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Hebeler Hall

Central Washington University

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What's in a Name? Hebeler Hall

Hebeler Hall is named to honor Amanda Hebeler, who played an integral role in the teacher training programs at CWU in its early decades. Hebeler directed the Washington State Normal School's student teaching program from 1924 to 1956, and was a professor of education from 1935 until her retirement in 1960.

Hebeler was born in Maple Grove Township, Michigan, on August 2, 1890. She graduated from Michigan State Normal School (now known as Eastern Michigan University) in 1916 and taught in the Wolverine State for several years.

In 1922, she decided to further her education and enrolled in the Teacher's College at Columbia University in New York City, earning a BS in 1924. While working at WSNS, she also continued her studies at the Teacher's College, receiving her MA in 1927.

By the early 1930s, it had become clear that Edison Hall (no longer standing), home of the student teaching programs, was no longer adequate and Hebeler began working with the school's administration on plans for a new education building.

In 1937, WSNS was granted the authority to issue four-year degrees and was renamed Central Washington College of Education. Additionally, that year the federal Public Works Administration and the Washington State Legislature appropriated funds to build a new teacher training laboratory building to replace Edison Hall.

The new structure, called the College Elementary School, was completed in 1939. It would continue to be used as a teaching lab school until 1982, when the state decided to close such instructional facilities for cost reasons.

In addition to incorporating design ideas from Hebeler, the new building boasted stained glass windows and fireplace tiles (depicting ancient printing processes and children's book characters) created by CWCE art professor Sarah Spurgeon and her students. Fireplace tiles in the Kindergarten classroom depicting Mother Goose characters were crafted by another CWCE art professor, Reino Randall.

Three years after her retirement, the College Elementary School was renamed to honor Hebeler. She continued living in Ellensburg until her death in 1969.

Hebeler Hall, which is now home of College of Humanities and Arts programs, has an architectural style that has been described as Neo-Classical Revival with Modern influence. It was designed with ten classroom suites that originally housed a nursery, Kindergarten, and grades one through six.

The floorplan of two-story Hebeler is L-shaped and it has a brick and stone exterior with interior concrete walls. In the mid-80s, the structure was substantially remodeled to modernize it and make it more useful for instructional purposes. An elevator was added in 1985 and electrical wiring was replaced in the mid-90s.

In 1966, Hebeler gave a lecture describing her Central experiences. An audio link to that talk can be found at: https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/library_lectures/1/.