, the academy students moved into monastery quarters that were no longer needed when the Sisters raised the age-limitation for the entrance into the community's preparatory phase for community membership. With the physical separation, the academy experienced fewer opportunities for sharing with college. The separation of academy and college was completed with the building of a new high school, an academic building and residence hall, in 1961.



High School (later Henrita Academic Building – HAB) and its dorm



**Needed next, and badly: a real gym**  
*No more playing around pillars!*

**St. Ben's builds a gym in 1961**



New (2<sup>nd</sup>) Gym built in 1961

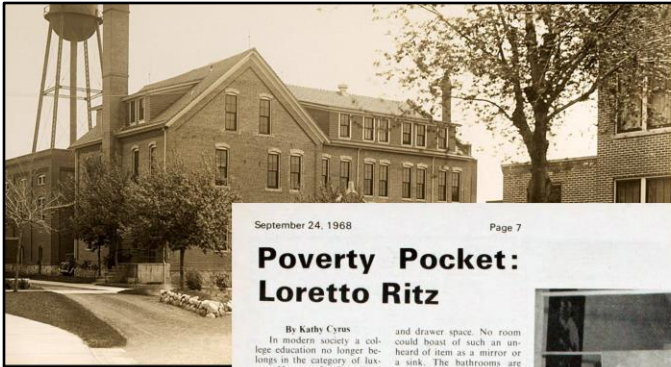


Two more dorms are added to Mary Commons:

Regina in 1963,  
Corona in 1969—  
*late 1969...*



Regina & Corona Halls are built



**Remember Loretto Hall, the former power house, renovated and rented to the college?**

September 24, 1968

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## Poverty Pocket: Loretto Ritz

By Kathy Cyrus

In modern society a college education no longer belongs in the category of luxury. Here at St. Benedict's the increasing demands of more and more students are also being felt. Among the primary difficulties encountered when large number of students invade the campus is, of course, housing. To meet this need, St. Ben's opened up Loretto Hall as a student dorm for the first time this year.

Loretto Hall, previously a sisters' residence, is located above the Education Department. For this reason, residents of the second floor enjoy the luxury of carpeted rooms and halls. No not so our third floor neighbors, however, and you can rest assured that anyone from second floor Loretto will testify to the fact that all third floor people must be hyperactive or very clumsy!

Up to this point, life in Loretto would seem to be very good. Some of the juniors and seniors who helped prepare the dorm for occupancy nicknamed it "The Ritz." However, we who reside there are more inclined to go along with our own name - "The Pock-

et" and drawer space. No room could boast of such an unheard of item as a mirror or a sink. The bathrooms are most convenient if you enjoy waiting three hours for a bathtub as showers are, as yet, out of the poor man's reach.

This brings us to the task of washing one's hair. At one time a routine procedure, it no longer can be classed as such. To attempt to perform this feat in the sink is sheer stupidity, as the hot water and cold water splatter from separate taps which are attached in a manner calculated to make even dampening the hair impossible.

To try another method, that of leaning over the side of the tub, means instant hospitalization for internal injuries due to the height of the tubs and crawling inside the tub means, if you have any length of hair at all, that you will have it hanging down the drain! But we are patient; we are from Loretto; we await the showers!

The wonderful aid of a cup of coffee while studying in our comfortable lounge is another item for which we expectantly await the carpenter's con-



**Oh, for the joys of simple maidenhood! Typical penthouse living in Loretto Hall. What does Park Avenue have over us?**

**"Loretto Ritz" - where all the beds are 5' 4" long**

**Too bad if you are longer!**

**"Loretto Ritz"**

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/490> and

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/492/show/490>

by Annie Ford

"Hello sunshine, this is the Ghetto." This would be the probable response one would receive if one were to call Loretto Hall, College of St. Benedict.

Loretto Hall, commonly referred to as the "Ghetto," is composed of thirty charming Bennies. They are all freshmen. It is a two-story dorm (on top of the Education building) which is more like a big house.

