History of Central College
1853 -1986
Written by Dr. William G. Wing, French Professor Emeritus of Central College.

Verified by phone call to Dr. Wing on 6/14/96.
*Credit for much of the research for the years 1853-1953 must go to Josephine F. Thostenson for her brochure, published on the occasion of the Centennial of the college, *One Hundred Years of Service.*

(To the editor: I have several points included long lists of faculty members. You may feel that these should be deleted. I included them because it was the only way in which I could possibly bring into a short history a lot of people who are really the college, the only way I could give them any credit at all! And then, if one wants to sell books, names do help.)
Since Central College has for the last seventy years been under the aegis of the Reformed Church in America, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that the college was founded, and for the first sixty-three years of its life, was guided by the Baptist Church. The early struggles of the Baptists to bring to birth a college in the wilderness which was then Iowa were the first in a long series of crises in the life of an institution which the Baptists nurtured through a puny youth; they deserve much credit.

The State of Iowa was carved out of the Wisconsin Territory in 1846; on June 5, 1847, when the region was pretty much the hunting grounds of a tribe of Indians, the Iowa Baptist Education Society was formed at Farmington. A year earlier the Baptist State Convention had appointed a committee to study the matter of founding a university at Agency City, but the Convention had promptly reversed itself. But in 1851 the Convention, meeting in Burlington, appointed another committee to try to get a university started, and this committee called for a meeting of delegates interested in education to foregather in Iowa City on April 13, 1852. The roads were bad; only a handful of people responded. That handful passed a unanimous resolution that the church should now get serious about establishing "an institution of liberal and sacred learning, under the control of the Baptist denomination." They were all for having it located at Burlington, but when the delegates had returned to their homes and the enthusiasm of the conclave had evaporated, they began to question the wisdom of setting a college down on the far eastern border of the new state. And so there was another meeting of delegates at Marion, in September, 1852, where they "resolved that this convention cannot sanction the proceedings of the educational meeting held in Iowa..."
City, April last, in locating an institution of learning." One coterie, however, maintained that the April vote was "regular and final;" they opened a university at Burlington in 1854 which continued to exist until 1901.

But while the friends of Burlington were agitating for their institution on the eastern border, the State Convention of 1852 was calling for a convention for the specific purpose of properly and methodically locating a site for a college. And such a convention was called; it met at Oskaloosa on November 10, 1852... The group determined to be less hasty, in fact very deliberate in their moves; they appointed a committee of 15 (5 of whom should constitute a quorum, for the roads were still bad) who were to visit various central points, "weighing the advantages and disadvantages connected with each point which shall offer a site, and report this to a convention to be held at Pella, Marion County, Iowa, on the first Thursday in June next, at 10 o'clock a.m." They urged every church in the state to send "a delegation of not less than three nor more than five with their pastor" to this meeting.

When the convention met on the appointed day, three of Pella's leaders, though they were not official delegates, were asked to take part: Dominie Scholte, Mr. A. E. D. Bousquet, and Professor L. Dwight. Dominie Scholte addressed the group; he offered land, some of his own wealth, and his entire cooperation if the college were located in Pella. A graduate of the University of Leyden, a persuasive speaker, a man rather indifferent to the formalities of worship, he probably determined the result of the deliberations. Both Oskaloosa and Pella presented proposals;
when these had been considered, the delegates took a cautious first step in debating a resolution that they "should locate an institution of learning at the present time." After a season of prayer, this resolution was unanimously adopted. They then took a second cautious step by debating a resolution "that this convention do now proceed to vote by ballot" as to a location. There was a season of prayer, balloting, and a declaration by the chairman that Pella was the chosen spot; the vote was made unanimous. Given the effort expended to win away from the eastern boundary as a site, it is hardly surprising that they chose to name the institution "Central" college!

Two committees were promptly formed: one to draft a constitution and articles of incorporation, the other to nominate a Board of Trustees. In due course a thirty-member Board of Trustees selected as its executive committee Dominie Scholte, president; W. Nossaman, vice-president; the Reverend I.O. Curtiss, secretary, and J. Smeink, treasurer. The predominance of Dutch names gives some clue as to Pella's involvement with the college from the beginning.

Josephine E. Thostenson, in her brochure A History of Central, 1853-1953, speaks of a "List of donations for the Baptist State University to be located at Pella, Iowa." This list first names Dominie Scholte, who gave Blocks 71 and 72, 81 and 82, constituting a considerable part of the present campus; he also gave 160 acres of land outside the city limits. At the time, this land was valued at $3360; today it would certainly be worth well over a million dollars. Various citizens made gifts of money totaling $2006, a sum which would today be equivalent to something like $17,000. And there were services promised: shoemaking, masonry, tailoring, and medical attendance; "the plan for the institution when the dimensions are given," "two lessons daily in some of the following branches: German,
music, singing, science of nature, Biblical history, and geography," "first year gratis teaching in Greek, Latin, French, universal history, and philosophy." There were also materials offered: "lumber and building supplies, bricks, shingles, furniture, store-goods, and wooden shoes." Services and materials were valued at $2383. Shall we say that they would be worth at least $20,000 today? As summarized in the "List of Donations" land, money, services and materials were worth $7749. In order to appreciate Pella's support of the college, let us convert those 1853 dollars to 1986 dollars; the total would come to something like $65,000. And when one reflects that at the time, there were 550 families in Lake Prairie Township (1856 tally), it becomes apparent that the town was backing the college to the tune of $120 per family!

Because the trustees hoped that eventually departments of law and medicine would be added to the liberal arts, they chose to call Central in the corporate charter a university; actually, that word has never been dropped from the official title, but since those departments were never added, it became an embarrassment and was eventually dropped from use except in the abbreviation CUI, Central University of Iowa.

Ordinarily one learns to walk before he learns to run; there were few young people in Pella prepared to enter college classes, thus the first advertisements were of the academic department of Central University. The academy was housed in a building four blocks west of the town square on Washington Street; the old brick house of two stories is still there, housing The Strawtown Country Store. The Reverend Emanuel H. Scarff was hired as the first principal, with Miss Julia Tolman of the Monticello Seminary, and Mr. Caleb Caldwell of Marietta College as his assistants.
Dr. Scarff wrote, "The school furniture was still growing in the Des Moines timber, yet in three weeks after our arrival in Pella, the timber was cut, drawn to the mill, sawn into lumber, made into two-seated desks and placed in the school room." Classes opened on October 8, 1854. Dr. Scarff again, "The enrollment the first day was only 37.... This small beginning was, however, increased almost daily, 'til at the close of the term our enrollment had attained 73. Though most of our students were young men and women, they ranged down from these classes to beginners in the common branches. In those days, school privileges were of a very inferior nature. Many teachers did not pretend to teach English grammar, and many who did make the pretense did it with the dictionary ever open before them in order to determine the part of speech a word might happen to be marked."

In that same year of 1854 the foundations were laid for a three-story brick building with a stone basement, located on Block 81; it would be known to later generations of students as "Old Central" and would serve until 1922, when it was destroyed by fire.

The second annual meeting of the Board of Trustees took place on June 7, 1855. One of the principal items of business was a proposal that an endowment of $50,000 be raised. Unfortunately no very precise technique for doing so was suggested; a half century later this roseate proposal had not yet been carried out.

