

Gustave A. Krasin  
Nominated by Carol and Ken Krasin

Gustave A. Krasin is remembered as a person who was instrumental in the rebuilding of Marshfield after the well-known Upham fire. According to the 2005 Intensive Survey Report, "Gus A. Krasin was the only professional architect to practice in Marshfield in the first half of the twentieth century."

Gus Krasin immigrated to the United States from Ukraine with his family in 1892. They lived in Arkansas and Michigan for a couple of years before settling in Tigerton, Wisconsin, just before the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1904, at 19 years of age, Gus began learning the carpentry trade. While living in Tigerton in 1907, he and his brother Jacob began a construction company, "Krasin Construction". They worked north of Marshfield until 1909 when business in Marshfield lured them to relocate their residence.

In 1909, Gus married Elsa Fremming. They had two sons, Lawrence and Karlton. He then began rebuilding, designing and building new buildings in Marshfield as well as in northern Wisconsin.



Gus began designing hotels and large storage facilities for Mr. C.E. Blodgett. Krasin Construction also built the Sam Miller Fruit Cold Storage building. Seven buildings Gus designed in Marshfield over the years are listed on the Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory: The Hamilton and Catherine Roddis Home; the original Marshfield Clinic at 7th and Central; Marshfield Industrial Foundation (better known as Weinbrenner Shoe Factory); 808 Oak (Gus' home); The Adler Theater (currently the Rogers Theater); the Armory (currently the Oak Avenue Community Center); and WDLB Radio Station.

Gus was part owner of the Marshfield Brick Company on Mann Road with Louis Hartl and Ernest Krause from 1915 until it closed during WWII because of a moratorium on building. Krasin Brothers were responsible for building the five kilns. Marshfield Brick was used in the construction of the Purdy Junior High School, Columbus High School, the former Adler Theatre, Brick Barns at Old Norwood, as well as the Oak Street Armory, to mention a few. Many people in town were employed at the Brick Company.

Carpenters were needed for Krasin Construction for buildings which were not only built in Marshfield, but also many small and large towns along the train lines which crossed through Marshfield. The Marshfield train lines were instrumental in getting employees to and from construction sites since roads and cars were at a premium.

In 1917, Gus and Jacob opened "a much-needed paint store" in Marshfield and later added wallpaper sales to their store. In the early part of the Twentieth century, many renovations were designed to existing homes and office buildings to "have all the modern conveniences;" basements, central heat, plumbing, and running water. Gus was also inventive. He invented an automatic open and close mechanism for a freight elevator for a building for H.C. Hoenig.

As a councilman, Gus was involved in Marshfield's city government as well as in the county government. In April of 1917, he was instrumental in having the roads paved from Marshfield to Pittsville to Grand Rapids with only \$2,000 to be paid by Marshfield. He served many years in local government.

After designing many buildings before an Architect license was required, in 1918, Gus was grandfathered in and awarded his Architecture License. There are many notable structures in town which were designed by Gus. In 1922, he designed Marshfield Water, Electric Light and Power Company's 500 horsepower boiler house with coal bunker and 150 ft. brick smokestack, which generated more work for their employees.

Roddis Lumber awarded Gus the design of many additions to their factory buildings. Also, three distinct homes were designed specifically for Roddis. They varied in size from small to large. They were built in Hungry Hollow and were offered to Roddis upper-level employees with no down payment. Some remain, though over the years they may have been altered and increased in size.

There are many structures in Marshfield that Gus designed. Here are some of the more notable not already mentioned:

- 1922 – Blum Brothers Box Company, which was Miller Brothers Warehouse, and is now Marshfield Furniture
- 1925 – Exhibition Building at the Fairgrounds
- 1925 – Ronald McDonald House, formerly a parsonage
- 1926 – Hotel Charles
- 1928 – Penney's
- 1932 – Karau-Radtke Building 333 Central
- 1941 – Weber Grocery
- 1947 – Hartl Manor Apartments
- 1947 – Rollohomes Trailer Coach
- 1951 – Legion Hall was moved, Connor office building was moved, Sears built
- 1951 – Immanuel Lutheran Church Parish Hall

Many structures designed in Marshfield from 1909 until 1951, which is more than 71 years ago, remain prominent in the community thanks to designs by Gustave Krasin. The abundance and longevity of his work certainly leaves an important footprint throughout Marshfield.