We are like one big happy family. We share each other's record players and radios and phone calls. Yes, phone calls! If a boy (on some rare oc-



## Ghetto Girls

**Corona Hall was finally open for students in November, 1969 (though that didn't mark the end of Loretto's days as a dorm)**

**Loretto was razed in the early 1980s to make room for the expansion of the Sacred Heart Chapel.**



"Ghetto Girls Prefer Loretto to Urban Renewal" Oct. 14, 1968

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchNews/id/210/show/205>

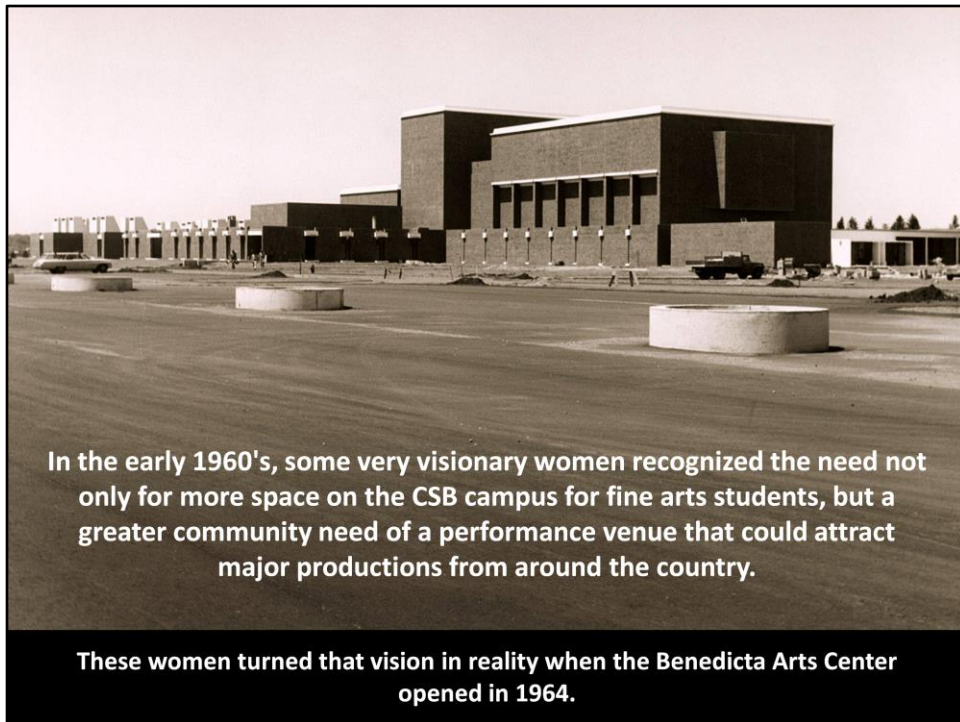


**Next need:  
a new  
venue for  
the Arts**

Teresa Hall venues for the arts

SBM04i\_\_Art\_room\_St\_Benedicts\_Academy\_St\_Joseph\_MN

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/53>



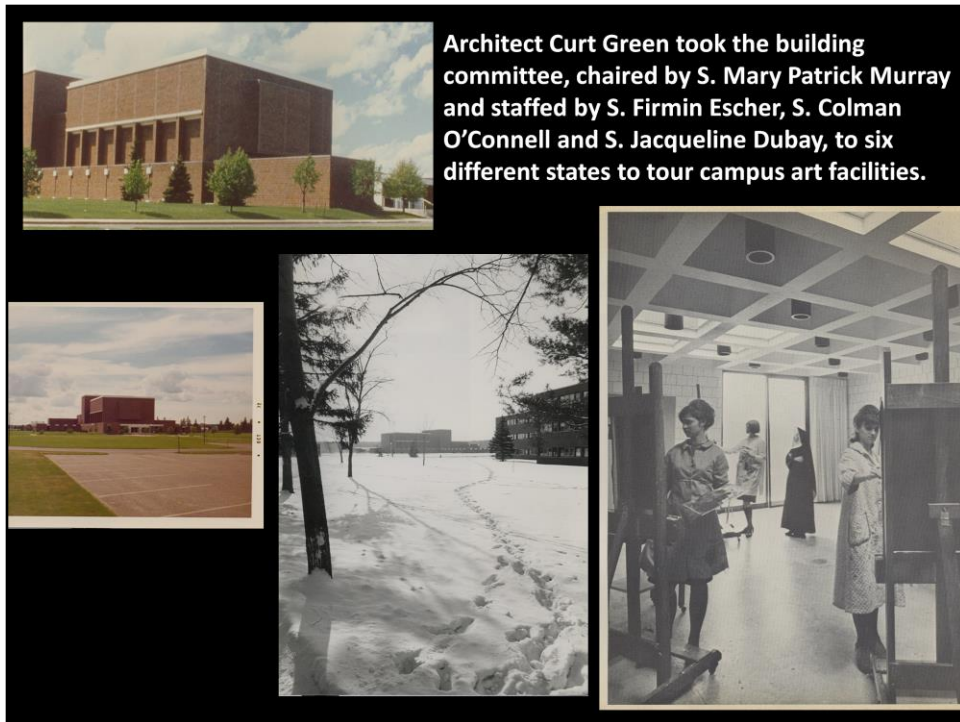
View of the exterior of the Benedicta Arts Center from the southeast  
SBM.20a03 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/507>

Just as the Sisters had surveyed the eastern and central U.S. in 1913 for a model for the building of Sacred Heart Chapel, so members of the building committee scouted the states for a model arts center. Not finding any building to match their vision, the Sisters proceeded to pioneer the construction with the help of the creative Hammel and Greene