

Tribute to President Inman Era at Central Methodist University



Classic Hall built in 1911 for the cost of \$40,000, pictured here in 2008, before the renovation in 2011-12.

CMU Central Methodist
UNIVERSITY



The Mabee Athletic Facility financed by the Campaign for Eagle Athletics is shown shortly before its dedication in 2008.



Aerial photo shows new Hairston 8-lane track and artificial turf on Davis Football Field, part of the athletic facilities upgrades made possible by the Campaign for Eagle Athletics.



Sign in front of the CMU-Macon Campus, one of the 13 extended studies sites the university has on community colleges throughout the state.



View of the CMU Student and Community Center and Inman Plaza. The new building opened in 2005 following the highly successful Campaign for Central which raised \$34.5 million.

The Inman Era 1995-2013

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Marianne E. Inman

Dr. Marianne E. Inman has been President of Central Methodist University in Fayette, Mo., since July 1995. During her tenure total enrollment has increased five-fold, the endowment has nearly tripled, the number of degree-granting sites within Missouri has grown from three to 30, and major upgrades to the Fayette campus have been completed. Statewide CMU serves almost 6,000 students, including Dual Credit Program high school students (fall 2012).

Beyond campus life Dr. Inman serves the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Council of Independent Colleges, and the Presidential Advisory Council for Missouri's Coordinating Board for Higher Education. She has twice served as president of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri and as chair of the board of the Missouri Humanities Council. She has also served for four years as president of the University Senate of The United Methodist Church. She serves on the boards of the Missouri Colleges Fund and the Great Rivers Council of Boy Scouts, and was consultant to the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies. She was named Business Leader of the Year in 2010 by the Fayette Rotary Club.

Previous institutions served include Northland College in Wisconsin, Alaska Pacific University, Southwestern University in Texas, and Tehran University in Iran. Dr. Inman holds the Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education from the University of Texas at Austin, the master's degree in French Literature and Linguistics from Indiana University, and the bachelor's degree with highest distinction in French, Spanish, and English from Purdue University.

Dr. Inman will retire from the Central Methodist University presidency in June.

This special section is a tribute to retiring Central Methodist University President Marianne Inman. We have compiled a history of President Inman's 18-year tenure at CMU. Inman has been a true leader for CMU in every sense of the word. CMU, Fayette and Howard County are all fortunate for the leadership Inman brought to us the last 18 years.

Thank you to Don Cullimore for researching and compiling this in-depth history. Cullimore told me, "this has been a challenge, indeed." Don hit a home run!

Photos courtesy of Central Methodist University.

Thanks also to Jim Steele for writing the story on David Inman and Miles Plzak. Special thanks to Kent Probst and Cathy Thogmorton at CMU for their help during this project. As always, thank you to Linda Vroman and Greg Jackson for your help and expertise on this project.

This last and biggest thank you to the sponsors of this project. Commercial Trust Co.- Janet Jacobs, Addison Laboratories - Bruce Addison, Coil Construction - Randy Coil, and CMU- Kent Probst.

(Editor's note: Sources for this article included conversations with staff members of the CMU Public Relations Office and direct quotations from CMU staff and faculty and Board of Trustees members. Also, permission was granted to use information from the Fall 2012 issue of Talon, the CMU alumni magazine, and the Jan. 18, 2013, issue of the United Methodist Reporter.)

With the impending retirement of Central Methodist University President Marianne E. Inman at the end of June, it will mark an end to what undoubtedly will become known as "The Inman Era" – an era representing one of the most ambitious and successful periods of academic program expansion and campus improvements in Central's history. It also represents a sustained period of strong financial gain and stability for the university.

Dr. Inman announced in June of 2012 that she would be stepping down, retiring, from the university in June of 2013, capping an 18-year period as CMU president and a more than four-decade career in higher education.

Her departure will mark the close of one of the brightest chapters in the nearly 160-year history of the university, noted CMU Board of Trustees Chair Glenn Cox of Bartlesville, Okla.

The accomplishments of Central Methodist under Inman's leadership are many and substantial. Some of the highlights since she joined the institution in July 1995 include:

A nearly five-fold increase in student enrollment, to almost 5,300 last fall

Completion of three capital campaigns, netting the University nearly \$50 million

A total tripling of the University endowment, to \$33 million

Growth in CMU operating revenues from \$8.5 million when she arrived, to more than \$27 million this past year

Campus improvements totaling in excess

of \$50 million

Implementation of a highly effective strategic planning process and institutional Master plan

One of the milestones for which Inman is particularly proud is that CMU will this year award more than one thousand college undergraduate and graduate degrees for the first time in its history. Another is the expansion of CMU academic programming to sites across the state, many in partnership with Missouri community colleges and other organizations. Those partnerships include the on-campus presence of CMU staff or extended programs through articulation agreements with all 13 of the state's two-year publicly supported community colleges (this does not include Linn State Technical College).

