

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rebekah Duffala
Lord, Aeck & Sargent
404-253-1484
rduffala@lasarchitect.com
or
Ann Kohut
Kohut Communications Consulting
770-913-9747
annielk@bellsouth.net

Michigan State University's Marshall-Adams Hall Undergoes \$6 Million Historic Rehabilitation

*Historic Images Guided Architecture Firm Lord, Aeck & Sargent
in Researching 1902 Building's Original Configuration,
Inspired Schematic Design and Finishes*

EAST LANSING, Mich., Feb. 27, 2006 – Marshall-Adams Hall, one of the oldest buildings on the Michigan State University (MSU) campus, has undergone a \$6 million historic rehabilitation. The “eclectically Romanesque¹,” red-brick, granite and limestone building, constructed in 1902, is one of several buildings on the land grant university’s historic Laboratory Row, which is listed on the Michigan State Register of Historic Places.

The historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse project was undertaken by the architecture firm Lord, Aeck & Sargent, which also carried out historical research and an extensive investigation of existing conditions to understand how the building was originally configured and how it had evolved over time.

Funded by a gift from MSU trustee Randall L. Pittman and his wife Mary E. Pittman, the project included the restoration of the building’s exterior to its original appearance, restoration of

- more -

its unique and character-defining interior features, and the incorporation of new faculty offices, contemporary systems and advanced technologies.

Marshall-Adams Hall was designed as a bacteriology laboratory building by Edwin A. Bowd, an architect who created many of MSU's earliest collection of noteworthy buildings, including three² on Laboratory Row. Beginning in the mid 1940s through the late 1990s, the building underwent numerous renovations and additions to make it home first to the MSU School of Business and later, as one of two historic buildings that houses the Department of Economics, which continues as its occupant.

"It is a special kind of design firm that allows its own work to tread lightly around that of a predecessor, creating something uniquely its own while honoring the work of another," said Lou Anna K. Simon, MSU president. "That is what the architectural firm of Lord, Aeck & Sargent did at Michigan State University as it worked on Marshall-Adams Hall."

Historic images aid in research, inspire schematic design and finishes

"When we began our historical research to determine the original appearance and interior configuration of the building, we found that Marshall-Adams Hall was very much a product of a substantial 1952 renovation that had removed most of the character defining features and historic finishes," said Rob Yallop, a Lord, Aeck & Sargent preservation planner in the firm's Ann Arbor, Michigan office. "We were fortunate however that MSU had a number of historic images and narrative descriptions to facilitate our research. We also had an architectural finishes analysis conducted by Welsh Color & Conservation to determine the original interior and exterior color schemes."

Original floor plans showed that the interior spaces of Marshall-Adams Hall consisted of a central masonry core that housed temperature sensitive experimentation rooms surrounded

by circulation spaces, and classrooms and laboratories lining the exterior walls. Terry Sargent, AIA, Lord, Aeck & Sargent director of design, took his inspiration from the floor plans and historic photos to develop the interior schematic design and details.

Like the original, the rehabilitated floor plan also contains a central core housing the main egress stairs, restrooms on each floor, and an elevator to make the building ADA-accessible. Yallop noted that a second stair had been added to the building's exterior around 1945 and that Lord, Aeck & Sargent decided to move it into the core to restore the exterior envelope to its original condition.

Surrounding the new central core area are circulation and support spaces, followed by office suites lining the exterior walls. Although the ceilings vary in height up to 13 feet, the office partition walls are detailed with wood trim and have been kept to 8 feet and topped with glazed partitions to let natural light into the interior and allow the office suites to read as the original larger spaces.

Matching patterns

“In selecting materials for the interior, we again took our cues from historic photos, which showed pressed metal ceilings, wood trim elements and exposed painted brick walls,” Yallop said.

“Although the metal ceilings had long-since been removed, photos revealed a pattern that we were able to match closely with a pattern that exists today. Similarly, historic photos allowed us to distinguish the molding profiles of an old fume hood, and we took those and applied them in the design of the building's new wood trim elements,” Yallop continued.

“The finishes analysis revealed a two-tone paint scheme of dark green and white on the interior brick walls. We collaborated with the user to come up with a more acceptable palette of muted green below an off-white cream.”

Interior changes also included the preservation and rehabilitation of the main historic staircase. “When we removed plywood covering from the baluster, we uncovered an oak gothic arch design, similar to what one would expect to find in a church,” Yallop said.

The interior rehabilitation also included a complete replacement of the heating, air conditioning, fire alarm/fire protection and computer networking systems. Window air conditioning units were replaced by central air handling units that feed from the attic to the two floors and basement below.

Restoring the exterior envelope

In restoring Marshall-Adams Hall’s exterior envelope, the Lord, Aeck & Sargent team discovered through Welsh’s paint analysis that the cornice and window frames that recently had been painted white, were originally painted a brick or terra cotta color, and the window sashes had been black. “We found that the terra cotta and black color scheme was popular among turn-of-the-20th century school buildings,” Yallop said. He also noted that the original wood windows were replaced with aluminum units closely matching historic molding profiles and replicating the original pane configuration.

In replacing Marshall-Hall’s roof, Yallop said the firm also put back galvanized metal finials that had disappeared early in the building’s history. A large masonry chimney that also had been removed was replaced with one that both mimics the original design and incorporates the building’s new air intake and exhaust system.

The exterior restoration also included the removal of a 1990s addition to the rear one-story “stable” portion of the building. “By removing the addition, we were able to restore the stable’s north elevation, which included a large arched opening,” Yallop said. The stable now houses mechanical and custodial rooms and a large seminar space.

Finally, the exterior restoration included the repointing of deteriorated masonry joints and cleaning of the building's multi-colored granite base, limestone banding and red brick masonry.

The Project Team

The Marshall-Adams Hall Building project team includes:

- Lord, Aeck & Sargent (Ann Arbor, Mich., and Atlanta offices), architect
- Robert Darvas Associates (Ann Arbor, Mich.), structural engineer
- Peter Basso Associates (Troy, Mich), MEP/FP engineer
- Fitzgerald Henne Associates (Lansing, Mich.), civil/landscape architect
- Fryling Construction (Grand Rapids, Mich.), general contractor
- Welsh Color & Conservation Inc. (Bryn Mawr, Penn.), finishes analysis
- Construction Materials Consultants (Stirling, Scotland, UK), mortar analysis

About Lord, Aeck & Sargent

Lord, Aeck & Sargent is an award-winning architectural firm serving clients in scientific, academic, historic preservation, arts and cultural, and multi-family housing and mixed-use markets. The firm's core values are responsive design, technological expertise and exceptional service. Lord, Aeck & Sargent has offices in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Atlanta; and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. For more information, visit the firm at www.lordaecksargent.com.

###

¹*MSU Alumni Magazine*, Fall 2003 – “The Campus Heritage Initiative: Protecting the Irreplaceable”

²Old Botany (1892), Marshall-Adams Hall (1902), and Agriculture Hall (1909), buildings on MSU's historic Laboratory Row, were designed by Edwin A. Bowd.