And yet there were men of wealth in Iowa who, in spite of difficult financial times, wanted to support the college. The Honorable J. K. Hornish of Keokuk was convinced that his pastor, Dr. Elihu Gunn, would make an excellent first president, for Gunn was both learned and vocal in his advocacy of Central. Mr. Hornish gave $10,000 to endow a president's chair, provided Dr.
Gunn was called to fill the position. At its annual meeting in 1857 the Board indeed elected Dr. Gunn, and in the same year he was installed as president. He served for four years, using up his own personal fortune in keeping the college solvent, so that in 1861 he finally felt obliged to resign in order to support his family; he went from the presidency to a pastorate in Mt. Pleasant.

It was under Dr. Gunn that the collegiate department was opened in 1858, and the first class graduated in 1861. The names of those graduates will appear in many chapters of subsequent Pella history: Herman F. Bouquet, J.A.P. Hampson, Alonzo F. Keables, W. J. Curtiss, Warren Olney, and H. Kellenbarger. It was under Dr. Gunn also that Amos N. Currier, Dartmouth graduate, was added to the faculty in 1857, a man "respected, admired, and loved by all," wrote one of his students. And Dr. Gunn hired Mrs. I. J. Stoddard, a graduate of the Troy Female Academy, N.Y., and a returned missionary from India as principal of the Ladies' Department. Her husband, Dr. Stoddard, was for some years closely associated with Dr. Gunn and the trustees.

But the panic of 1857 threatened to put the light of the lamp of learning completely out; the trustees thought they were going to have to close the college, for there were no funds left, despite the sacrifices of Dr. Gunn and others. Whereupon Dr. Scarff, Dr. Stoddard and Professor Currier took the institution into their own hands, collected what tuition they could, paid the running expenses, and divided the meager remainder amongst themselves. Other larger colleges closed their doors; the three men kept the flame alive; it was not the last time that heroic measures were to be called for! Dr. Scarff was urged to accept the presidency of the college; he modestly replied that he was a teacher, not a president. So the troika Scarff-Stoddard-Currier managed as best they could for five years, until 1866. Dr. Scarff in his Reminiscences says
that the college owed about $12,000, and that some creditors were pressing for their money. "Reverend Stoddard took the field, and traveled more than 6,000 miles, mostly in his own conveyance" looking for money. "Prof. Currier, who acted as secretary and treasurer, also gave his time and one hundred fifty dollars in money saved from his scanty salary....So successful were the efforts that in the spring of 1866 the debt was all paid... We may add here that the college sustained her debt freedom four years."

But in the spring of 1867 the Stoddards felt that they should return to the mission field in India. Prof. Currier received an invitation to the chair of Latin at the State University; he accepted. Prof. Scarff wrote, "This so diminishes our teaching force that we are compelled to confine our labors to preparatory work.... These last years (1865-1871) may be termed a period of contradictions: a period of overwhelming indebtedness, of entire freedom from debt and again in debt; a period of darkness and doubt, and of... buoyant hope; a period of an experienced and able faculty, and of the teaching force reduced to a mere skeleton."

This was the era of the Civil War. Reverend Scarff wrote, "The first call of the President for volunteers found a response in the college, and before the summer had passed, about twenty of our boys had enlisted. This beginning was, the next season, followed by a general stampede to the front, till not a young man of age to bear arms was left, except two; the one of these had a withered hand and the other was minus an arm. It thus happened that one hundred and twenty of our boys were found on the army roll....Death claimed twenty-four of them....In 1863 we graduated a class of three, five in 1864, and in 1865, two"

After the war a marble slab was dedicated to the memory of those
men who lost their lives; the original slab was broken in 1922 when Old Central burned, but a replica was presented by George A. Jewett of the class of 1862. It stands today in Central Hall.

The years 1871 to 1891 were not particularly kindly to Central. To be sure, enrollment increased as men came back from war; and a succession of dedicated men, men of learning and ability, occupied the president's chair. But these men were from the pulpit; they had some slight experience with administration, but hardly the training in the ways of the world which would have pulled the college from its almost constant lack of funds. From 1871 to 1881 the Reverend Lewis A. Dunn, D. D., originally from Fairfax, Vermont, struggled with finances, resigning because of weariness and advanced age.

For three years, from 1881 to 1884 the Reverend George W. Gardner, D.D., put his shoulder to the wheel; he and his chancellor, Mr. T. E. Balch, made it their goal to raise an endowment of $100,000, but though they did pull the college out of debt, they did not manage to set up the hoped-for endowment. After an interim acting-presidency of Professor Tripp, in 1885 the Reverend Daniel Reed, L.L.D., took the helm for a single year. Most unfortunately, Dr. Reed became interested in the proposal of a group, some of whom were real-estate promoters, to found yet another college in Des Moines. Dr. Reed resigned when it was proposed that Central be made a feeder to this new Des Moines University, a short-lived institution of no very great reputation. Central was saved from complete eclipse by the vigorous action of Dr. I.J. Stoddard, who secured an injunction from the circuit court, "restraining the board of trustees from disposing of or transferring any of the property of said university, either real or personal, to the University of Des Moines.

In 1886 Dr. Dunn was persuaded to return to office. During the
two years of his second term he set up the Biblical Department, persuaded that many a church which could not afford a seminary graduate would find in a well-prepared bachelor of arts a lay reader of assistance. Dr. Dunn died in office, on Thanksgiving Day, 1888.

For many years the president's home on campus bore his name. The Reverend Seth J. Axtell took over for two years, being succeeded by the Reverend John Stuart, Ph. D., previously pastor of the Pella Baptist Church and also Professor of Mental Science and Sacred Literature in the college.

By 1890 things were looking up. As Dr. Stuart took over, the number of students had become great enough that the administration decided to build a ladies dormitory. It was opened for use in 1891, named for a former principal of Central's Music Department, Professor J. B. Cotton. Cotton Hall was described as having neat rooms, "commodious and well ventilated, planned for the health and comfort of the students. This building is heated by furnace and lighted by electricity....In the building are twenty-two rooms besides the dining-room and kitchen...Table board is here furnished for students of both sexes. The dining-room will seat seventy-five boarders."

From the catalogue of 1896: "Cotton Boarding Hall - Rooms 30 to 40 cents per week for each student, two young ladies in a room. Board in Cotton Boarding Hall, per week $1.75. The rooms in Cotton Hall are furnished with all necessary articles except bed clothing and towels. Boarders provide their own napkins." The same catalogue informs us that tuition was $8.00 per term with incidentals at $3.00.

Cotton Hall had a front porch, topped by a railing. The young ladies were wont to hang blankets on the balustrade, then take sunbaths behind that screen. Legend has it that on occasion daring young men, scaling a ladder, poured water on the damsels, which probably did not utterly displease them. Cotton Hall burned to
the ground in 1923; for years the Cotton Hall Lot was vacant. Then in 1941 the college built three houses for members of the faculty at 1000 Peace Street and at 503 and 505 West Second. Two other houses were later built on the same lot by private initiative.

The years 1890 to 1900 were years of enthusiasm frequently capped by discouragement. Under Dr. Stuart (1890-1895), not only was Cotton Hall built, but the foundations for a multi-purpose building were laid; it was to become known as the Y.M.-Y.W.C.A. Building, or as the Auditorium, housing a gymnasium—a few classes met there eventually, auditorium and library; but though the building was started in 1893, funds were so insufficient that it was not finished until 1901. Under the Reverend Arthur B. Chaffee, D.D., (1895-1899), Professor A. B. Bush, able teacher of Greek, joined the faculty and the enrollment continued to be high, but once again the Baptists debated the advisability of closing Central in favor of Des Moines University; a committee of eleven was appointed to look into the matter, no very clear definition of its powers being given. Dr. Chaffee maintained that the committee was empowered only to act with authority to promote the welfare of both the colleges. Under Professor Bush, who served as interim president (1899-1900), the debate concerning unification continued. And it persisted during the presidency of Dr. L.A. Garrison (1900-1909).