"The opportunity to work with an outstanding Board of Trustees and a first-rate, faculty and staff in service to Central Methodist University has been the high point of my career as an educator," Dr. Inman said when announcing her retirement. "I feel privileged to have been part of this institution of opportunity for students all around our state. The timing of this decision seems appropriate in that we are completing one major campus project (the restoration of historic Classic Hall) this year, and CMU will require continuity in leadership over the next number of years in order to implement the highest priority recommendations from our recently concluded master plan," she added.

Inman and her husband, David, plan to relocate to Georgetown, Texas, this June. Her much-beloved father, Miles Plzak, whose 100th birthday was celebrated April 5 at Emmet's Kitchen and Tap by the Community of Fayette, has already resettled in the Georgetown area.

In succinctly summing up Inman's highly successful tenure as CMU president in an

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Brannock Hall, main administrative building and first structure built on the campus after founding in 1854.

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article in the Fall 2012 issue of the CMU alumni magazine *Talon*, the university's marketing communications director Kent Propst wrote:

"Society tends to 'brand' its leaders, and colleges and university presidents are no exception.

"Some presidents are branded as enrollment-builders; others, as people who strengthen and expand academic programs. Still, others are heralded as outstanding fund-raisers, or as builders or renovators of campus facilities.

"Some gain acclaim as adroit business executives, moving a college from troubled financial waters and returning it to fiscal soundness. Technological advances are the legacy of other presidents.

"A few are reputed to be strong administrators, deftly navigating an institution through trying times while developing and surrounding themselves with a strong management team.

"Rarely does a college CEO come along with strengths in several of the aforementioned areas.

"Still more uncommon is one who excels in them all.

"Yet, any objective evaluation of Dr. Marianne E. Inman's nearly 18-year tenure leading Central Methodist University leads one to the realization that she did, indeed, do it all – and then some."

The path that took Dr. Inman to the presidency of a United Methodist Church-related university, to Central Methodist University, began during her early career in higher education. In an interview with Cathy Thogmorton, editor of CMU's alumni magazine, she told her: "Through the years, Central kept popping up in my life. What set me on the course for higher education [administration] was a summer course at Bryn Mawr.

"It was a month-long residential program for 90 or so women who wanted to move ahead in administration. One assignment was to do a career map. We were to identify positions, the years we hoped to be in those positions, and when we finished, they had invited a number of deans and presidents. For about three days, we went from one to another to talk." Inman added that the discussions involved creating a timetable for climbing the administrative ladder: two to five years as an associate dean, five to seven years as academic vice president, and, eventually, appointment as a college president. The year was 1987.

Subsequently, in pursuing her desire to become president of a UMC-related college or university—"that's what I know, believe in and feel," Inman said—she spent 11 years at Alaska Pacific University, a United Methodist Church-related school in Anchorage, where she both taught and served as an associate dean. She also taught briefly before Alaska at UMC-affiliated Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Then came five years at Northland College in Ashland, Wis., where she served as vice president and academic dean of the college.

Inman also made a Methodist Church connection by attending annual conferences of the higher education institute of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) of the United Methodist Church, a body she would later serve for four years (2008-12) as president of the GBHEM University Senate while also president of Cen-

tral Methodist University.

During her job interview for the presidency of Central Methodist, Inman was asked about her vision for Central. "It was basically bringing the quality of the living and learning environments up to the quality of the academic and co-curricular programs," she responded. After being selected for the position by the Central Methodist Board of Curators (now Trustees), said she sensed it was a special place. She knew it was a fundamentally strong institution and had an historic relationship with the United Methodist Church.

The Years Covering 1995-2004

But Inman had some major challenges ahead of her as she began her service as CMU president on July 1, 1995. The college was operating in the red; several years of deferred maintenance meant that numerous campus buildings – much of the general physical plant – were in need of repair or replacement; and the aging campus was behind the times technologically and administratively. She also inherited a \$1.8 million operating deficit that was growing, but was able to guide the college out of the deficit within her first year, and Central has not had an operating deficit since then.

"The top priority was righting the ship and getting ourselves in order," she told *Talon* magazine staff when interviewed for the Fall 2012 issue. "The vision was transforming the physical plant to match our [academic] quality. It's impossible to sell excellence when what people see is not excellent."

There had been nothing new in buildings on the campus since Philips Recreation Center in 1984, prior to which had been construction of Stedman Hall in 1963. The student union, known as the "Eyrie," was an aging wood-framed building, a former World War II Officers' Club from Camp Crowder in Neosho, Mo., that was purchased as surplus military property and moved to the Central campus in 1947 as a "temporary" student union. It remained in service for 56 years.

But things were soon on the move. By the fall of 1996, new programs in athletic training, criminal justice, and management were implemented, and a new graduate program for a master of education degree was in place. Dr. Inman also announced a \$500,000 gift from Southwestern Bell to create a new telecommunications videoconferencing facility in Smiley Library, located in Cupples Hall. This heralded numerous other technological advances in the years ahead, including classrooms with "Smart Boards" coupled to computers and projectors that replaced the antiquated chalk board.

