

**In this Issue:**

When RUDAT Came to Town

Chicago Unfinished

Big D

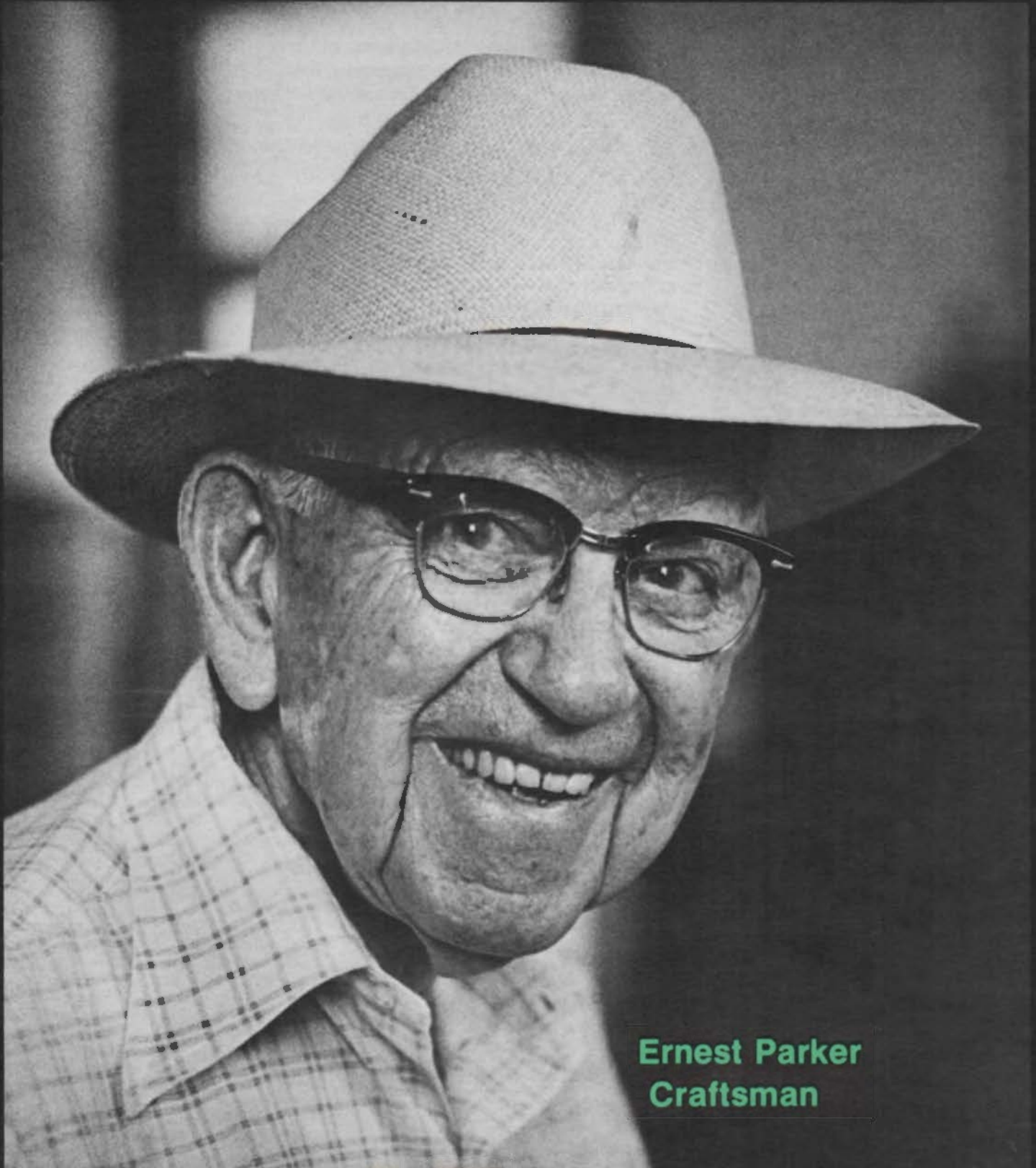
Cornering a Lame Duck

A Man of the Old School

**Plus regular columns. See contents.**

# Texas Architect

NUMBER 1 VOL. 26 JAN/FEB 1976



**Ernest Parker  
Craftsman**

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TSA is the official organization of the Texas Region of the American Institute of Architects.

