

Carrie E. Ludden Hall

The Board of Education of State Normal Schools of the State of Nebraska approved construction of a new women's dormitory at Nebraska State Teachers College at Kearney at its January 14-15, 1960, meeting. At this meeting, the \$542,200 contract to build Ludden Hall was awarded to Central Contracting Corporation of Kearney. The Hall was built on the site formerly occupied by Green Terrace Hall. Construction was scheduled to be complete in January 1962, but the work went more quickly than expected, and the hall was ready for occupancy near the end of the Fall 1961 term.

Ludden Hall was a residence hall for 160 women. Its floors had central bathroom facilities, and it was the first residence hall to be air conditioned. Mrs. Maxon was the first housemother.

It was dedicated at ceremonies on February 11, 1962, attended by over 1,000 people. The ceremony also served to dedicate Cushing Coliseum, College Heights Apartments, and Randall Hall. The main speaker was Dr. George W. Rosenlof, former director of admissions at the University of Nebraska. Before the ceremony, more than 3,000 people took advantage of the 80-degree weather to tour the four buildings being dedicated.

The Hall was named in honor of Carrie E Ludden, a longtime faculty member. Ms. Ludden was born in Knox, New York, and joined the faculty as a laboratory assistant in 1906. Her father, Luther P. Ludden, was a Lutheran pastor and a member of the State Board of Education which selected Kearney as the site for the Nebraska State Normal School.

Ms. Ludden holds the distinction of serving the college for 48 years, longer than any other faculty member in the institution's history. She retired from the biology faculty in 1953.

Ms. Ludden served as secretary of the Alumni Association for more than 50 years, resigning in June, 1960, to be succeeded by Warren E. Messman. During World War II she wrote personal letters to all Nebraska State Teachers College servicemen and servicewomen.

Ludden Hall went coed in 1975. In August Ludden was filled to capacity by 78 women and 40 men. Open-house hours were set at noon to 11 PM, Sunday through Thursday, and noon to 1 AM on Friday and Saturday.

Ludden Hall was razed in February 2006 to make room for Antelope Hall, which now (2009) occupies the site formerly occupied by Green Terrace Hall and then Ludden Hall. Blessing Construction of Kearney won the contract to raze the Hall. Before it was razed, Ludden Hall was used to help train Kearney firefighters. The building's furniture, doors, etc., were auctioned off on March 13, 2006, but artifacts important to the institution, such as the two lion heads that had been part of Green Terrace Hall's façade, and Ludden's Masonic cornerstone, were preserved.

Ludden Hall is reputedly haunted. The story goes that in 1963, a Ludden Hall resident, "Bobbie," was killed in a car-pedestrian accident at 11th Avenue and 26th Street after a serious lovers' spat with her boyfriend, a Theta Xi who lived in Randall Hall. Bobbie supposedly returns each year on November 4th, the anniversary of the accident to find her boyfriend. On that day in Ludden Hall, beds shake, blinds rattle, and whitish spirits are seen floating above beds. Bobbie only appears, it is said, to Theta Xi's, Theta Xi Little Sisters, or girls who are dating Theta Xi's. 1970 was the worst year for these hauntings (seven years, of course, after the supposed accident). As with most ghost stories, this tale is more colorful than accurate. There has never been a fatal car-pedestrian accident at that intersection.



Laying the Cornerstone of Ludden Hall, 1960



Ludden Hall Under Construction, 1961



Carrie E. Ludden



Ludden Hall, 1961



Ludden Hall, 1964



Ludden Hall, April 2005