A number of major events occurred – and were occurring – on the Central Methodist College campus as the fall semester 2000-01 began and the College entered its 148th year.

"Because of its solid financial position, the College has been able to undertake some important projects that will enhance the quality of life on campus for students, staff and faculty alike," Inman noted at that time.

Among the highlights of the 2000-2001 academic year were the issuance of \$8 million in bonds that spring by Central Methodist to finance major upgrades of residence halls; installation of a campus-wide fiber-optic backbone to improve computer communications systems; and renovations to Smiley Library.

The tax-exempt bonds were issued



CMU President Marianne Inman and husband David wave at parade viewers during the October CMU Homecoming Parade that occurs in and around the Courthouse Square each fall.



Front view of Paul H. Linn Memorial Church on the CMU campus.

through the Fayette Industrial Development Authority. "Entering the local bond market was an historic first for CMC (Central Methodist College)," noted Julee Sherman, CMU vice president for finance and administration.

The money was used for interior improvements in Burford, Holt, Howard-Payne, Woodward and McMurry Residence Halls. This work includes the complete reconstruction of the interior of McMurry Hall, which was completed in August 2002. Other building improvements included construction of new bathrooms, upgrades of plumbing and electrical systems, installation of air conditioning and new communications wiring.

Thanks to gifts from alumni of the College, Smiley Library was also given a new appearance in 2001. These improvements included the Aletha Lewis Reading Room and a new library entrance, complete with a coffee bar and lounge built around a restored fireplace. They were made possible by sizable gifts from CMC alumni Warren Head (Class of 1933) and his wife, Katherine, of Palmyra, Mo., and Claude Lewis (Class of 1949) of Carlisle, Pa., who gave his gift as a memorial to honor his late wife, Aletha, who died in 2000. Claude Lewis passed away in early August.

A fiber-optic communications backbone also was installed across the campus. A ma-

major gift to the College by then CMC Board of Curators member Alexander Marshall and his wife, Beth, of St. Louis, financed this project. The fiber-optic backbone connects all buildings on campus – residence halls, athletic, academic and administrative – and allows high-speed communications through the campus computer network.

The major event of 2004 coincided with the university's sesquicentennial year. It was a name change from Central Methodist College to Central Methodist University, announced on May 20 of that year by President Inman. It heralded a major transition that included an expansion of CMU's educational mission both on the main campus in Fayette and through its extended studies programs in others areas of the state. The Central Methodist Board of Curators had unanimously approved the name change on May 1. With the transition to university-level status, came the formal establishment of a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and a College of Graduate and Extended Studies.

"The term 'University' is clearly a more accurate representation of who we really are," Inman said at the time. "The reach and scope of our programs and the diversity of students served and degrees offered all speak to the university concept. We believe that this change will reflect best who we are and who we are becoming."

Inman noted

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Aerial photo shows the new CMU Student and Community Center opened in 2005 and the adjacent Puckett Field House with refurbished exterior. The project was financed by the \$34.5 million campaign for Central.



Dr. Marianne Inman swings the first sledge hammer to raze the 56-year-old “temporary” Eyrie Student Union in 2003 to make way for construction of the new CMU Student and Community Center which opened in 2005.



CMU students visit in one of the refurbished rooms of McMurry Residence Hall. The major upgrading of the residence hall was one of several residence hall projects financed by an \$8 million bond issue by Central Methodist early in Dr. Inman’s tenure as president.



Students gather on the “Con” Steps in the archway between Linn Memorial Church and the Swinney Conservatory of Music, long a favorite meeting place on campus.



Students enjoy visiting in the Cyber Café, the “new” Eyrie Café, part of the new 60,000-square-foot CMU Student and Community Center completed in 2005. The \$15-million Center was financed by the 2001 Campaign for Central which raised \$34.5 million.

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Classic Hall, built in 1911 and completely refurbished in 2011-12 to house The Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art and part of the Swinney Conservatory of Music.

Roger Drake incoming CMU president

Roger Drake has been named the next president of Central Methodist University and will assume the office on July 1, according to Glenn Cox, chair of the CMU Board of Trustees and of the Presidential Search Committee.

Dr. Drake will become the 26th president in Central Methodist history, dating to 1854. His appointment was announced and he was introduced by the Board of Trustees at a campus assembly Feb. 1. Drake will replace Dr. Marianne Inman, who will retire in June after 18 years at the CMU helm.

"I am honored to be chosen as the next President of Central Methodist University," Drake said. "It is my hope that the institutional momentum created under President Inman's leadership can continue far into the future. [My wife] Judy and I are excited about this opportunity to make a difference in the lives of students."

The appointment capped an over seven-month search process that included CMU Board members, faculty,

staff, students, alumni, and community members. AGB Search of Washington, D.C., supported the search process.

"We expect the higher education environment to experience many challenges and changes in the immediate future," Cox said. "Dr. Drake's business experience, coupled with his academic accomplishments, makes him an excellent choice to lead Central Methodist University during such a period as we continue to excel and grow."

Currently the vice president of administration and finance at Lindsey Wilson College in Columbia, Ky., Drake has held that position since 2004.

