

*FEBRUARY, 1959*

*Fehr & Granger win National Awards*

*When the old Capitol burned*

*Architect in Training Program*

TEXAS ARCHITECT

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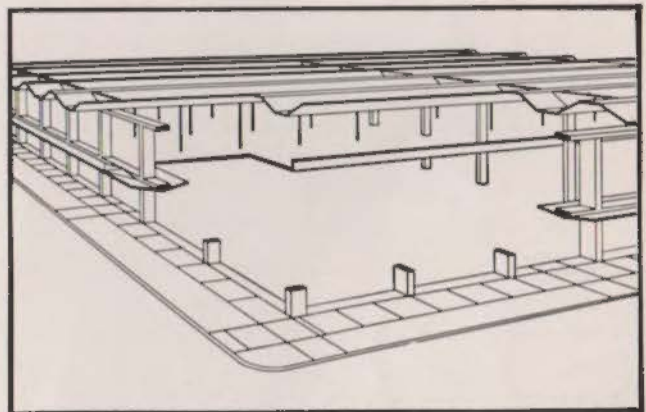
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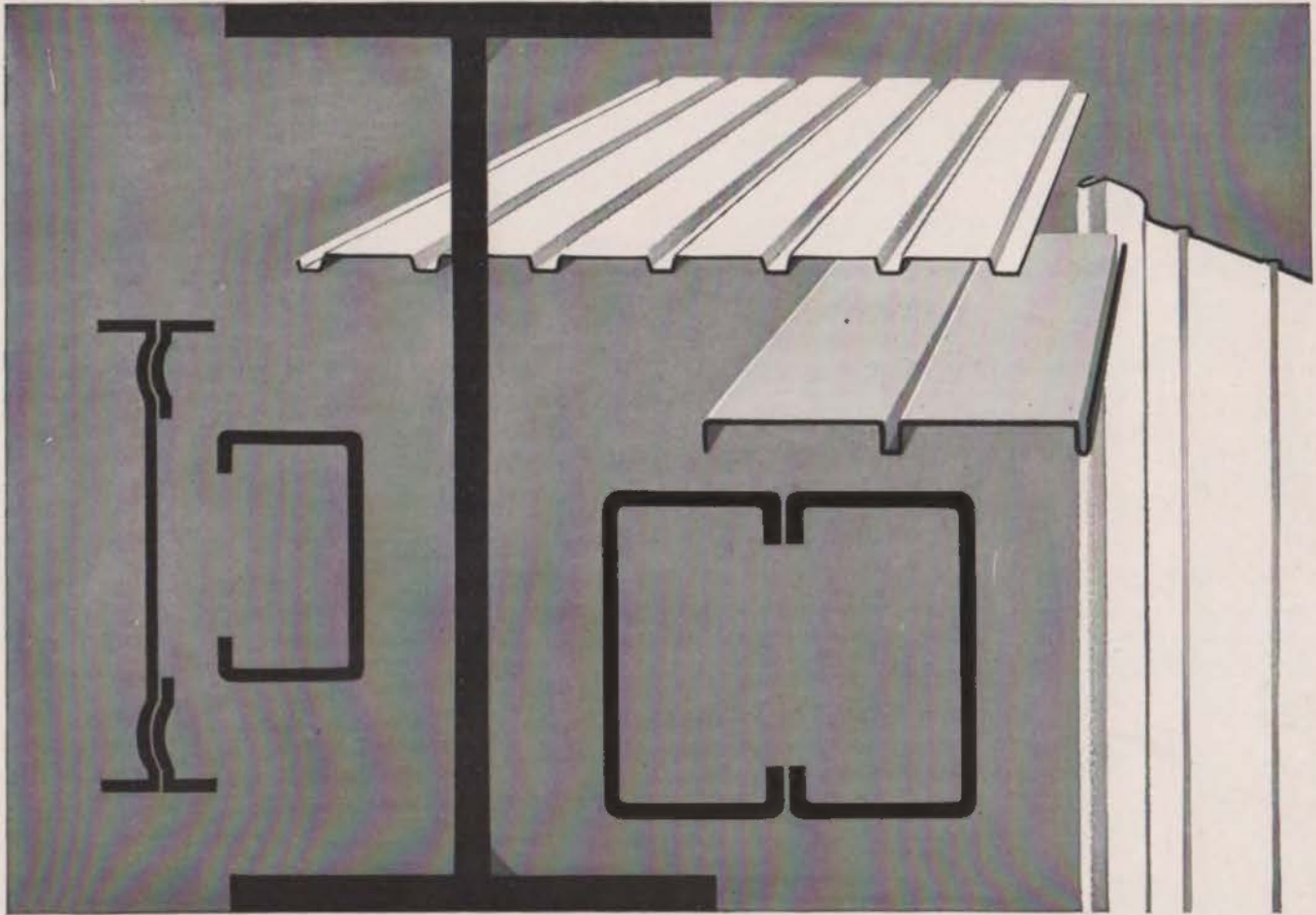