Dr. Lemuel A. Garrison, D.D., was a Central graduate of 1896. Intensely loyal to the college, he made his views concerning unification known in no uncertain terms. "...It is useless to discuss and utter folly to dream about the ideal — if it be ideal — condition, had there been but one Baptist college in our state. We have two colleges. Both have their friends and strong adherents....Two Christian colleges of the same denomination can work side by side in the same state without
trying to take each other's life blood." And evidently Dr. Garrison worked to very good purpose, for two years after he had become president, he could write, "The movement to secure twenty-six thousand additional endowment for our college is progressing well. Only about four thousand dollars needs yet to be raised to secure the entire amount. And the places are in sight where it is believed this balance needed can be secured. Soon after commencement was over, Mr. P. P. Beard, Esq., of Pella, surprised us by offering his entire observatory, including telescope, transit, spectroscope and clock, costing him nearly $4,000, on condition that we start the Normal course this fall and build a president's house within the year... The outlook for our college's future was never brighter. If the alumni and friends rally now, the future is assured." Three years later masons and carpenters began building Jordan Hall (1905), and Dunn Cottage, the home of a number of presidents, was erected in 1906.

The meeting of the Board of Trustees in June, 1906, was up-beat. Andrew Carnegie had offered the College $20,000 provided Central would raise an additional $40,000. This would give the college an endowment of $100,000; the Board agreed unanimously that the $40,000 must be raised. Student spirit ran so high over this news that in less than an hour's time students subscribed $1250 to help in the effort. Pella was a town of 4,000, but it was prosperous, and the Commercial Club adopted the fund-raising for endowment as something to be pushed.

The Baptists held their State Convention at Grinnell, on October 26, 1907. The Pay reported, "...seven good men... became personally responsible to see $60,000 paid into the treasury of Central College within the next year, if the Baptist State College is located at Pella." So the nagging debate continues: two colleges
The Executive Committee of the College on November 8, 1907, voted to notify Mr. Carnegie that the college had met his terms and was ready to receive his $20,000 gift. And they made plans to raise an additional $100,000.

During Dr. Garrison's presidency, two familiar names are added to the roster of the staff. Mr. H. J. Vanden Berg became treasurer in 1900. He was to serve in that capacity for 41 years, always scrupulously exact in his bookkeeping, sometimes a chary advisor about the expenditure of precious monies. Many people alive at this writing can remember his frosty smile, evidence of a warm heart.

And in 1905 Miss Elizabeth A. Graham, a Central graduate, joined the faculty as an English teacher. Later, in 1914, she also assumed the duties of Dean of Women. For 27 years, until 1937, when she resigned, she was a gracious presence in her classroom and as advisor to her women. Graham Hall, which stands as a tribute to her memory, was built in part during her regime, the main body being completed in 1917.

When Dr. Garrison resigned in 1909, after nine years of successful work, the college had three classroom buildings: Central Hall, the Auditorium-library-gymnasium (later to become Ludwig Library), and Jordan Hall. A home for presidents, Dunn Cottage, stood next to the Auditorium; at some distance from the main campus was Cotton Hall Dormitory. Fifty-four years after that first proposal that an endowment of $50,000 be raised, there was an actual endowment of $100,000. Despite the rather constant dithering over the University of Des Moines, Central was making progress.

Upon Dr. Garrison's resignation, the Board appointed the Reverend John L. Seyl, Ph. D., as acting president, and gave him full status as president in 1911. It was in that same year of 1911 that
the college lost a real friend when Dr. B. F. Keables died. He had been a member of the Board of Trustees since the college was founded, and he had been vice president of the institution for many of those years.

Dr. John W. Bailey, Ph. D., who succeeded Dr. Boyl as president, was the right man for his times: he ably oversaw the transference of the college from the Baptist to the Reformed Church. At the time of that historic meeting in Grinnell of the Baptist State Convention when seven men had made their pledge to see the endowment pushed to completion, provided always Central was to be the beneficiary, the alumni of Central had regarded this as a moral victory; however, the report to the convention recommending that there be one Baptist college, located at Pella, lacked the necessary two-thirds majority. So the friends of Des Moines University considered it a moral victory for them. Seven years later, on April 14, 1914, "the Board of Education of the Northern Baptist Convention brought to the Board of Trustees of Central College a proposition looking toward the unification of Baptist educational interests in Iowa. The proposition involved the transfer of the local property of Central College to the Reformed Church." The Central College Board replied that for the moment this did not seem possible, though they would keep an open mind on the subject. A year later, in June, 1915, the Executive Committee informed the Board of Trustees that alumni and friends of both colleges thought that something really should be done, and asked for instructions. This resulted in a two-day conference in Chicago, October 18 and 19, 1915, with representatives of the Board of Education of the Northern Baptist Convention, the Board of Education of the Reformed Church, two ministers and two lay people representing the constituency of the Reformed Church, members of the Board of Trustees, and President Bailey. The Board of Trustees voted unanimously to transfer the
college to the Reformed Church. The vote meant that grounds, buildings, and equipment would go to the Reformed Church; endowment would go to the American Baptist Education Society; the Board would cooperate in founding a single Baptist College in Iowa. When this vote was communicated to the Board of Education of the Reformed Church, that body voted unanimously to approve the general proposal, and made itself responsible for the control and maintenance of the college. Thus Central was once more without an endowment!

The report of the Board of Education to the General Synod of June 20, 1916, summarizes matters in these terms: 'One-third of the students are from Reformed Church families. The total enrollment in 1914 and 1915 was 166, including 37 in the summer school. There is a faculty of 21 members, 13 men and 8 women. The average expenses of the last five years have been just under $20,000. The income from tuition and fees has been slightly over $7,000, leaving $13,000 to be secured from endowments and contributions. The equipment consists of a campus near the heart of Pella, of eight acres, on which are five buildings, the whole conservatively valued at $110,000. These buildings are deemed ample for the present. In case the College is accepted the pressing need would be an endowment of at least $200,000, as required by the laws of Iowa.' Synod was well impressed; a temporary Board of Control was organized on January 25, and steps were taken looking to the continuance of the work of the coming year, to the securing of an endowment of $200,000, and a fund of $30,000 for the maintenance of the college for two years.

Generally speaking, the Synod judged that since Hope College was 500 miles distant there would be little interference between the two colleges; there was no Reformed Church college west of the Mississippi, in an area where there was a heavy concentration of Reformed Church members, many of whom needed to be Americanized. Even though accepting the college meant an added burden, it was
considered a very advantageous move. And so, after 63 years under the aegis of the Baptist Church, Central had come under the control of the Reformed Church. There was very little change in the actual work done. President J. W. Bailey, Dean Elizabeth Graham, Treasurer H.J.Vanden Berg, and several members of the faculty continued in their positions through the next year, and helped give continuity to the ethos and ambience of the campus.

The Reverend B. F. Brinkman, chairman of the temporary board of control at the time of the transfer, wrote that "...the school will continue to be nonsectarian, but Christian in the broadest sense possible, to comply with the teachings of the Master, 'whosoever will may come,' and enjoy the blessings of a Christian institution.... We believe the future of 'Old Central' to be brighter than ever because of the added strength of the new constituency." With the incubus of that perennial debate over the placement of the Baptist college now removed from their backs, the administrators had every reason to look forward to an easier row to hoe. But Providence chastizes those whom it loves.