Drake attended Lees Junior College (Jackson, Ky.), received a bachelor of business administration degree in accounting from Eastern Kentucky University, a master of business administration/executive MBA degree from Vanderbilt University, and the doctor of education (Ed.D.) degree from Vanderbilt.



Accolades to President Inman

CMU President Marianne Inman credits CMU faculty, staff and Board of Trustees members with playing a critical role in her success as leader of the university for the past 18 years. The trust and accolades bestowed on them by Dr. Inman are returned in kind here through comments offered by a number of these key people.

"Central Methodist University first began offering courses at its extended sites in 1989 with just 24 students enrolled. Today, CMU has more than 4,400 students enrolled at locations throughout Missouri and online. Through the vision of President Inman, CMU is now an educational partner with all 13 community colleges in the state. CMU has a longtime commitment to the health care fields, including nursing, and the RN to BSN is just one of our many quality programs. I am honored to have been a part of this vision and appreciate her guidance and leadership in ensuring the success of the College of Graduate and Extended Studies, alongside the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences."

Rita Gulstad
Vice President and Dean of Central Methodist University

"Dr. Inman's successful leadership of three major capital campaigns was a result of inspiring CMU's trustees and painting a clear vision of the possibility of success in achieving the institution's goals. People give pocket change to losers but they invest in winners. Dr. Inman made it very clear to all supporters of Central Methodist University that the university was indeed a winner."

J. Bruce Addison
Member, CMU Board of Trustees

"Back in 2005 I had a vision of improving the CMU athletic facilities from top to bottom to support the enrollment growth of the total university and to attract more visitors into the community of Fayette. Being a supportive leader, Dr. Inman allowed me to present my vision to the board of trustees. The campaign for Eagle Athletics would not have occurred without the trust Dr. Inman placed in me and the

rest of the university's senior leadership team. The campaign for Eagle Athletics has been a victory that will be remembered for many years. Dr. Inman is truly one of the best mentors I have had throughout my professional career. I am honored to have had the privilege of working for her."

Ken Oliver
CMU Vice President for Institutional Growth and Student Engagement

"Marianne Inman's contributions to the advancement of Central Methodist University (CMU) are too numerous to count. During her tenure as president, Dr. Inman has created a body of work any higher education executive would love to have on a resume/vita. Even distilling her accomplishments to a short list based on longest-lasting impact would be difficult to do. However, if those who know her work were forced into this exercise, there are a few highlights I am certain would be top of mind. Among these would be the development of an outstanding leadership team. The senior staff at CMU appears to have very few limitations. With Dr. Inman's leadership, this group has accomplished much – perhaps among the most notable being the increase in the quality and reach of the institution.

"A complementary item would be the development of a strong, active and talented Board of Trustees. Those who have served public bodies know the importance of attracting and maintaining the interest of people who understand the roll of the board member while being willing to support the institution with their talents, connections, and financial resources. By this definition, the board Dr. Inman has developed would be considered exemplary.

"Finally, the successful completion of three capital campaigns would have to be on any list of highlights. The results of this work have

transformed the look of the campus, produced a positive upside impact on enrollment, increased morale of those in and around the institution and community, and fostered a renewed sense of pride and confidence in CMU among alumni and friends. This item alone would be considered the product of a successful career."

J.B. Waggoner
Member, CMU Board of Trustees

"President Inman's leadership at CMU has encompassed every aspect of our relationship to the United Methodist Church. She is the face of the university, having led countless CMU Days at UM churches across Missouri through preaching in pulpits and speaking to various UMC groups on behalf of the university. Her leadership example has inspired over 30 CMU faculty and staff to volunteer to help spread the CMU story through CMU Sundays this year involving nearly 50 congregations.

"Dr. Inman also is the creative mind and founder behind the CMU Leadership Institute, which began in 2006 and has drawn more than 200 UMC clergy and laity to CMU the past few years to hear the most inspiring church leaders in our state and nation, including the Rev. Adam Hamilton, the Rev. Bob Farr, Bishop Robert Schnase, resident Bishop of Missouri, and Bishop Will Willimon, retired Bishop from the Northern Alabama Conference of The UMC.

"This year's event will feature President Inman, the Rev. Ron Watts, LaCroix UMC, and the Rev. Mike Schreiner, Morning Star Church, a UMC congregation. This 6th annual leadership day event is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, at CMU.

"President Inman initiated the UMC 50 percent Tuition Scholarships for first-time freshmen and transfer students in 2006. This program, which still exists, has greatly added to

the number and quality of UMC students who visit CMU and decide to make Central their university of choice. These students represent some of the brightest and best minds and talent of our student body and they consistently exhibit leadership in the classroom, in campus ministry and in other aspects of CMU's community life."

Michael D. Pope, M.Div.
CMU United Methodist Church Liaison

"Dr. Inman's time at Central has been marked by the success of three major capital campaigns resulting in major improvements to the campus with the construction of the Student and Community Center, major athletic facilities renovations and additions, and the recently completed renovation of Classic Hall. A great deal of the success of the campaigns has been due to Dr. Inman's connections with generous supporters and donors who were alumni, faculty and staff, friends, businesses, the United Methodist Church, and other entities.