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# Hurdles and Hopes, 1976

The architectural community of Texas, spearheaded by the state organization, could and should have one of its finest years in 1976—the 200th anniversary of our nation's birth.

It promises to be a critical year both for architects and for the nation at large. Economic uncertainty continues, despite scattered signs of a possible upturn, and this is certain to have its effect on the men and women involved in the built environment of Texas. Firms large and small will feel this effect, perhaps most strongly in residential construction, just as they will continue to feel the myriad pressures exerted by ecological and resource difficulties. Modes of design and construction have already started changing, particularly in regard to energy conservation. Clients—in both the private and public sectors—have become more sophisticated and more demanding, and there is a growing likelihood of more and more design work in urban planning and reconstruction, mass transit, recycling, and retrofitting of existing buildings, as well as in new construction.

These changes augur corresponding changes in the architectural community. Our job, in TSA, is to try to be sure these changes take the form not so much of headaches but of opportunities.

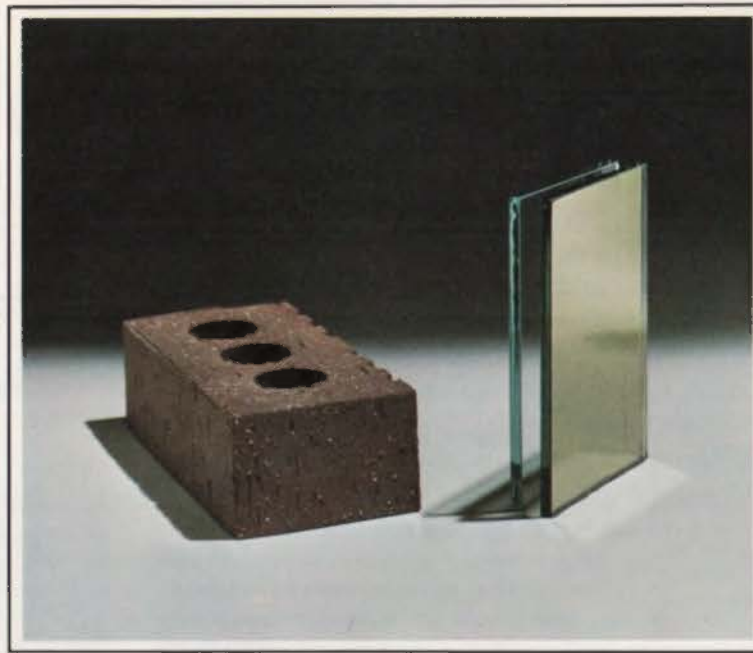
We have never been in a better position to do so. Our finances are sound, thanks to the judgment of past administrations, and we may soon move to a new state headquarters. We have learned much about making ourselves heard in the state legislature, and each and every one of us, in preparation for the session in 1977, will be asked to get acquainted with his or her senators and representatives on a first-name basis. Our professional development program is going strong, with several timely seminars already scheduled for '76. Finally, on a national level, we are in the unique position of having two regional directors in AIA, as well as the president-elect.

As your state president for 1976, I look forward to meeting and working with all of you in the shaping of our challenges into opportunities.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Maffitt". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The first name "Ted" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Maffitt" follows in a similar but slightly smaller style. The signature is positioned above the printed name and title.

Theodore S. Maffitt  
1976 President  
Texas Society of Architects



## One of these building materials can save you \$848,735 in initial cost on your next building

### A Study of the Relative Economic Performance of Masonry versus Glass Office Buildings

#### Results of Brick versus Glass Buildings Study

New and exhaustive research by the Texas State Building Materials and Systems Testing Laboratory has established that office buildings with brick exterior walls not only save money but are much more energy conserving and provide greater return on investment than the same buildings with all-glass walls.

#### Summary of the Findings

Comparing a typical office building having 15 stories with exterior walls of 80% brick (20% window area) to an all-glass exterior building, the research determined:

**The brick building will out-perform the glass building as follows:**

- 1. The brick building saves 9% in initial construction cost. (In this study \$848,735)**
- 2. The brick building saves nearly 34% in cash equity required.**
- 3. The brick building reduces heating and air conditioning bills by 9.8%**
- 4. The brick building's annual operating costs are nearly 4% less. (\$29,436 savings the first year)**
- 5. The brick building's maximum rate of return on investment is 28% higher.**
- 6. The brick building's rental income is the same as the glass building.**

The report was approved by the research engineer representatives of nine Texas state universities. The results typically apply to office buildings of all sizes.