Three stirring men who were to give the rest of their professional lives to the college were appointed in that year of transfer: Dean Henry W. Pietenpol to teach mathematics and physics, Professor Thomas H. Liggett to teach chemistry and biology, and Professor Frederick S. Bosch, to teach German and Greek. All three were kindly men, respected by their students, wise of counsel in times of stress.

Just eight months after the transfer, on the morning of February 28, 1917, the Auditorium Building, containing the library, gymnasium, and chapel, was largely destroyed by fire. That same afternoon the executive committee met to make emergency plans: chapel services would be held in Central Hall, concerts and recitals in First Church, organ practice and recitals in Second Church, and 8,000 volumes had
been saved as a nucleus of a future library. The committee went on to appoint committees to raise funds for buildings to replace the facilities destroyed. At the Board meeting the following June, the Reverend M. J. Hoffman, D. D., was appointed president, Dr. Bailey having resigned. Dr. Huffman, always a resolute man, saw to it that in October, 1917, a financial campaign was launched to obtain funds for two buildings: a women's dormitory, and a gymnasium-chapel-music-center.

The women's dormitory, eventually to be known as Graham Hall, was rushed to completion just in time to be used for a brief time at the end of World War I by the Student Army Training Corps. Mrs. Carrie Halbert, for many years matron of the dormitory, described several times for the writer the conditions under which they began serving meals to the Training Corps: little enough equipment, no adequate stoves, and planks laid down in the kitchen as walkways, since the cement floor had not been laid.

It should be noted that Central sent 106 men into the service of the country.

Ludwig Library was constructed upon the ruins of the Auditorium Building; the observatory which Mr. Beard had presented to the college in 1902 was mounted atop the new library, and its round dome, together with the large semi-circular windows, formed a profile familiar to many generations of students until 1975, when Ludwig was transformed into the Arts Building.

The new gymnasium was slower in coming; largely through the efforts of the Pella Chamber of Commerce it was dedicated on October 21, 1921. When it was finally erected it contained, as the Executive Committee had desired, a temporary chapel at one end and music practice rooms, together with two studios, at the other end.

Scarcely was that accomplished when Old Central Hall burned. A bit after midnight on June 14, 1922, the fire was discovered. It had made such rapid progress that the firemen made no effort to save
but concentrated on keeping the flames from the nearby gymnasium. Five pianos, office supplies, and furniture were destroyed along with the building; the loss was set at $20,000. In memory of a building which since 1855 had been the very heart of the college, some of the best foundation stones were fashioned into a ponderous bench, at one end of which was placed the bell which had hung in its tower, and which had rung students in and out of class from 1857 until 1914, when a bolt of lightening had silenced it; bell and bench are located immediately in front of the original entrance to Old Central.

The General Synod of the Reformed Church was in session in Pella when Old Central burned; one can hardly imagine a more dramatic demonstration of need to act! They promptly passed a resolution to expand the faculty and endowment, and a year later, in 1923, Synod passed a similar resolution, calling for better salaries, fuller teaching staff, and a building to replace Old Central, which for them meant a sum of not less than $400,000.

In 1925 President Hoffman, who had surely left his mark upon the institution, resigned to accept a position in the New Brunswick Theological Seminary. The Reverend John Wesseling, D. D, pastor of the First Reformed Church in Pella since 1913, was selected to succeed him. Classes were growing rapidly. Jordan Hall, which was by now the only classroom building, was quite jammed at most hours; another building was becoming imperative. And so in 1926 the Executive Committee set up a campaign to raise $100,000 for classrooms. The committee had hoped that students might be willing to raise $4,000; one of the most gratifying aspects of the campaign was that they pledged $6,000! The campaign was progressing so satisfactorily that in June of 1926 ground was broken for New Central. But then construction had to be suspended during the winter 1926-27; the farming economy, so booming during World War I and just afterward,
was slowing rapidly to a bust, and Iowa was finding it hard to make contributions. Only the first floor was put into use in September of 1928; the second floor was opened in 1929, and not until 1935 was the third floor opened. Nature added her stringencies to those of the general economy, for the summers of 1934 and 1935 were hotter and drier than any that men could remember; farmers were cutting limbs from trees to feed their stock. It was something of a miracle that New Central got completed at all.

In 1928 the Board voted to drop the Academy.

The Synod of 1923 had approved the establishment of an endowment for Central; by 1929, $200,000 had been raised, but if the college were ever to meet the requirements of the North Central Association of Colleges, she would need an endowment of $500,000. In the face of an on-coming depression, the Executive Committee entered upon a campaign to secure the additional $300,000; it was slow going.

A systematic appeal to the alumni seemed indicated. An Alumni Association had been formed as early as 1878, but it had been dormant. In June, 1929, the Board of Trustees had sought to increase its prestige by adding three alumni to the membership of the Board, and now, in 1932, William P. Bosch, son of Professor Bosch, began a reorganization of the association; in 1935 he was elected Alumni Secretary, he and his wife giving their services without pay until 1939, when Miss Martha Firth was made Director of Alumni Relations. Miss Firth, a graduate of 1893, had been hired as a teacher of history and social studies in 1894; she was another of those faculty members who helped hold the college together at the time of the transfer. She continued to teach until 1942. Living alumni were not numerous; for years the index of their names and addresses was kept in an old shoebox; with the Great Depression clamping down more and more tightly, neither the alumni nor the churches were able to help the college as generously as they had done. Treasurer H. J. Vanden Berg had to report a deficit.
of $5,000 in the current-expense fund at the March, 1933, meeting of the Board of Trustees, and he saw further deficits looming.

President Wesselink resigned in 1934. He had been a member of the Board of Trustees since 1917, and president since 1925. Once more he was one of that long series of ministers who stepped from the pulpit into the presidency with little enough administrative training. He was a devoted man, but it was unfortunate that the all-devouring depression found him in office at a moment when a more resourceful man was called for.

That man of adequate training and great personal resources was found in Dr. Irwin J. Lubbers, Ph. D. He had for a short time been a teacher at his alma mater, Hope; he had been a short-term missionary in India; when he was chosen as the next president, he was teaching at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin. At a time when such degrees were relatively infrequent, he had earned his doctorate in college administration. The Board of Education of the Reformed Church requested that he visit Pella to investigate the chances of saving the institution from the burning. He was fond of relating that he stopped in a Pella gas station, where he remarked that he understood that there was a college in town. "Yea, but it'll shut down any day." And still when he visited the buildings he thought, "It would be a shame to let that place close its doors!"

Enrollment was small, faculty salaries had not always been paid in the closing year of Dr. Wesselink's administration. Dr. Lubbers promised that he would make salaries at least fifty percent of what they had been, and that they would always be paid, even if he had to borrow money at the banks. Faculty had become accustomed to receiving pay directly from their students in terms of potatoes, chickens, meat. Dr. Lubbers declared that that was no way to run a college, and that such practices should cease. He unabashedly set out to
increase the enrollment, admitting some students who would have seemed poor prospects to an Ivy League administrator. In 1928-29 there were 160 students; in the third year of his administration there were 275. He set up an earn-your-way program, with students acting as waiters, janitors, teaching aides, or working in the Student Industries making ironing boards, spark arrestors, folding tables and many other items on contract with outside inventors and developers. And he encouraged students with very limited resources, but with promising talents, to come to Central. The college today looks with pride on a number of very successful ministers, teachers, scientists who, in those days, arrived on campus with a few dollars in their pockets.