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## The President's Letter

By

Robert P. Woltz, Jr.

President,

Texas Society of Architects



The first Board Meeting for the year 1959 of the TSA was held January 24th, in Austin. I regret that some of the Chapter Directors could not attend this organizational meeting because of illness. I announced that the Spring Board Meeting would be held on April 18th, in Lubbock, at the Caprock Hotel. You will, of course, receive other notices of this meeting but it might be well for all of you Chapter Officers and Chapter Members in that area to mark your calendars and plan to attend the Spring Board Meeting. You are cordially invited and will be most welcome.

The Spring Board Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Charter Presentation Meeting of the new Lubbock Chapter, the 16th Chapter of the Texas region. The Officers and Directors of the Lubbock Chapter are planning a very large evening on Friday, April 17th. From the interest already shown me, I believe that we are going to see many enthusiastic results from the members of this new Chapter.

The Texas Society of Architects is launching some very omnipotent programs for this year and it is my

feeling that the TSA in its 20th year is really going to become of age. The recognition which we are getting from the slide show, which you are going to hear more about later, on Capitol Hill in Austin, is most gratifying.

The Adult Seminar on Design for the Practicing Architect, being worked up by Chairman of the Committee on Education, "Skeet" Pitts, is something that every practicing architect in the State of Texas should look forward to attending. I am firmly convinced that you will never regret the time spent at such a Seminar.

Our AIA Regional Director, Max Brooks, called the Board's attention to the high standing of the Texas Society of Architects in the American Institute of Architects, stating that California being a region within its own state boundary like Texas, the California region was going to pattern their regional organization after that of Texas and Florida in all probability would soon follow suit. Max also gave the dates of June 22nd, through June 26th, 1959, as the date of the AIA Convention in New Orleans. He expressed the desire that since the Texas Society of Architects was in such high standing at the national level, he sincerely hoped that many of us would plan to attend the National Convention since it was so close to home. Max also felt the vertical committee structure had virtually reached a nationwide agreement in the Institute.

I am trying in this letter to give you a small inkling as to what is being done by your Texas Society of Architects. In the future, I feel sure you will welcome the opportunity and be proud to say, "I am a Member of the Texas Society of Architects."

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### THE TEXAS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS

The Texas Regional Organization of  
The American Institute of Architects

Harold E. Calhoun, Editor  
John G. Flowers, Jr., Managing Editor  
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A dignified and thoughtful way to remember a departed friend is to make a donation to the memorial funds of the Texas Architectural Foundation. Chapters, firms and individuals increasingly are taking advantage of this method of demonstrating high regard through a constructive and meaningful expression.

All donations are acknowledged by the officers of the Foundation to the donor and the family or associates of the person memorialized. The application of the gift to further architectural education in Texas is explained.

Next time, send a check to:  
Texas Architectural Foundation  
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SEVERAL years ago, a balding, jovial man with a friendly smile and quick wit spent two weeks at the Texas School for the Deaf, pretending he was a child who could not hear. He went to classes and participated in recreational activities. When the students took music lessons he went along—placing his own hands on the piano with theirs so he could “listen” to the music through his fingertips.

Arthur Fehr was determined to find out everything he could about the needs of the School before he began designing new buildings for it.

“He practically lived there,” recalled Charles Granger with a smile as the two men sat in the stunningly-decorated offices of the Fehr and Granger Building, which is perched on the banks of an Austin creek.

Such research is considered funda-

mental by this rapidly-growing, frequently-honored firm—the only one in the country to receive two awards in *Progressive Architecture's* Sixth Annual Design Awards Program.