The complete TSBMSTL Report has been reprinted by the permission of the state agency and is available upon request. To obtain a copy, see your local Acme Brick representative, or write:

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You're moving through the bleakness of a prairie — open, flat and still; sparse and dull gray. Then, right out there in the middle of nowhere, appears a town — Wichita Falls, Texas.

"Here we have opportunity for some real relief and contrast," said architect Piet Van Dijk. "It's a chance to create something of an oasis — an environment completely different from its surroundings — including intimate scale, shade, green areas, activity, variety and perhaps some high-rise structures from which to look back over the great expanse. These are the potentials of a town in this kind of location."

Speaking to a standing-room-only crowd of Wichita Falls citizens, civic leaders and members of the press, the architect went on to say that the city's potential had not been met. "Moving from the prairie, which is of course very bleak and treeless, you come into this city where there are lots of trees — but they are all in the residential areas. Unfortunately, the town area again becomes hard and bleak.

"You see an awful lot of pavement, due mainly to the very wide streets which separate the blocks into islands, with little intimate connection in between. There is very little greenery; the general first impression is that it is all very utilitarian and was planned pretty much for moving traffic efficiently. You don't see many of the aesthetic qualities which could be utilized here to make this something more of what an urban place should be."

The assessment was frank . . . unflattering. But Wichita Falls townsfolk,

literally, had asked for it. Van Dijk was presenting his portion of the final report of a team of professionals called in to assess the needs and potential of downtown Wichita Falls, an area which, as numerous "inner cities," has suffered overall deterioration and continued economic decline. The team was the 29th such Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (RUDAT) to be sent by the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Urban Planning and Design Committee to various American cities. Since 1967, RUDATs have been invited into specific areas to deal with environmental and urban problems which range in scale from regional to small-town. Each team is specifically selected to include professionals experienced in the particular problems of the area under study. Members are not compensated for their services and agree not to accept commissions for work resulting from their recommendations. The team acquaints itself with the community and its people and presents its analysis from a fresh perspective.

#### The Team

Joining Van Dijk on the Wichita Falls RUDAT were: Joe Champeaux, Team Chairman, of the Lake Charles, Louisiana, firm of Barras Breaux Champeaux, Architects and Planners, who is former director of city planning for Lake Charles; Bill Albinson, of the St. Louis, Missouri, firm of Team Four (a partnership of architects, planners, attorneys, economists and various professionals), who is an architect with urban design expertise; former Texas Society of Architects Presi-

# When the RUDAT Came to Town

## Urban Design Assistance for Wichita Falls

Story and Photos by Larry Paul Fuller





*Team Leader Joe Champeaux*



*Piet Van Dijk*



*Bill Albinson, left, and Jay Barnes*



*Douglas Schwartz*

dent Jay Barnes, of the Austin firm of Barnes, Landes, Goodman & Youngblood, who has a strong interest in land use; and Douglas Schwartz, of Atlanta, who is an economic consultant, community planner, lecturer and doctoral candidate in public administration and environmental policy. Van Dijk, a partner in the Cleveland, Ohio, architectural firm of Dalton, Van Dijk and Johnson, was a Fulbright Scholar who has been active on the AIA National Committee on Urban Design and Planning.

The team was assembled at the request of the Wichita Falls Chapter of AIA, supported by the City of Wichita Falls. The request was approved in April, 1975, and by August 15, Team Chairman Champeaux was making a reconnaissance visit to the city. Each team member was sent extensive background material in advance of their visit October 3-6. Indeed, a degree of advance preparation was essential, for the intense, three-day schedule waiting them would leave little time for catching up with homework.

#### **Community Involvement**

Advance work — and continuing involvement — also was necessary on the part of numerous Wichita Falls citizens. In fact, the whole project was conceived as a review and assessment of "Midtown 2000," a report on the future of the downtown area previously prepared by the city's own planning staff, under the direction of Stephen Ondrejas, Director of Planning. Ondrejas, Senior Planner Dan B. Porter and other members of the city planning staff worked closely with the RUDAT members throughout their stay. Serving as coordinators of the visit were AIA Chapter President J. G. Dixon and architect Charles Harper, chairman of the Midtown 2000 subcommittee of the Wichita Falls Planning Board. In addition,

members of the local AIA chapter, civic leaders, city officials, business people and other citizens actively supported the project. It was a friendly, cohesive effort.

