



Wisconsin Industrial School For Girls

Currently the site of Oakhill Correctional Institute, the facility was originally built in 1932 for juvenile girls. The historical designation includes 13 buildings--a school, maintenance buildings and ten cottages. A cottage system was chosen at the time to avoid the traditional punitive cell blocks or dormitory, and it was hoped that this progressive choice would provide a more homelike atmosphere.

The cottages are all constructed of Lannon stone in a modified two story "L" shaped plan. The interiors contain decorative tile floors, a living room with French doors, fireplace and built in bookshelves, dining room, kitchen and individual rooms for residents.

The cottages housed between 20 and 25 residents--young women between the ages of 12 and 18 who were supervised by four matrons.

Even though the cottages were finished in 1932, they sat unoccupied for nearly a decade because the entire facility could not be completed. The Depression set in and the State was unable to appropriate the necessary funds to construct the remaining buildings.

When the school and administration buildings were finally completed in 1941, the new facility was widely praised as an ideal institution for wayward young girls, and today it is considered one of the truly successful examples of a "cottage plan" institution in Wisconsin, both physically and philosophically.