He was sure that the Eastern Church, particularly in New York City, should be able to help more than it was accustomed to do; he spent many weeks trying to sell Central College to prestigious people. Then, finding the doors closed to him, in 1937 he put his organizational ability behind a cooperative effort of all the educational institutions of the church making an appeal to the denomination at large, Central's specific goal being a more adequate chapel.

In 1938 the children of Mr. A. N. Kuyper, through a generous gift, made possible the regrading of the athletic field on the western edge of the campus, the erection of a grandstand on the field, and the purchase of the greater part of Block 73; Central was starting to expand. At commencement in 1939 Dr. Lubbers was able to announce that a new chapel was now assured, by contributions from many donors, and a particularly substantial gift from the Reverend and Mrs. P. D. Douwstra, who ultimately gave a total of $100,000 to the school, some of it entailed as an annuity. Ground was broken on that same day, May 30th. Seats were "sold" for ten dollars each, the members of the class of 1940 pledging twenty-five seats, provided they could graduate from the new chapel. Two friends of the college, with help from the Ladies Auxiliary, gave a Steinway piano;
hymnals were provided by a Reformed Church family of New Jersey; carved rosewood pulpit furniture was a gift of the Katpadi Industrial Institute of the Arcot Mission in India. Douwstra Chapel was dedicated at the 1940 commencement. Now known as Douwstra Auditorium, it saw thousands of worship services until the building of the present Chapel in 1981. The Kimball organ, delivered to the chapel in July, 1942, was one of the last to leave the factory before the OPA ordered the company to stop production so that such metals as are used in making organ pipes might be devoted to war uses.

Just before World War II, the enrollment had risen to 371 students. By that time Dr. Lubbers had assembled a faculty of twenty-three full-time teachers, amongst whom were such people as Herbert S. Van Wyk, Herbert G. Mentink, Cunera Van Emmerik, William Vander Lugt, Tunis W. Prins, Richard A. Tysaeling, William G. Wing, Thomas H. Liggett, Frederick Bosch, S. Bert Baron, Laura Nanes, Cornelius Evers, Mary Phillips Street, Mary D. Liggett, Martha Firth.

Beginning in February, 1941, the college sponsored a Collegiate Private Flight Training program under the supervision of the Civil Aeronautics Administration. Actual flight lessons were under the supervision of Mr. Earl Pohlmann. Then after Pearl Harbor plunged the United States into war, the Navy Department approved Central for a Naval Flight Training program. A number of faculty members fitted themselves to offer courses in meteorology, engines, flight theory. Graham Hall became a Navy barracks. As the young men of the college went off to war, enrollment once more plummeted; the Naval school proved to be the salvation of the college for those years. Some six hundred of the alumni served in World War II.

But with Graham Hall once more a barracks, other provision had to be made for women students; a number of homes were purchased for the purpose: Firth, Aschenbrenner, Drusilla Stoddard, Menning, and Jennie Kuyper; they proved to be popular with the girls.
Perhaps the accomplishment in which Dr. Lubbers could take greatest satisfaction was his securing accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The endowment had inched up; the faculty was as strong as it had ever been; Dr. Lubbers decided to try for it. For weeks the whole staff were engaged in gathering statistics and writing reports. The examiners were "...very much impressed with the fact that this is an institution which knows where it has been; it is aware of where it is; and has intelligently based plans for the future." They were not completely happy with either the library holdings, or the endowment, but on the other hand said privately to the administration that they wondered why application had not been made years earlier. Membership was granted in 1942.

After eleven years as president, Dr. Lubbers resigned in June, 1945, to accept the presidency of Hope College. There were those faculty members who were sure that Central could not survive without him, so much had he accomplished. There is little doubt that without him the college might well have perished. He, on the other hand, was confident that he had worked to such good purpose that the institution was now firmly on its feet and could do without him. In the interim before the selection of a new president, Dr. H.W. Pietenpol served as acting president, ably seconded by the Reverend F. J. Vanden Berg as business manager.

Seven months later, in January, 1946, the Reverend Gerrit T. Vander Lugt, Ph. D., who was then president of Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, was invited to become the sixteenth president of Central. His decision to accept the invitation was no doubt influenced in some measure by the presence of Dr. William Vander Lugt, on the faculty; on February 18, 1946, Dr. Gerrit was inaugurated at a special chapel service.
At the student registration of the following September, enrollment rose to an all-time high of 518; more student housing was obviously needed. A dormitory of no great pretensions was built, capable of housing sixty men; through a very clever architectural transformation, this was, in the 1970's, to become the home of the languages. The college also set up a Barracks-and-Trailer Town for married G. I.'s on land just north of the present Learning Resource Center. And in 1947 a north wing was added to Graham Hall. Finally, in 1950-51, Gaass Hall, a men's dormitory with a capacity of 160, was built and named in honor of a family which had over many years been stoutly supportive in many ways. P. G. Gaass and his son George G. Gaass had been members of the Board of Trustees for a total of ninety-four years; from 1906 to 1933 they served together. Dominie Scholte was the grandfather of Mrs. George Gaass; he too had served on the board. All three men had made very generous contributions of money and land; Gaass Hall is on ground originally given by Dominie Scholte, later sold, and then once again given by Mr. and Mrs. George Gaass. There was every good reason to commemorate the family name. And let it be added that a scion of the family, Peter G. Gaass, is at this writing Chairman of the Board.

In the measure that a still-modest budget would allow, Dr. Vander Lugt made a number of plant improvements: he set up Aachenbrunner Cottage as an infirmary, with the part-time supervision of a doctor and two registered nurses; he built a greenhouse in 1950; the Physics Department was moved to the third floor of New Central; an advanced chemistry laboratory was established.

Dean Pietenpol had long felt that Central's curriculum would be improved if departments were grouped together under larger divisions, with each division offering a synthesizing course at the introductory
level. Such a curriculum revision was accomplished in the early '50's, the departments being grouped under the rubrics Humanities, Natural Sciences, History and Social Studies, Religion and Philosophy. And though many revisions of the curriculum have been carried out since, the general shape of this grouping has not been altered.

At commencement in 1952, Dr. Vander Lugt said of Dean Pietenpol, who was then retiring: "(His) record is almost unparalleled in the history of educational institutions. He has served for thirty-six years as dean and teacher under five presidents. During many of those years this college required almost super-human power, endless sacrifice and unflagging devotion. Dean Pietenpol never wavered but gave without thought of self that Central College might continue to serve the young men and women who came here. Some did not always see eye to eye with him. (What person does who needs discipline or rebuke or stern counsel?) But these people now rise up to call him blessed. Many alumni can thank Dean Pietenpol for his counsel that they became what they had it in them to be. They are better for having faced him in his office, and they appreciate what he has done for them."

He had indeed served beyond the call of duty. His last gesture as he retired was characteristic: a widower, no longer needing a large home, he presented his home, just off the campus on Peace Street, to the college for use as a dormitory; one more gem in his crown.

Students coming from metropolitan areas had long complained that Pella was dead on the weekends; there was a need for some other place than the gymnasium where they could relax. And so in 1956 a Student Union was opened, with a lounge, a games room, and facilities for a branch post office and student mail boxes; this was to be added to in 1966.

Ludwig Library was bursting at the seams; in 1957 the size of the building was doubled with the addition of an area of stacks on three
levels. This of course multiplied the shelving space many times over.

The following year, 1958, a number of radical changes were made in Graham Hall: the dining hall, accommodating 500 students at a seating, was added to the southwest corner, the old dining hall being converted to lounges and smaller dining facilities; a completely new kitchen was added to the south; and a dormitory wing was added to the southeast. The family-style meals, which the college had preserved as long as possible, from this moment on were to become less and less financially viable.