Fehr, Granger and their associate, Herbert Crume, were all on hand in San Francisco for the Awards Banquet where they won the top Design Award for large commercial

buildings and an Educational Award Citation. Their plans for Austin's new airport terminal won the Design Award and their work on the proposed Hillview Unit for Brown Schools, Inc., the Award Citation.

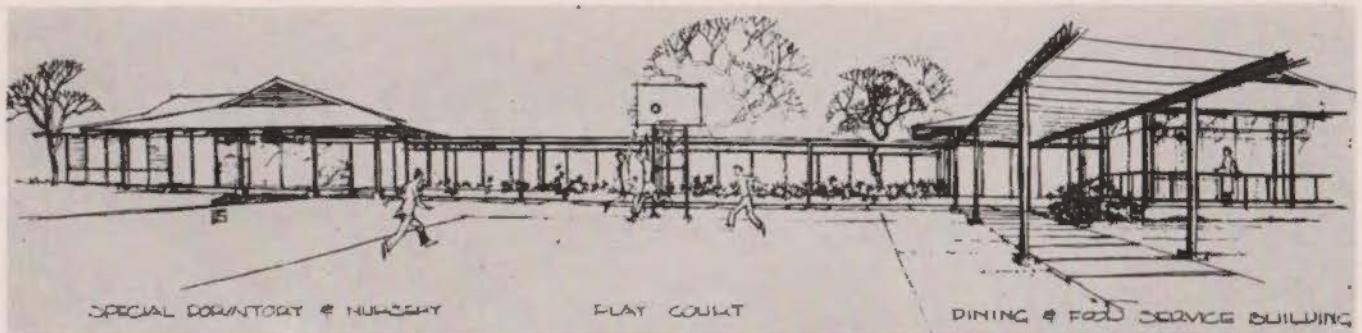
In 1953, when Fehr led an architectural study tour through Germany, he appeared to be strangely fascinated with airports. Fehr and

## Research Does It

... say Fehr and Granger, winners  
of top design awards



Arthur Fehr, Associate Herbert Crume and Charles Granger have found that detailed research is the key to award-winning designs, such as the two which won them high honors in the PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE competition.



Putting themselves in the place of the youngsters for whom they designed this school, Fehr and Granger came up with a design for the proposed Hillview Unit of Brown Schools which netted them an Educational Award Citation.

Granger had just been commissioned to design the Austin terminal. Fehr studied from the air as well as the ground every terminal building he saw—and spent every minute he possibly could asking questions of the people who worked at the airports.

"The best question," he said, "was simply this: If you were starting all over again, what would you change about this building?"

Granger, meanwhile, followed the same general pattern during extensive travel through the United States. Every member of their staff did the same thing for about five years.

This far-flung research included numerous conferences with officials of the Civil Aeronautics Administration, commercial airlines, the United States Weather Bureau and other agencies.

"You don't have to be a specialist to come up with a good architectural plan," commented Fehr. "The real trick is to research your problem.

"I've never been a member of a sorority," he grinned, "but we came up with a highly successful design for a sorority house."

The airport research included endless hours of work with cardboard models. Although the research stretched over five years, the concentrated design labors took about eighteen months.

"And the City of Austin has been a wonderful client," said Fehr.

Crume agreed.

"In most award-winning projects," he said, "you'll find that the client was a sympathetic one."

The airport involved several unique problems.

"Very seldom do you get an architectural project," said Crume, "that has to look good from the air as well as from the ground. We felt that the roof should be particularly attractive. It is really sort of a big umbrella, protecting us from the sun—and we have a critical sun problem here, of course."

The roof, 16 feet above the ground, has a 16-foot overhang. Its unique structure and the control tower shape represent "a conscious effort to get away from a static silhouette and create a dynamic structure" of efficiency and design drama without creating the hulking "monumentality" found in many airport terminals.

