



**Ayres Hall Renovation**  
**The University of Tennessee**  
**Knoxville, Tennessee**



ARCHITECTS  
 WEEKS  
 AMBROSE  
 McDONALD  
 INC.

Area 80,124 s.f.  
 Construction Cost \$15,843,367  
 Cost/s.f. \$198  
 Completion Date 2010

Architects Weeks Ambrose McDonald, Inc. was half of a joint venture to provide A/E services on the historic restoration, remodeling and interior furnishing of Ayres Hall on The University of Tennessee Knoxville campus. Designed to be LEED Certified, the renovated building opened in January 2011, ninety years after the original building opened, during a week of celebration with many descendants of former UT president Brown Ayres, for whom the building was named.



The scope of work included restoration of the exterior brick and limestone, replacing exterior doors and windows, installing four clocks on the tower, blending new clay tile into the existing roof, and constructing a north entrance plaza. The interior classrooms and offices were completely gutted and replaced with new wiring, plumbing ventilation, and three elevators to meet code requirements. Much of the floor space was reconfigured, with classrooms on the ground and first floors and offices on the second and third floors. The fourth floor, which had been closed in recent decades, now contains seminar, meeting and conference rooms.



Terrazzo flooring, marble and plaster accents, metal railings, and wood paneling and trim were restored throughout the corridors and monumental stair. Three elevators were added featuring marble, terrazzo & bronze finishes. Marble wall panels and benches that were part of the original design, but deleted for budget reasons, were added. Toilets were completely renovated using new marble, tile and wood partition doors to respect the original design. Most wood flooring in the classrooms was retained and restored.





A new north plaza, based upon the plaza shown in the original 1919 architectural plans but apparently deleted for budget reasons, was added. Additional landscaping was installed around the building. Masonry and limestone mechanical wells were added on either side of the south entry to conceal the building generator and transformer. All exterior openings were provided with energy efficient but historically accurate windows and doors that were designed using old photographs. Custom replica lighting fixtures were installed around the entries and along the north plaza.



Four clocks and an electronic carillon were installed in the belfry tower. All of the exterior brick, limestone and clay roof tiles were cleaned, restored and/or replaced to match the original. The original copper gutters, downspouts and wood entry transoms were retained and restored to original condition.



In the fourth floor Colloquium Room, historic photos of the campus and Ayres Hall construction were screened onto glass panels to depict the history of the university and Knoxville area at the time of the Civil War to the modern era. Custom ADA compliant signage throughout the building directs occupants and visitors to every space within the building, and carefully selected new furniture was provided throughout.

Ayres Hall sits atop “the Hill” - the original campus that contains many of the “collegic gothic” academic buildings that have been or are scheduled to be renovated. A façade lighting system was designed to highlight the main tower - the historic icon that is most identified with the University’s Knoxville campus. Ground and roof mounted metal halide lamps accentuate the tower at night, creating the “beacon shining bright” that is immortalized in the University’s alma mater.