It is well to remind ourselves that in 1957 a severe depression gripped the country once more; Dr. Vander Lugt was working against considerable odds as he added to housing and dining facilities, to library and recreational facilities. He felt the need for an aide in the task of raising funds. A son of former President Lubbers, A. D. Lubbers, was invited to leave his teaching position at Wittenberg College in Ohio to assume the duties of Vice President in charge of Development at Central. Brought up in Pella, with a strong attachment to the town, he accepted with alacrity.

The following year, 1960, Dr. Vander Lugt resigned to accept a teaching position in New Brunswick Theological Seminary. He had accomplished much in his fourteen years: student enrollment was twice as high as it had been when he took over, with 430 students in that year; there were now 16 people devoted to administrative duties; there was a faculty of 43 people, amongst them Harriet Heusinkveld, Chester Leu, Alice Carlson, Maurice Birdsall, Maryanna Hamer, Laurence Grooters, Mina Baker (Poelofs), James Graham, Lawrence Mills, John Beardslee, Donald Butler, Maxine Fish-Huffman, Johanna De Vries, George Lauber, Donald Huffman, Daniel Bergman, Arthur Bosch, James Smalley, Edith LeCocq. Much of the careful work of selecting
these teachers had been shared with Dr. Harold Haverkamp, Ph. D., who succeeded Dean Pietenpol in 1952 and continued to hold that office until 1961, when he too resigned to accept a position as Dean of Hanover College, in Hanover, Indiana.

The committee appointed by the Board of Trustees to search for a new president were of the opinion that the new man should be well acquainted with the Reformed Church, well acquainted with Central College, but with a fresh outlook on college administration. When young Lubbers, whom everybody knew simply as "Don", only 29 years of age, presented himself amongst a host of candidates for the position, the committee for weeks hung fire, sure that "Don" was too young, examining other candidates, until at last this immature vice president urgently requested a meeting with the members. At the close of that long session, the committee shook its collective head in wonderment and decided that after all the man they were looking for was in their midst. Arend D. Lubbers became the seventeenth president in 1960; at the time he was the youngest college president in the United States, celebrated as such by Life Magazine.

On October 21, 1960, he was inaugurated, and it immediately became apparent that he was not going to let grass grow under his feet. In 1961 a new dormitory was begun; finished in 1962 at a cost of $400,000, it was named in honor of Dean Pietenpol. It quickly proved to be popular with the 97 men whom it housed. In 1963 the college bought what had been a professor's home, at 510 West First Street, and fitted it out as the first language house, where ten young ladies, under the supervision of a native French assistant, could learn to pass the butter in French at family-style meals; this was the first step on the way to Central's specialization in languages. In 1964 similar houses were opened for students of Spanish and of German. In that same year the Cox-Snow Music
Building was constructed, made possible by generous gifts from Henry G. Cox, his wife Queene Snow Cox, and Frank E. Brower. Total construction costs were about $340,000. This very functional complex of library, three classrooms, office, ten practice rooms and ten studios, together with a recital hall and a band practice room, was dedicated on October 17, 1964.

Upon the resignation of Dean Harold Haverkamp, in 1961, Professor James Graham was elevated to the deanship. Born of missionary parents in Brazil, where he learned to speak Portuguese as a native tongue, he was of the opinion that languages should be learned in a milieu conducive to natural absorption. At his urging, Mr. Charles Haydon and Mrs. Maryanna Haydon were appointed to the faculty in 1964 and began work which, in the following year, sent the first group of students abroad for study in the Cours de Civilisation of the Sorbonne, Paris. Need it be said that President Lubbers strongly encouraged this beginning of foreign studies?

In 1965 the Milton-J. Huffman Dormitory was dedicated, costing $340,000 and capable of housing 88 men. In that same year Central's largest dormitory, the H. P. and Maria Scholte Hall, was begun; a north wing was added in 1966, and a south wing in 1970. Completed, it is capable of housing 325 young women.

In 1968 Central joined a national Reformed Church drive in support of her colleges; one million dollars of the funds received as Central's share in this work was allocated to the construction of the Kuyper Memorial Gymnasium with wrestling and weight room, handball courts, classrooms, offices, sauna, and large gymnasium.

But even as money was being allocated for the piling up of these buildings, other more subtle activities were afoot. Charles Haydon's diligent work had made the Foreign Studies Program prosper;
program similar to the one in Paris had been opened in Austria and in Spain. And in 1967, after no little diplomatic work on the part of President Lubbers, Dean Graham, and the Director of the Cours de Civilisation, the North Central Association accredited the Paris program as worthy of awarding the master's degree. Furthermore, in 1968 a study program was opened in Yucatan, Mexico, one which has proven very popular with students.

After much soul-searching and some urging from President Lubbers, the faculty adopted a so-called 3 x 3 curriculum: a study year of three terms rather than two semesters, the normal load in each term to be three courses. It was posited that under such a curriculum, study would be intense and retention improved. This thesis has more than once been debated in later years, but this calendar still obtains.

President Lubbers resigned in 1969. When an invitation came to consider the presidency of Grandview College in Michigan, like his father before him, he found the appeal of a larger horizon irresistible. In his nine-year term he had dedicated a lot of new buildings; he had added beauty to the campus by replacing a flat stretch of lawn with a small lake; he had tripled the student body from 430 in 1960 to 1355, tripled the administration from 16 to 48, doubled the faculty from 43 to 107. An ever-smiling man with a cherubic face, he had taken a conservative and somewhat parochial institution and had shaken it into the 20th Century. Under his administration such faculty names as those of William Paul, Gerda Dippmann, Donald Meyer, Harold Kolonbrander, Norman Ryerson, Barbara Dieleman, Ronald Schipper, Arthur De Jong, William Lubenow, John De Jong, Leland Graber, Allen Moen, Ronald Sagraves, Bette Brunusting, John Vruwink, Jack Walvoord, James Van Hoeven, Richard Glendening, Robert Wegter, Gary Boeyink, Davis Folkerts, Rudy Thies, Richard Whitaker, Edward Banfield, George Ann Huck, Arthur Johnson, Robert Maurer, Richard Bowzer, James Danks, Judith Lauber were added to the faculty roll.
There were those who thought that he had moved too fast, but there is no doubt that he laid the groundwork for the college as it is today.

In the interim period, as another president was sought, Provost James Graham was made acting president. Language cottages on campus, where German, French, or Spanish were spoken under guidance by native language aides, had proven popular and had showed their worth as preparation for study abroad. Mr. Graham began planning a complex of such houses to replace the homes of limited capacity which had heretofore served. And, seeing that a campus coordinator of the proliferating foreign programs was soon to be necessary, he persuaded Mrs. Barbara Butler to fit herself for the position. In a far-sighted move, he hired Mr. James Brandl, asking him to develop a computer training curriculum; when Mr. Brandl left the college in 1981 to take a position in private industry, there was a good basic program, making use of about 45 terminals about the campus, and a time-sharing plan with Iowa City. As of this writing, there are majors in Computer Science, in Mathematics and Computer Science, and in Systems Management with 109 students seeking majors; there are 60 computer terminals, 75 microcomputers, and a time-sharing DEC mode PDP 11/70 master computer.

Mr. Graham had, himself, been talked into the deanship largely by the deft tongue of President Lubbers; he had not felt at home in the work, and so after the flurry of a transition to a new president had subsided, he opted, in 1976, to go back into the classroom.