architects. After studying monastic architecture, Curtis Greene determined that the structure needed to be beautiful and formative in its materials and design but it was not to be ornamental. Every detail was planned on that principle. When completed, the BAC became a place of pilgrimage for many architects and builders in the nation who came to learn from this very successful venture.

An interesting feature of the BAC is that there are no windows in the exterior walls of the main part of the building. However, the art, music and classroom wings do have floor-to-ceiling windows or patio doors. Most of the interior lighting is achieved with skylights, glass entrances and glassed inner courts which are placed strategically as entries into the various departments throughout the building. The skylights placed above the art studios (see the extreme left of the photo) admitted light from the north. They were an interesting feature of the exterior architecture and of the interior lighting. However, they were not effective at this latitude or in this climate. Later, the leaky roof necessitated the removal of these skylights.

Though not visible on this photo, an expansive basement affords space for an ample

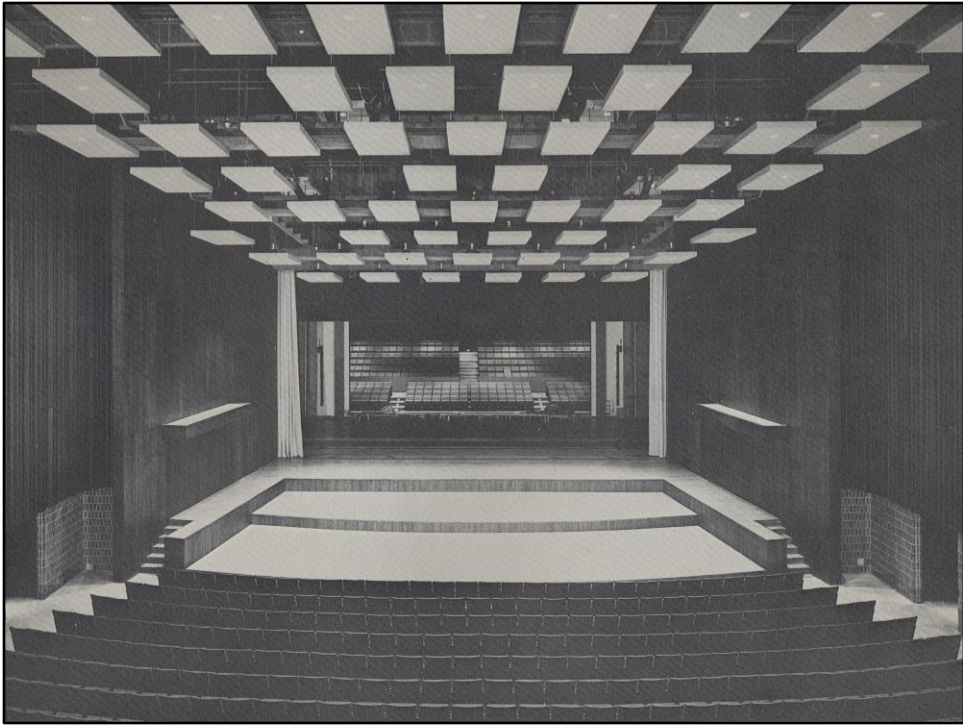
theater arena, the college museum and storage rooms