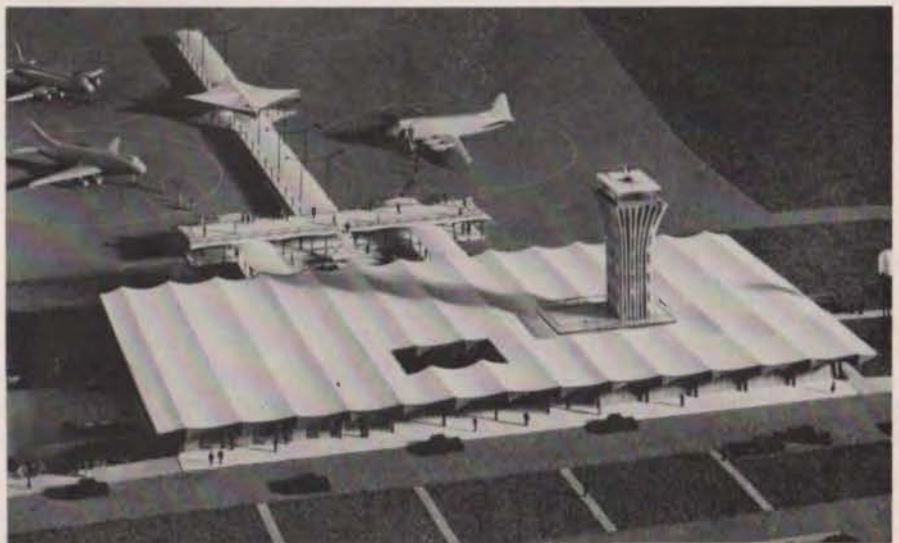
**S**INCE Austin, for economic reasons, cannot build an airport now that will be adequate for 20 years, Fehr and Granger devised a

master plan with two building stages. The first stage will provide necessary facilities for approximately 10 years. The second stage will provide for expansion until about 1980.

To plan beyond that date is not practical, the architects feel, since technological progress in air travel cannot be predicted accurately past that time. The master plan makes it possible for the airport to retain its design and unity and to continue in full operation during future expansion.

The same type of comprehensive, detailed research went into plans for the Brown School's Hillview Unit, which will be situated high on a hill overlooking San Marcos. This project was honored both for design and adaptation to the site.

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This model of Austin's new airport terminal, also shown on the cover, brought Fehr and Granger the top Design Award for large commercial buildings in the PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE Sixth Annual Design awards program.

# WHEN THE OLD CAPITOL BURNED

*This writer saw the fire as a friend of architecture  
... rather than a fiend*

*Editor's Note:*

*An entire area of new buildings to house the state government is now being developed around the picturesque, red granite Capitol of which Texans are so proud.*

*Construction of the present Capitol, completed in 1888, was speeded up as the result of a fire which destroyed its predecessor—a building*

*which some Texans, at least, were happy to see razed. This group included the editor of a weekly newspaper, "Texas Siftings." As you will learn from his delightful, humorous account of the fire, which appeared Nov. 12, 1881, and which is reproduced here, this gentleman had strong, definite views on architecture in general and that of the old Capitol in particular.*

THE architectural monstrosity that has so long disfigured the crown of the heaven-kissing hill at the head of Congress Avenue, in Austin, is no more. The venerable edifice that bore such a startling resemblance to a large sized corn crib, with a pumpkin for a dome, and whose halls have so often resounded with legislative eloquence, reminding the distant hearer of a dog barking up a hollow log, is gone.

It took fire on Wednesday at noon, and in two hours nothing was left of it but the bare walls. The old building, however, was filled with many historical reminiscences and thousands of bats, all of which perished in the flame.

We were on the spot and saw what happened. As one of the Sifters was driving over the hill west of the Capitol, on his homeward way to wrestle with his mid-day meal, he perceived a dense smoke oozing out of one of the chimneys

on the north side of the building, and he said confidentially to himself, "That's the way those State officials waste firewood because they don't have to pay for it themselves. There they are toasting their sinful shins before fires in which they waste enough wood to do a respectable family for a week."

The Sifter had just made up his mind to write an editorial headed "Reckless Extravagance," — "What Becomes of the People's Money?" when he perceived that some more smoke was leaking through one of the windows. Pretty soon a tongue of red flame protruded through the window, and felt around for something to lick, very much like that of a hungry boy who has been feeding on corn bread and molasses, and is anxious to get in the returns from all the outside precincts . . .

It was a thrilling scene. The fire demon's cruel tongues licked the fair proportions of the historic pile, while huge volumes of black smoke

poured from the doomed building, and settled over the fair city of Austin, like a sable funeral pall, enveloping in its somber folds the spires and domes that glitter on the seven hills of the Capital City of Texas, while the toot, toot, toot, of the fire engine, and the hoarse profanity of the enthusiastic volunteer firemen, seemed a solemn and appropriate dirge as the old sarcophagus crumbled into, etc., etc. But we are getting poetical, and encroaching on the province of the local reporter. What we have written in the above paragraph will, however, demonstrate that we can be sentimental and pathetic when we want to. Those who imagine that the Sifters have no pathos or poetry inside them are requested to read the foregoing, about the "doomed building" and the "funeral pall," over again.