The new president was found in the person of Dr. Kenneth J. Weller, Ph. D., who had been a highly successful professor of economics and business at Hope College. He took office on August 1, 1969, and was formally installed at a chapel service in the spring of 1970, at a moment when students were very restless because of black demands for justice in the South. In contrast to President Lubbers, who admittedly was inclined to ride off in several directions at once, Dr. Weller has been a
steady-as-she-goes administrator, making his decisions in a business-like way, insisting that a college should be run with balanced books, and not on borrowed money. As one examines what has happened in the last 17 years, one is inclined to feel that his administration has been the fruition of all that went before.

Carefully he selected Mr. Gary Timmer as his Vice President for Development, and Mr. Robert C. Froelich as Vice President for Business and Treasurer of the College; these men have been of great assistance in the financial planning of the college. As one looks about the campus today it becomes evident that these three have largely remade the physical plant.

Kuyper Gymnasium, for which ground had been broken in 1968, was brought to a preliminary state of completion in 1970. Currently much additional space is being added at a cost of some $2,000,000. In 1972 the complex of Language Houses, projected earlier by Acting President Graham, was built: four houses for French, German, and Spanish, with a fourth to receive overflow from the others, interconnected only at the basement level, with dining facilities, each capable of housing 16 young women. In the style of town houses, these could be built with local labor for something like $100,000 each. The first air-conditioned dormitories on campus, they were naturally looked on favorably. And so, in 1973, the first of no few double townhouses of the same pattern, with 32 beds, was dedicated to the memory of Mr. Herbert G. Mentink, long-time Latin professor. And later in the same year three other such double houses were erected in a common area, known as The Collegiate Center, in honor of the Collegiate Church of New York City, the oldest Protestant Church in the United States with a continuous history. In more recent years four other such double houses have gone up: Nanes, honoring Dr. Laura Nanes Griffeth, esteemed professor of history; and in a common area once more, three houses honoring prominent and generous trustees: H. J. Stauffer,
One of the most prideful buildings of this administration went up in 1974, a building costing $1,500,000, housing 200,000 volumes and many services, the John Edward Geisler and Gertrude Setzer Geisler Learning Resources Center, made possible by gifts from the Geisler children: Loren and Cecil Geisler Penquite, and Harold and Mavis Hobbs Geisler, in honor of their parents. Not only does the construction house the library with archives space, magazine room, microfilm reading area, circulation work room, and facilities for over-night study, but in addition office space for 22 professors, two large classrooms, an audio-visual-aids center, a computer terminal room, nine seminar spaces, and 27 study carrels. At present Education Department facilities are located here; as more space is needed for the library it is contemplated that these facilities will perhaps be moved to their own building. The Learning Resources Center, familiarly known as the LRC or LURC, is a most functional building which has won architectural prizes for its thoughtful arrangement, a true center of intellectual enterprise.

Earlier we noted that a former small men's dormitory was ultimately converted to offices and classrooms for language study. Known now as The Cross-Cultural Center, this was accomplished in 1975 at a cost of $175,000. This relatively modest expenditure provided five classrooms, nine offices, and a number of conversation carrels, where, pursuing Dean Graham's ideal of learning what comes naturally, students can talk with natives in the language of their choice. Such practice requires work on the part of students, language aides, and professors, but it does produce results!

In that same year of 1975 the former library was being converted to The Art and Business Building, with classrooms carved out of what had been the stacks, a tiered lecture hall where the magazine room had been, offices large studio spaces, and for the business and art staff, the Mills Gallery, named in honor of
As noted earlier, Provost James Graham resigned in 1976 to return to the classroom. His successor was found promptly in the person of Dr. Harold Kolenbrander, Ph. D., an alumnus of Central, who had taught chemistry in his alma mater for a time before going to Grand Valley University as head of a division of that institution. Coming to Central as Provost, he accepted full responsibility for matters academic, leaving President Weller more nearly free to concentrate on the business life of the college and on relationships with the church and the general public. Dr. Kolenbrander was one of the most thoughtful and most demanding administrators the college has known. Under his selective hand the following people were added to the faculty:


Dr. Kolenbrander resigned in 1985 to accept the presidency of Mount Union College, in Alliance, Ohio. Dr. William B. Julian, Ph. D., has taken office as Acting Dean of Faculty as a replacement is sought.
Dr. Lawrende F. Mills, since 1950 a fixture on the campus. And so the Y.M. and Y.W. Building, which had become the Ludwig Library after the 1911 fire, then simply The Library, had been transmogrified into the Art and Business Building; if Miss Marie Greiner, who in the 1930's and 40's had been the librarian, could be brought back to behold a rubber plant where her desk used to be, she would be utterly confused and bewildered, for a small wonder has been wrought from the old walls. Reusing and reusing the old shell has meant huge savings; this latest miracle transformation was accomplished for a modest $100,000.

In 1977 the college was able to enlarge its recreational area by a purchase of 39 acres to the north and west of Kuyper Gymnasium. And in that same year, after some hesitation, the trustees accepted the former home of Mr. Stuart H. Kuyper as the president's residence. Initially, Dr. Weller had resisted the move, feeling that he should not be so far removed from the scene of all action, but ultimately the Board persuaded him that his mere physical presence at all hours was perhaps not so important after all; the new residence, set on spacious grounds, has been the scene of many faculty and student picnics; it is a gracious house and Dr. and Mrs. Weller have been gracious hosts in it.

The Ver Meer Manufacturing Company of Pella, in 1978, made possible a new science building. The moment one enters the Ver Meer Science Hall, he is aware that organizing intelligence has been at work here, for the whole is laid out about one large laboratory where biology, chemistry and physics do introductory work, sharing a common materials-supply room. About this very large laboratory are located eight small laboratories for advanced work, ten offices, a science library, animal room, green house, photo dark room, and construction room. The plant cost approximately $1,000,000; the cohesive plan which brings all science students into intimate contact with each other is evidence that the money was carefully and wisely spent.
By 1979 the languages, education, fine arts, business, and the sciences had all moved out of what people were still calling New Central, harking back to the loss of the original or Old Central in 1972.
The administration, which had contented itself with cramped quarters while more adequate classroom and faculty-office space was brought into being, and believing that Central Hall, sturdy and staunch, could be spared from teaching for a time, set about remaking it into largely administrative offices. Into the ground floor went offices for International Studies and Admissions, Development, and Publications. Into the second story went the offices of the president, dean, treasurer, business manager, and assistant business manager, registrar, and student financial assistance, the bursar, and finally a conference room. On the third floor went offices for the mathematics and computer-science people, together with their classrooms, and most welcome addition - the rather considerable pumping equipment which made the air conditioning of Central possible.
It was a right royal reworking, with most impressive results; once again, the reuse of old walls gave the college practically speaking a new building for a modest $1,000,000.

As student numbers had doubled and then tripled during the '60's, Douwstra Chapel, capable of seating about 800 people, had become less and less adequate for compulsory daily chapel services. For a time the student body was divided into two groups, meeting on alternate days. But then the restlessness of the times finally hit the campus, with students in rebellion against all sorts of requirements; chapel attendance became voluntary, and naturally, numbers of those attending dwindled. Douwstra had never been an inspiring chapel, aesthetically or religiously, and so when the P. H. Kuyper family offered to donate a chapel, adequate to house the worshiping community, with genuine inspirational lines, the administration accepted with alacrity. The Chapel, dedicated to the
memory of "Pete" by his children, went up in 1981 at a cost of about $1,000,000. Cruciform in floor plan, it soars with a difference, for its walls are great concave arches, meeting in windows at the very top, so that light floods in exultantly from above. The Chapel is provided with a Brunzema organ of 17 ranks of pipes, appropriate to the 250 or 300 worshipers regularly gathering there. The Chapel proper sits above a bermed first floor where there is space for four offices, a small area for the preparation of refreshments and a large area where receptions or student meetings may be held. Visible from any point on the campus, the Chapel forms a true center for a Christian college.