Saint Benedict's Today, Fall 1997 Issue: It all starts with a vision

In the early 1960's, some very visionary women recognized the need not only for more space on the CSB campus for fine arts students, but a greater community need of a performance venue that could attract major productions from around the country. These women turned that vision in reality with the opening of the BAC in 1964. Sister Firmin Escher-former music instructor, department chair, dean of fine arts, and academic dean at CSB-envisioned the need for an arts center that would do much more than meet the needs of the music department she had nurtured for 30 years. It would challenge the CSB community with its ambition and include consummate facilities for all the studio arts.





Inside both auditoriums of the BAC, empty

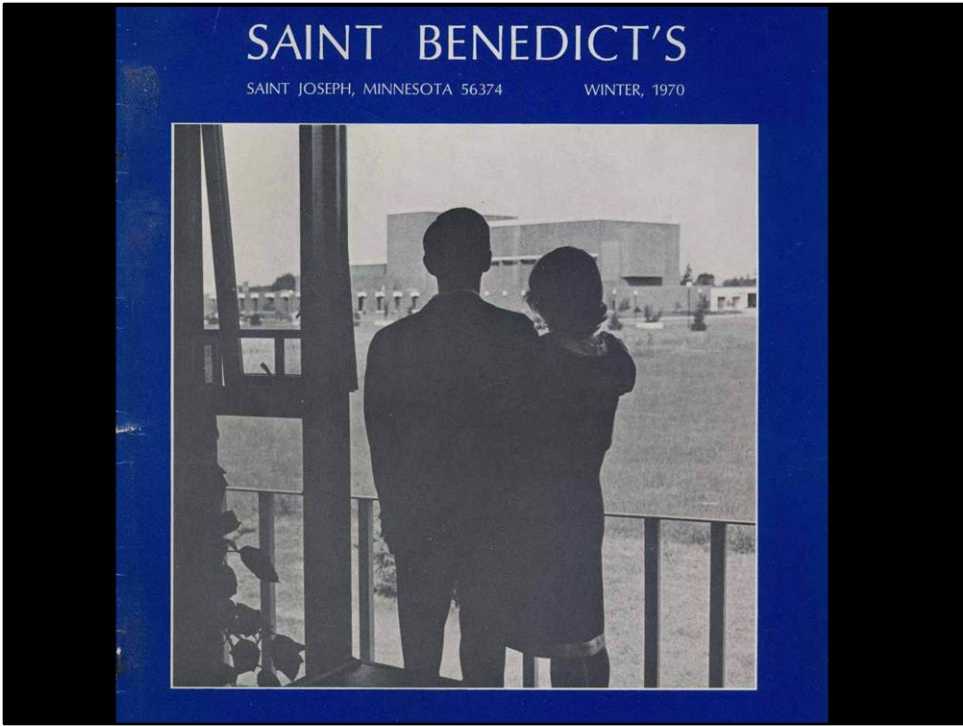


Inside both auditoriums of the BAC, full for commencement  
(undated)



1968: Stanley Idzerda becomes CSB's first lay, male president

1968: CSB's enrollment is a little over 500, SJU's is about 1500; CSB has about 65 faculty, SJU has over 130  
(statistics from the catalogs)



Idzerdas' view of the BAC



CSB aerial photo ca. 1970 looking NE

From the 1971-72 Catalog

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/1909>