In a very short time the fire fiend was in complete possession, as if he had been counted in or elected by





Construction of the present State Capitol was speeded up when fire destroyed the old one, shown above, which was described by this 1881 newspaperman as "the architectural monstrosity" at the head of Congress Avenue.

an overwhelming majority. He showed his ruddy face and fierce glowing eyes (more poetry) at the windows, which were lit up like those of a confectionery store on Christmas Eve, while Governor Roberts, in a rubber overcoat, like a venerable Santa Claus, wandered about, and looked on from the outside. He was accompanied by two staffs. One, which looked like an enlarged broom handle, he grasped in his hand. The other staff, that accompanied him, was the staff that wanted him to attend the Yorktown Centennial, and to take it, the staff, along so as to lend tone and dignity to the occasion.

**H**EROIC efforts were made to preserve the public property. We noticed in particular one colored man, who, in our opinion should receive a pension from the State. He rushed into the burning building

and rescued a large office desk. He had the whole western hemisphere to choose, as a place where to deposit that desk, but the only place that seemed to suit him, or that would answer his purpose, was a precipice or embankment, 20 feet high, on the west side of the Capitol. He approached the edge, raised the desk above his head, and hurled it down this "abruption," as Seabaugh of the *Express* would call it, where it lay on it's broken back, mangled beyond recognition, and held up the remnants of its legs in a supplicatory attitude.

Once more the heroic colored man disappeared into the doomed edifice, and, returning with an armful of public documents, he cast them over the brow of the embankment. The brisk norther took charge of them, and the atmosphere was filled with foreign treaties of

the Republic of Texas, and ancient archives, yellow with age, and bearing the proud signatures of Hispania's royal potentate, (another relapse into poetry.)

The brave and chivalric colored man thus continued to save public property, being the coolest man on the grounds, except the four gentlemen who assisted in demolishing the ten foot high Alamo monument that stood in the vestibule. They deserve to have their names preserved in history. If we can learn their names, we shall publish them next week.

They said that the monument erected in memory of the heroes who, for the freedom of Texas, gave their lives at the Texas Thermopylae—a monument carved out of the blood-stained stones of the sacred Alamo, should not be allowed to perish. With tears in their eyes they went in search of an axe. It was an impressive sight to see these four old men come back with a long handled axe, and while the lurid flames lighted up the scene, and the Genus of history despairingly fluttered over the cherished monument, gave the old belisk a whack, and the record of historic deeds crumbled into small chunks of plaster of Paris.

The members of the Austin Fire Companies did all that firemen could be expected to do, and the criticism of their action, in some of the daily papers, is unjust. They had no water to work with except a stream from one small plug.

**W**HEN the alarm was given, it was supposed by a great many that the treasury, containing the million and a half cash balance, was in danger. The anxiety on the part of all classes to assist in removing the silver to a place of safety, was touching. Wealthy men, who had failed in business, got up from champagne and oysters, and, bare-headed, distanced impecunious candidates and seedy journalists, who were also rushing to the front to remove the cash balance to a place of safety. That prominent Austin Avenue merchant, Mose Schaumburg, in his shirt sleeves, on a dray horse, was one of the first to be halted by the  
(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 9)

guard, who positively refused to allow even newspaper men to remove that cash balance to a place where it would be safe.

As already stated, Governor Roberts was on the grounds, wearing a gum coat and a troubled look. At first we supposed that the fire fiend had "busted" the senatorial campaign by getting away with that corn-cob pipe, but we were afterwards told that the cob pipe was rescued by one of the brave firemen at great personal risk to himself, while a batch of 400 applications for pardon, that had only arrived by mail that morning, too late to be acted upon, had been destroyed. If this is so, the fire can hardly be regarded in the light of a calamity.

The oil paintings of George Washington, Sam Houston, Stephen F. Austin, General Tom Green, and some others were destroyed.

Almost all the papers in the Governor's and the Secretary of State's

room were saved, and but few public documents of any value were lost.