"Along with her many other duties as university administrator, advocate for Missouri's private colleges and universities, and liaison with the United Methodist Church, she worked tirelessly to build these relationships with all of Central's constituencies. Anyone who is associated with the university can sense her devotion to Central and her dedication to the mission of the university. Dr. Inman has loved Central with the enthusiasm and energy that is usually shown by those of us who are alumni or who have life-long ties to the community. We can never thank her enough for embracing Central and Fayette and for leaving lasting positive improvements and impressions within the fabric of our community."

Janet L. Jacobs
Member, CMU Board of Trustees

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that Central Methodist was among more than 500 private four-year institutions of higher education nationally that enroll between 1,000 and 5,000 students. Some 61 percent of which were classified as universities.

“Central Methodist’s name change is concurrent with the institution’s celebration of 150 years of service in higher education,” Inman added. “Full implementation of the expanded educational mission, along with the other logistics of becoming Central Methodist University, is expected to extend into 2005.”

An official birthday celebration was held on campus during Homecoming weekend, Oct. 8-10, 2004. Inman went on to note that the College had qualified for university status for many years, that by the 2004, it was offering more than 40 majors, with degree programs at the associate’s, bachelor’s and graduate levels, and had “increasingly over the last decade and a half enjoyed a statewide presence.” Under the direction of Inman’s predecessor, Joe Howell, Central Methodist established Missouri’s first public-private institutional partnership with Mineral Area College at Park Hills in 1989 and a similar program with East Central College in Union in 1993.

By the 2004-05 academic year, CMU’s College of Graduate and Extended Studies (CGES) had expanded to serve 1,312 students in numerous communities throughout Missouri. An additional 850 students enrolled in the traditional College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) on the largely residential campus in Fayette brought the institution’s total enrollment to 2,093 that fall. By the fall of 2005, the enrollment numbers had spiked 2,065 for CGES and 818 for CLAS – a total enrollment of 2,883.

Further expansion of educational offerings, particularly emphasizing the adult learner, was to occur within the next two academic years. The program leading to the Master of Education degree, launched in 1995-96, was soon joined by a Master of Science in Counseling and a Master of Science in Nursing as well as graduate programs in Business Management and other areas.

The most notable event in the 1995-2004 time period was the public announcement in 2001 of the “Campaign for Central,” a \$31.5 million capital campaign to finance construction of a new student and community center as well as numerous other campus improvements. Following this in 2003 was the razing of the 56-year-old Eyrie that had served as a student union building far beyond its intended years and the fall groundbreaking ceremony for the new 60,000-square-foot CMU Student and Community Center. When concluded, the Campaign for Central had exceeded its goal by nearly \$4 million.

The Years Covering 2004-2013

In his Fall 2012 Talon article, marketing director Kent Propst noted that Dr. Inman was increasingly focusing on the expansion of CMU’s educational mission both on the Fayette campus and statewide. “There were more programs to launch, more places to take CMU, more technological and physical improvements to accomplish,” Propst wrote.

By the winter of 2005-06, Inman had announced that gifts to CMU had exceed-



CMU President Marianne Inman visits with students on the Campus Quad near Brannock Hall. Inman made a practice of stopping to chat with students whenever she was out and about on campus.

ed \$6.5 million, the “greatest total ever at CMU and more than triple levels from less than a decade earlier.” Total enrollment for the 2004-05 academic years was more than 2,000 for the first time in Central’s history and would soon rise above 3,000. That spring, Inman announced that Rita Gulstad, who had started at Central some years back as director of library services, would head the new College of Graduate and Extended Studies, a responsibility that eventually positioned Dr. Gulstad to become the university’s vice president and academic dean.

The signature event of the 2005-06 academic year was the Fall ’05 dedication of the new four-level, 60,000-square-foot CMU Student and Community Center, a building that was to radically change the dynamics of the entire campus and bring increasing numbers of visitors to the campus in the years since its opening. Especially appealing to Fayette and central Missouri residents, as well as businesses and other educational institutions, was the top-level arrangement of a conference center capable of accommodating more than 400 persons in one large room or to be divided into three smaller rooms to handle more than one event at the same time.

Other facilities located in the Student and Community Center include the third-floor large dining hall and the new Eyrie Student Café. The second floor accommodates the main campus post office, book and apparel store, Office of Student Development, Career Learning Center, Office of the Campus Ministry, counseling center and the student health clinic. The first floor houses the Athletic Training Program classrooms, a cardio-workout room, the Ariston Hairston Sports Hall of Fame and Eagle Lounge, with an entrance into the adjacent Puckett Field House.

In the fall of 2006, President Inman announced that Board of Curators member Fred Alexander and his wife, Barbara, gave a generous gift of 30 acres of land on the northwest side of the campus and adjacent

to Arthur Davis Football Field and Hairston Track. The large area allowed for expansion and upgrading of athletic facilities including extra practice fields for football and other sports.