The east face of the Chapel was built within ten feet of the former gymnasium, used at the time as a theater and theater workshop; the administration foresaw that the old building would soon have to come down. Their hand was somewhat forced when the State Fire Marshal declared that its continued use would demand a large number of improvements, some of them costly, and so, what with these expensive demands and the awkwardness of an ugly building which blocked the view of a lovely one, the gymnasium was hastily torn down in 1982 - which forced the theater arts people to make use of temporary housing in the town's Community Center. The Kuyper family took pains to assure the president that they had not precipitated the visit of the fire marshal.

Lack of theater facilities on campus now caused the administration to turn to plans for a long-promised theater, and this went up in 1984, made possible by handsome gifts from the Kruidenier family of Des Moines. The Kruidenier Center for Communications and Theater is dedicated to the memory of Daniel Kruidenier, a pioneer settler and business man of Pella. It's another handsome and well-conceived structure with a theater in the round capable of seating 250 people, studio theater, make-up room, green room, broadcast laboratory, classrooms, four offices, scene shop and prop storage. Planned as a teaching facility for young
people going out into high schools or professional acting, rather than as a vast community auditorium, the theater-in-the-round is, in particular, a very flexible facility with movable seating, excellent lighting, and good acoustics. Entering it on the first night of a stage production, one wonders a bit what a pioneer settler of Pella would think of so sophisticated a memorial.

But now, with the theater and Chapel in place, what was to be done with Douwstra Auditorium? Tear it down? Make office space of it? The 40-year-old building was sound as a dollar; in the end, it seemed best to continue using it as an auditorium. However, it had never been satisfactory for band, orchestra, or organ concerts because the proscenium arch muffled sound so greatly. It was decided to remove the arch. It had been harsh acoustically, with odd reverberations. Treat the ceiling and walls to minimize these effects. The seats were showing bad signs of wear. Buy new ones. The campus needed an auditorium seating about 700 people, but in hot weather Douwstra was sweaty. Air condition it. The Kimball organ had been attacked by seepage of rainwater; it was in poor shape. Sell it, and use the space devoted to organ chambers to enlarge the stage. One really needed prop-storage space on many occasions. Add on to the west end. These things were done at a cost of about $1,000,000. The result has been an auditorium so delightful that had it been available, with its tasteful and invigorating color scheme, in the days when students were protesting compulsory chapel services, it's possible that they would not have thought of protesting! It is used for large musical productions, for big public meetings, or important lectures. The building was rededicated in 1985.

It remains to tell of Jordan Hall, the oldest building on campus with an unchanging history. Built in 1905, at 80 years of age it was still completely sound in every respect. There was, however, some waste space
in its large halls and double-stair system; it was rather inaccessible to the handicapped, and its heating system was wasteful. There had been a moment, after Old Central burned, when it was the only classroom building; it had been home to the Home Economics Department for many years; it had been the scene of hundreds of meals and banquets prepared by the Women's Auxiliary of Central College. Let it be noted here that the Auxiliary had labored to raise money ever since June 11, 1904, when President Garrison had brought together a group of ladies, asking what they could do to help with finances; during the 81 years of their many activities they had raised hundreds of thousands of dollars; Jordan Hall had housed a large kitchen - for which they had paid - and a dining hall, which they had time and again refurnished. But by 1985 the Auxiliary had given up serving meals in favor of such projects as cookbooks and a fabulous Christmas Bazaar which annually cleared thousands of dollars. Jordan could do with, and was worthy of, a face-lift.

And so, during 1985, many of the interior elements were completely changed: the double stairs was replaced by a single set at the east entrance, and a single set at the west entrance; an elevator was added; all levels were made accessible to the handicapped; the heating system was completely redone, and air-conditioning was added; new carpentering was installed throughout. The fine old woodwork was preserved and enhanced by careful refinishing; handsome new doors matching the woodwork were installed. Once again the use of old walls made possible a new building for the minimal sum of $500,000.

Jordan now provides five classrooms, two of them large ones, two seminars, seven offices, a computer center, and a sensory-deprivation room. It is the location of the Psychology, Home Economics, and Geography Departments.
In the year 1986, what is the state of the college? Never has the campus been so fair. No sooner is a building completed than it is landscaped with handsome trees, bushes and flowers; the administration wagers a constant winning contest with an unfavorable horticultural climate.

Never have finances been so impressive. When the present administration took office, there was a $3,000,000 debt against dormitories; this has been paid off. The endowment, in 1970, was about $1,000,000; today it is approximately $8,500,000; beyond that there are about $2,300,000 in the annuity fund. Never has the college been able to offer its students so many self-sustaining scholarships: 52 endowed scholarships, 27 memorial and honor scholarships, 14 special scholarships, in addition to which there are hundreds of Central College, Reformed Church, Alumni, Iowa Tuition and other grants.

Never has the college been able to offer such complete dormitory service. In addition to the dormitories already outlined, there are twelve cottages in use; the college commands a total of 1220 beds, all meeting a high standard of living comfort and safety.

Total enrollment has stabilized at about 1,500 students, in 1986 coming from 46 states and 19 foreign countries. Eighty-nine percent of these young men and women were in the upper half of their high school graduating classes. The number of people engaged in administrative work has stabilized at about 65; the faculty at about 100.

There were, in 1970, four centers for international studies; there are, as of this writing, seven, with additional programs in London, England; Carmarthen, Wales; and Leiden, the Netherlands. Dr. Weller has been carefully laying the groundwork for a center in Japan, asking faculty to sharpen their knowledge of that nation, bringing Japanese teachers to the Pella campus. It has become evident that one of Central's strongest claims for national attention is its work in international education;
with the cooperative good will of 40 other campuses, Central annually sends about 300 students abroad for study; approximately 130 of these are Central's own, which means that by the time a given class graduates one third of them will have had the experience of rubbing shoulders with students in another land. It is to the credit of this administration that it has made a vigorous effort to keep the costs of study abroad at much the same level as those of study in Pella.

A year's room, board, and tuition now costs $9,000, admittedly high, but in comparison with other colleges of excellence, that figure is very moderate indeed.

In the pragmatic world of today it is inevitable that certain studies should enlist the attention of large numbers of students: business, computer science, pre-law for example. Dr. Weller takes pride in maintaining a sustained commitment to the liberal arts, to a broad-based education as being, in the long run, the best preparation for employment and for living.

He takes pride also in maintaining a strong relationship with the Reformed Church in America, which reciprocates by offering strong support to the college. Goodly numbers of the students continue to come from Reformed homes; any Reformed Church member would feel at home in the services of the campus church; the Chapel's one stained-glass window as a fitting symbol of this relationship carries the coat-of-arms of the Reformed Church. The college does not proselytize its students; even as in Reverend Brinkman's day, it holds that "whosoever will may come;" it strives to influence its students for the better.

Dr. Weller is himself a very human person, his office door open, his interest in people evident as he circulates about the campus, as he prepares a sustaining budget for many student interests. This deep desire to retain a human dimension in campus life becomes evident in
a real sense the moment one steps on campus: students and faculty alike smile and greet one in friendly fashion, even though he may be a total stranger. There is here an extraordinary sense of community.