The oil paintings, twenty in number, of all the presidents of the Texas Republic and all the governors of Texas were saved. They belong to Huddle, the artist. No doubt the State will buy them. If they had been lost they could never have been replaced, as of some of them there are no copies in existence.

The library of law books was burned and will be difficult to replace. The collection of fossils was for the most part destroyed, and there is no insurance on the life of the bats, but beyond this there is not much cause for regret, as the fire precludes the possibility of utilizing the old Capitol as a part of the new building, which atrocity has been contemplated.

Instead of the hideous old hen coop we have now a picturesque ruin, with columns that remind the traveler of the Parthenon and classic Greece and Italy.

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# A Hand For Trainees

## FORT WORTH ARCHITECTS HELP THEIR FELLOWMAN— AND THEIR PROFESSION



HUBERT H. CRANE

“WE’VE grabbed a bull by the tail,” said Hubert H. Crane, the beloved Fort Worth architect, “and the tail is long enough for a lot of handholds! We need your help!”

Crane was discussing his favorite subject, the “Architects in Training” program which celebrates its first anniversary this month. Sponsored by the Fort Worth Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, this unique project proves how much effort—and money—architects are willing to put into a professional training program for young men who are anxious to obtain licenses.

“One man worked for me 25 years,” Crane recalled, “and became the Number Two man in my office although he had never been to college. He was an excellent hand because of his practical experience but he never felt himself qualified to take the state examinations for a license. His architectural experience later helped him become a highly successful banker—but I’ve often thought there should be some way for such men to obtain professional training that would enable them to pass the license examinations.”

Crane is the father of the program that now enables men to supplement their practical experience with professional training prior to

taking the examinations.

“We found that a lot of them were simply afraid to take the examinations,” said Crane. “So we started giving them ‘dry run’ exams, patterned as nearly after the state exams as we can make them. They include 12-hour design problems such as those they encounter when they take the license exams.”

These dry runs are particularly valuable, Crane believes, in teaching the men to budget their time on such problems. Failure to finish these long design problems is one of the principal reasons for failure of the state examinations, according to Crane.

The training program was launched officially on February 13, 1958, with 35 men accepting Crane’s invitation to attend the organizational meeting. Fifteen of them had college degrees and the others had practical experience ranging from five to 19 years.

“Log books” in which young architects keep records of their experience preparatory to taking the state examinations presented one of the first hurdles, since they were designed solely for college graduates. Crane cleared that one quickly by getting the AIA to publish a new edition designed for men without college degrees.

The lack of textbooks also presented a problem—but the persuasive Crane also came up with the answer for that one. Only 60 per cent of the necessary books were available at the Fort Worth Public Library. The Acme Brick Company donated the other 40 per cent to the Library’s collection. Then the Texcrete Company and the Fort Worth Sand and Gravel Company teamed up to contribute an entire new set of textbooks, which are kept at the Fort Worth Art Association Building for the convenience of those on the west side of the City.

THE Fort Worth Chapter’s executive committee voted to pay the \$5 fee for each of the Log Book applicants. A few days later, forms were mailed to all applicants along with a list of suggested subjects to be studied and a list of books for the subjects, furnished by the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners.

Members of the Fort Worth Chapter were asked to serve as sponsors or counselors for the trainees.

“Almost every member responded,” Crane reports, “and the candidates were given their choices of counselors.”

Crane obtained particularly valuable help from three Fort Worth

*(Continued on next page)*

(Continued from page 11)

architects who had passed the state examinations in 1957—Jim Johnson, Paul Putty and Bob Chambers. Putty and Chambers had college degrees but Johnson did not.

"They studied together for the exams," Crane recalls. "And Chambers and Putty claim they learned more from Johnson than he learned from them."

Fourteen night training sessions were held last year, along with three 12-hour design problems. Crane hopes to offer such a design problem each month this year.

"We've averaged about 85 per cent attendance at the training sessions," he said, "and we have had only five or six boys drop out of the program. These boys want to learn—and we've been fortunate in finding professional architects who are willing to help them."

Crane is particularly grateful to Johnson, Chambers and Putty for their advice on the study courses and to George Shoupec, head of the

Arlington State College Department of Architecture, and Bill Hendricks for their overall participation plus their conduct of the dry run examinations.

**E**VERYONE connected with the program, of course, is grateful to Crane for making it a reality. He has given generously, both in time and money, to help these fledgling architects secure the professional training they need.