The 30-acre tract of land involved increased the overall campus size by approximately 60 percent and was to prove invaluable in supporting CMU’s football and soccer programs as well as other athletic programs and facilities, which were soon to receive a major upgrade.

“We are extremely grateful to Fred and Barbara Alexander for their significant contributions leading to the availability of this land for the benefit of Central Methodist University,” Dr. Inman said. “Having the additional land available presents considerable opportunities for upgrading other athletic fields, such as those used for soccer and other outdoor sports, and for broader use of these facilities by the community of Fayette.”

The Fayette School District uses CMU athletic fields for several of its athletic events, including track meets.

The Alexanders said they were motivated to make this special gift benefiting Central Methodist for several reasons, including their desire to aid an independent institution of higher education.

In December of 2006, President Inman announced the largest financial gift in Central Methodist University’s history and the lead gift in a campaign to upgrade CMU’s athletic facilities, the Campaign for Eagle Athletics.

Inman said that a gift of \$2.2 million was being made to the university by a family who wished to remain anonymous. She said it was earmarked to fund a significant portion of a \$5 million initiative approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2006.

Inman said this would allow the university to proceed more quickly than anticipated with the \$2.5 million transformation in sev-

eral high priority areas that include artificial turf and other major improvements to support football, soccer and track at Arthur Davis field; a new softball complex; and renovations to Puckett Field House.

“We have identified a number of key projects that will greatly enhance our athletic programs, placing our university’s facilities among the top in the Heart of America Athletic Conference,” Inman stated.

Specific improvements the large gift helped to finance included a new softball complex; state-of-the-art artificial turf on Davis Field; a championship eight-lane track and new long-jump and other field competition facilities to replace the current six-lane track; a new entrance to Davis Field; a new concession stand and public restrooms at Davis Field; a new meeting room for athletics in Puckett Field House, as well as a refinishing of the field house gymnasium floor and the perimeter walkway; new drop-down basketball goals and volleyball nets in the field house; a new basketball/volleyball scoreboard; and installation of a new exterior finish on the field house to complement the exterior facade and trim of the new Student and Community Center.

“A gift of this magnitude has the potential to transform the Central Methodist experience for our students, as well as our broader community,” Inman said when announcing the gift. “We are deeply grateful for the support of this donor family and, indeed, for the support of all who are committed to the ongoing growth and development of this university.”

A major component of the Campaign for Eagle Athletics was the \$1.8 million Mabee Athletic Facility on the north side of CMU’s Puckett Field House. Groundbreaking took place Oct. 11, 2008. Completed in 2009, the facility now houses strength training and weight room facilities, athletic offices, meeting rooms and restrooms. The addition included a more than 3,500-square-foot weight room, two meeting rooms that can hold up to 150 people, locker rooms, athletic offices, laundry facilities, and restrooms for Puckett Field House, which is the site for Eagle basketball and volleyball contests.

Completion of the new facility marked the final part of Central Methodist’s \$5 million Campaign for Eagle Athletics, which is helping to support all athletic teams and programs at Central Methodist through a combination of new and renovated facilities. Also in progress was the creation of the Glenn and Veronica Cox Softball Complex, thanks to a generous gift from the Coxes.

Also in the fall of 2008, CMU unveiled a technologically sophisticated research facility when it dedicated the Robert M. and Edith I. Garst Information Commons in Smiley Library.

The Information Commons, which functions as the research centerpiece of the library, occupies the library’s central area on the main floor and includes a series of computer work stations that are capable of accessing virtually every academic and other key research database worldwide by Internet. The Information Commons also features special meeting areas and a reading room. Development of the unique research facility was made possible by a sizable gift from Robert M. Garst, a retired businessman, long-time

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Marianne Inman legacy not complete without noting contributions of husband and father

By JIM STEELE
EDITOR EMERITUS

During this historic weekend of commemoration and celebration the spotlight, rightly, will be on Central Methodist President Marianne Inman as a grateful community hails her 18 years of service to the university and the City of Fayette. But we'd be remiss if we didn't also pause to recognize one who has steadfastly stood by her side as help-mate, confidant and partner in ways large and small — both before and during these 18 years.

Married now for nearly 50 years, David and Marianne Inman met during their student days at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. Both had been reared for the most part in the Hoosier state, he coming from Fort Wayne and she from Indianapolis.

David ultimately earned a B.S. degree in industrial management at Purdue and later a master's degree in operations research from George Washington University.

Having been part of the ROTC program at Purdue, David settled on a career in the U.S. Army, serving 20 years until retiring in 1982 with the rank of major in the Army Transportation Corps. During his military career he lived for eight years in several foreign countries including France, Germany, Vietnam and Iran. Marianne of course was at his side during most of those assignments.

While in Alaska, he accepted a post as human resources director for the police department in the municipality of Anchorage, retiring in 1990. In what was to become a familiar pattern, David took on various leadership responsibilities in church and civic affairs while there. He particularly has been adept at financial planning and administration. Ultimately the couple would spend 11 years in Alaska.