Crane has a unique educational background of his own. Educated in his youth by a private tutor, he successfully passed the University of Louisville entrance examinations at the tender age of 14—without bothering to pick up a high school diploma en route.

He went ahead and earned his college degree—and laughs when he recalls that "sometimes people have looked down their noses at me because I never graduated from high school."

The training sessions are held in the Fort Worth Art Association's auditorium—a location that proved

fortunate in more ways than one.

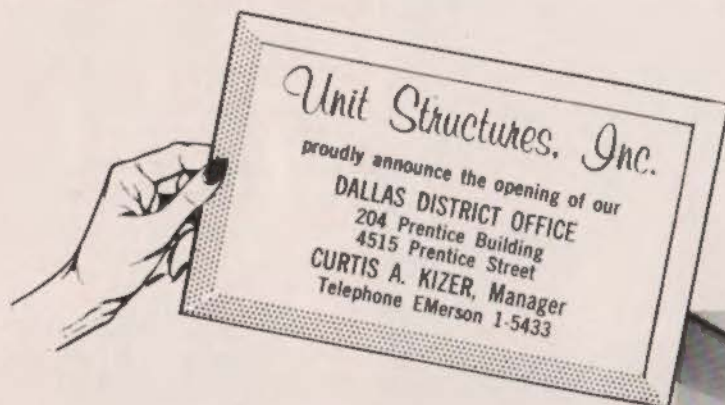
In the adjoining room, Crane discovered an exhibit by John Chumley in water color, tempora, pen and pencil.

"His technique is exceptionally realistic and adapted to architectural rendering," he commented in announcing that Chumley had agreed to teach a class of architects each Wednesday evening for 14 weeks. He further agreed to give the trainees first opportunity to join the class, which was limited to 25 students.

"I consider this an excellent and a most unusual opportunity," Crane said in a letter to all of his trainees, "and urge those of you who lack training in this work to join. We may never again be able to offer you an equal opportunity for this type of training."

The fee for the course, he announced, would be \$25—and then he added a typical Crane statement.

"Talk to me personally," he said, "before allowing finances to prevent your joining."



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(Continued from page 7)

Brown School is a private, year-round residential school for the care, treatment and training of mentally-retarded and emotionally-disturbed children.

"When we started work on it," recalled Fehr. "Tom Shefelman, the associate in charge of the project, and I went over there and told them to treat us like mentally-retarded children. We told them to do everything to us they do to these children when they enter the school."

Shefelman emerged from the experience with the strong conviction that the school should have a camp-like atmosphere. In order to work well with the irregular terrain and to avoid brutal institutionalism, he divided the project into a group of individual buildings. Using hipped roofs with generous overhangs, he believes, will create a campus unity while providing an informal, protective environment for the children.

The distinguished panel of judges in the *Progressive Architecture* competition said they found in both of these Fehr and Granger projects "qualities beyond mere function—something that gives the observer a compelling esthetic experience."

The judges included Architects Hugh A. Stubbins, Jr., of Cambridge, Massachusetts; Ladislav L. Rado of New York, Philip Will, Jr., of Chicago and Minoru Yamasaki of Detroit, along with Engineer Milo S. Ketchum of Denver.

**F**EHHR and Granger organized their firm in 1938, after serving far-ranging apprenticeships. Both graduated from the University of Texas, Fehr in 1925 and Granger in 1936.

Both are rendering outstanding service to the profession. Fehr, a member of the American Institute of Architects, College of Fellows, is now serving as secretary-treasurer of the Texas Society of Architects. Granger is national chairman of the AIA Committee on School Buildings and Educational Facilities.

Fehr took graduate work at Columbia University, the Beaux Arts Institute of Design and New York

University. He traveled and studied in Europe, then worked nine years for architects in New York and San Antonio, plus three years as architect for the National Park Service before opening his Austin office in 1937.

His office at that time, he recalls, consisted of a single drafting board in the back of a wood carver's studio.

After graduating from Texas, Granger worked two years for Richard J. Neutra in Los Angeles.

"That was in the middle of the depression," Granger says, with a grin. "I was happy to work 54 hours a week for \$6 a week."

Five years after Granger joined Fehr in Austin, he was granted a fellowship at Cranbrook Academy, where he earned his Master of Arts Degree in architecture and urban design.