When Marianne was named dean and vice president of Northland College, the couple found themselves in a new location — this time on the south shore of Lake Superior in the city of Ashland, Wis. Again, David enthusiastically entered into the life of the community, ultimately serving four years on Ashland's city council. But just as today, the lure of Alaska beckoned and for nearly 35 years he has pursued his hobby as an avid fisherman along the clear waters of the nation's northernmost state. Every summer he spends six weeks or more pursuing salmon fishing in Alaska, having now traversed the Alaska Highway nearly a dozen times. Always at home with technology, David — even while in Alaska — manages to keep up with friends via the Internet, often sending along tidbits of political lore espousing conservative causes.

David's devotion to civic and community improvements became even more evident when the couple arrived in Fayette 18 years ago.

Since 1995, David has been a volunteer within 13 separate local organizations. The innumerable ways he has assisted his spouse during the couple's tenure in Howard County probably never will be fully known. Her job, of course, has involved extensive travel in Missouri and beyond, often with her spouse

as chauffeur and traveling companion.

Some of David's more notable contributions to Fayette and Howard County have included his leadership in founding the Fayette Armstrong Community Betterment Group, serving on several occasions as its president. He also was president of the venerable Fayette Round Table Club and the Fayette Rotary Club, among others. He has been active in the Fayette Area Heritage Association (FAHA), the American Legion, Linn Memorial United Methodist Church, and the Howard County Community Foundation. In addition, David was a founding member of The Huddle, an informal group of community leaders which meets monthly.

Besides his community involvement, David Inman has served in countless ways behind the scenes at Central Methodist University. On many occasions throughout a given year, he assists in hosting and transporting trustees, alumni and other guests who are attending CMU functions or visiting on campus.

No account of David's contributions here would be complete without noting the role of his much-loved father-in-law, Miles Plzak, who just weeks ago celebrated his 100th birthday. Miles had moved to Fayette about 10 years ago from Indianapolis following the death of his beloved wife, Bessee. Taking up residence in the living quarters attached to CMU's Morrison Observatory on Park Road, Miles found a happy life in a home located immediately adjacent to the presidential residence.

Reared in Chicago, Marianne's dad learned his trade as a tool and die maker and entered the work-force during the depths of the Great Depression. Ultimately, he joined Western Electric, the manufacturing arm of AT&T, rising through the ranks to assume significant executive responsibilities and the supervision of several hundred employees.

Already having lived to an advanced age when he moved to Fayette, Miles was still not content to spend his hours sitting idly by in front of the television set. He took delight in entering into the life of the community — including involvement with Rotary, Community Betterment, and Linn Memorial Church. He also lent his name as honorary chairman of several civic campaigns, including two successful efforts to secure donations for street sign replacements.

Over the years, David Inman has served as care-giver for his father-in-law and often the two could be seen together in and around the community. On April 22, Miles was flown to his new home in Georgetown, Texas, where he is now safely ensconced in a small apartment that's part of an assisted living facility there. Meanwhile, Miles eagerly awaits the time in less than month when Marianne and David again will be nearby. Having already said our good-byes to Miles, the countless residents here who have become friends with David and Marianne now prepare to say so long and farewell. Godspeed and every conceivable good wish in your new life in the Lone Star State. Stay in touch and return to visit often.



David Inman



Miles Plzak

Continued from page 6

civic leader and philanthropist, and his wife, Edith I. Garst.

"At the October 2008 dedication, Inman said "The Garst Information Commons represent an especially significant contribution to the high quality of our library research capabilities and to the overall academic excellence of this university." In addition to their gifts establishing the Information Commons, the Garsts have funded eight Hall of Sponsor Scholarships at Central Methodist University.

The latest and one of the most significant projects representing campus improvements was facilitated by the awarding of a major grant to CMU in October 2010. Inman announced that the Mabee Foundation had awarded CMU a \$1,080,500 challenge grant to help fund restoration of Classic Hall, one of the university's older and architecturally significant buildings. The university was engaged in a \$5.4 million project — the Classic Renaissance Campaign — to restore Classic Hall, which is located at the campus entrance at the intersection of Main and Elm streets in Fayette.

"We are extremely pleased to receive this challenge grant from the Mabee Foundation," Inman said. "This is a wonderful reaffirmation of our partnership with the Foundation, and we feel that it clearly reflects their continuing confidence in the mission of Central Methodist University and our ability to carry out these substantial improvements in campus facilities.

"It is also most fitting that we celebrate Classic Hall's long service to Central Methodist by undertaking its renovation during the year of its 100th anniversary." Dedication of the completely refurbished historic structure took place in 2012.

Built in 1911, the three-story, 18,000-square-foot building is architecturally classified as a "Renaissance Revival" building. Classic Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building was closed in 1980 as a cost-saving measure and had been used since then only for storage.

The restored Classic Hall now houses part of the Swinney Conservatory of Music and The Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art. The art gallery is located on the ground floor. The first floor (second level) now houses music faculty offices, practice rooms, meeting or seminar rooms, and the music library, and the top floor of the building houses large rehearsal rooms for CMU band's and choral departments.

Classic Hall was built at a cost of \$40,000. It has the distinction of being the first building used exclusively for classroom purposes among colleges for women in Missouri (Howard-Payne Female College, which was folded into Central College in the mid-1920s). Originally the science department occupied three rooms on the first (ground level) floor, along with a lecture room and laboratories. Also on the ground floor was a gymnasium equipped for athletics and physical training. The college library was housed on the second level and an auditorium was located on the upper floor, which also included a stage and balcony. A Steinway grand piano and pipe organ also were located on the upper floor, where chapel exercises, recitals and "public entertainments" were given.

The interior areas of Classic Hall were remodeled several times between 1911 and the last renovation in 1967. Only minor changes were made to the building's exterior over the years, including the placement of different windows and the installation of a side entrance.

Under President Inman's guidance, Central Methodist University has a successful history of receiving major grants. The university has received previous grants from Mabee over the years, including one for \$1.5 million in 2003 during the successful capital campaign that raised \$34.5 million, which funded construction of the new 60-thousand-square-foot Student and Community Center, and a \$415,000 challenge grant in 2007 used in the construction of the new Mabee Athletic Facility. Sizable grants have also been awarded to CMU by the Kresge Foundation.

Although the Classic Campaign will be the last to be undertaken during Inman's tenure at CMU, future plans call for more campus improvements, including one potentially targeting Stedman Hall, an effort that has already occupied a lot of Inman's, as well as others', time and energy. Inman and the senior administrative staff have set a goal of 1,500 students on the Fayette campus by the year 2020, as well as substantially increased numbers of off-campus, extended studies students in CMU programs around the state. It is a fitting goal for a president who has seen the total student enrollment grow from fewer than 1,400 students statewide to approximately 5,616. This includes a Dual Credit program for academically qualified high school juniors and seniors that began with a handful of students in the 1980s and now includes nearly 2,040 students at nearly 100 high schools throughout the state.

When a press conference was called in February this year to announce Inman's replacement, Dr. Roger Drake, currently the vice president of administration and finance at Lindsey Wilson College in Columbia, Ky., who will assume the CMU presidency in July, Inman said her best advice for the incoming leader was to "Love this institution with every fiber of your being and work tirelessly in its advancement."

In summing up Inman's remarkable tenure at CMU, Glenn Cox, chair of the Board of Trustees, offers this assessment: "Marianne's tenure as president of Central Methodist University resulted in what I would summarize as its period of greatest rebuilding as well as its notable progress toward excellence.

"Her leadership skills are of the highest order. She is strategic, thorough, farsighted and able to identify critical issues and apply the resources to engage in problem solving or being opportunistic.

"Another sign of an outstanding leader is the ability to select the right people to execute the plans to achieve your goals. I also have the highest regard for all of her team members. It's hard to beat the combination of good leadership and outstanding teamwork. She maintains an excellent relationship with the board, having always demonstrated an adherence to the principles of integrity and honesty. I might even go so far as to describe her as Central's version of the "Iron Lady."

"Thank you Dr. Inman for your leadership of Central Methodist University and for providing Addison Labs with well educated employees and interns over the years!"



I will never forget the day the board of Central Methodist College voted to hire Dr. Marianne Inman as the new president. I was impressed with her but I understood the challenges she would face in the coming years. She more than met those challenges.

Since Dr. Inman took the helm the College has become a legitimate University, the budget has been balanced every year, McMurray Hall was totally remodeled into a beautiful residence hall and, the old student union went away and was replaced with a state of the art student and community center. Dr. Inman grew the Fayette campus population at an unbelievable pace to record levels while increasing the quality of the students and increased our off-campus presence dramatically while maintaining top quality at each location. She rescued Central's Music program and brought it back to the level of excellence that Central had come to expect and saved Classic Hall from decay and created a first class art gallery and music teaching facility. The athletic facilities were brought up to modern standards and are as good or better than any other comparable institution and continue to be shared with the entire Fayette community.

The quality and livability of Fayette are directly tied to Central Methodist University and its success and size. Every citizen in this community should thank Dr. Inman for her vision, leadership, tireless work, and dedication to the University and the City of Fayette and Howard County. Fayette would be less than it is if not for Dr. Marianne Inman.

Thank you, Dr. Inman.

J. Bruce Addison



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From all of the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of Central Methodist University...

Thank You

for 18 wonderful years.



TO DR. MARIANNE INMAN, for your spirited integrity, your tireless energy, and above all, your love for Central Methodist University;

TO MR. DAVID INMAN, for your willingness to get involved, your innovative ideas, and your spirit of community;



TO MR. MILES PLZAK for your cheerful countenance, your gift of friendship, and your ready smile;

Your friends at Commercial Trust and throughout the Fayette community say **"THANK YOU,"** and not "Goodbye," but **"HAPPY TRAILS!"** You will always be in our hearts!

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