During the war years, the two personable men closed their Austin office to participate in war work. They reopened it in 1946—and the following year began collecting awards. Their first, in 1947, was a Design Merit Award from *Progressive Architecture* for an Austin clinic. With periodic regularity, they have been winning high architectural honors ever since.

Neutra, also honored at the San Francisco Awards Banquet, was one of the first persons Granger saw after his firm had been given the two high honors.

"Well," Neutra told Granger, "it looks like I didn't raise your salary soon enough!"

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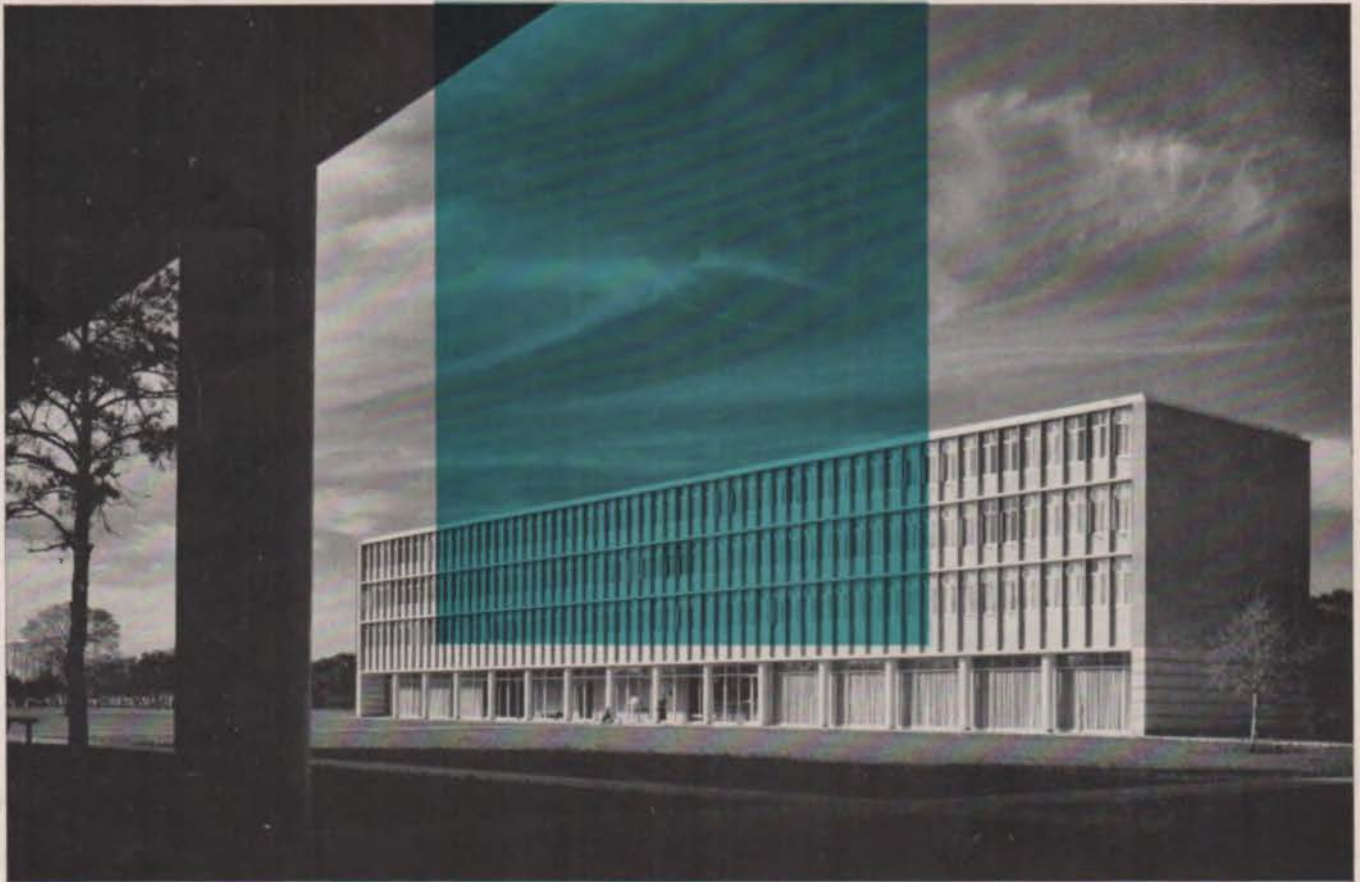
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