The RUDAT came to town Friday afternoon, October 3, and immediately began moving through its solid itinerary. That evening there were handshakes and introductions over dinner at the Wichita Club, followed by individual, down-to-business walking tours through Midtown. Saturday morning was occupied by a breakfast with community leaders and a public hearing during which citizens and various civic groups provided input into the process of conceptualizing what downtown Wichita Falls should be.

Following afternoon reconnaissance by bus and plane, the team settled into Planning Division offices in City Hall to further identify problems, goals and objectives. It was an intense session of give-and-take, of melding variant points of view, of bringing alternatives into focus. Using the existing Midtown 2000 report as a working document, the team attempted to embellish upon it and to inject their own ideas. Except for a dinner break, the work continued through midnight.

By Sunday morning, with basic concepts intact, each team member set about preparing his portion of the RUDAT public presentation, scheduled for 1 p.m. the next day. In little more than 24 hours, the team would be called upon to present its plan for Midtown as an oral presentation accompanied by slides and visual materials and as a written, illustrated report.

Meeting such a tight schedule would require assistance, and there turned out to be no lack of it. Ondrejas' planning staff, along with various AIA chapter members, were on hand to assist with visuals. Color slides were rush-processed. Typists busied





themselves with the manuscripts which would comprise a 77-page report booklet. Printers began printing, as individual pages were completed. It was a unified, spirited effort, and a very long day. Not until 4 a.m. Monday morning did the last RUDAT member, with the task basically complete, retire for a few hours of sleep.

At 6 a.m., the process of reproducing the report had resumed in the print shop. The RUDAT workroom, strewn with empty coffee cups and food wrappers, soon would be alive with activity once again. After a final flurry of finishing touches, the team would be ready to present its recommendations to the public.

#### Meeting With the People

By 1 p.m., Memorial Auditorium was overflowing with townspeople and a full contingent of print and electronic media representatives, all eager to hear what this team of experts would have to say about downtown Wichita Falls. As cameras clicked and whirred, and tape reels turned, Team Leader Champeaux introduced the other members of the RUDAT and yielded the floor to Piet Van Dijk for the first portion of the presentation.

After alleging the potential of the downtown area had not been met, Van Dijk proceeded to relate the team's recommendations. The first series of suggestions concerned improving the visual image of the typical Wichita Falls street — a wide (60-70') expanse of pavement with little landscaping or consideration of human scale:

1) Add trees along the curbs and build canopies extending from buildings over the sidewalks — simple gestures which would provide shade and visually would narrow the "canyon-like streets."

2) Going a step further, take out some of the curb parking lane on each side of

the street in each block, leaving areas for further landscaping. This measure would make the "hard edges" more lush and help define pedestrian spaces.

3) In new construction, allow buildings to be built over the sidewalk almost to the curbline, thereby providing covered colonnades. Also, add lantern-type, pedestrian scale lighting that people can relate to, perhaps moving the existing highway-type lighting closer to the street.

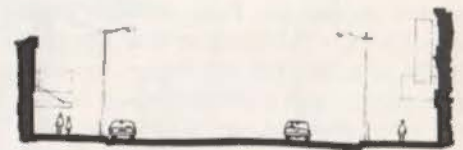
"In this scheme," Van Dijk said, "you still have your four traffic lanes and much of your curb parking, and the measures are simple and easily implemented. Yet there would be a great improvement in the visual impression you get here."

#### Getting it All Together

Next on the program was Bill Albinson, who maintained that "these simple environmental improvements lead us into a means of changing some of the functional aspects of Midtown, which, in a sense, may have more overriding concern to you because of the precarious situation Midtown is in these days economically.

"When we looked at what you had here, we saw some very powerful concentrations of office use, retail use, and other things, but we saw a need to tie these things together somehow. Downtown was thinning out, it was becoming disjointed, it was becoming more difficult every day for people to use as a unified element. Midtown is going to have to be something that's held together, that works as one thing, but has several functions within it."

Looking at the problem of unifying the downtown area, the team found streets arranged in a conventional grid pattern, with little variation. At the north end of Midtown runs the Wichita River, which is roughly perpendicular to named streets: Ohio, Indiana, Scott, and Lamar. Roughly parallel to the river and intersecting the



TYPICAL WICHITA FALLS STREET



FIRST SUGGESTION



SECOND SUGGESTION



THIRD SUGGESTION

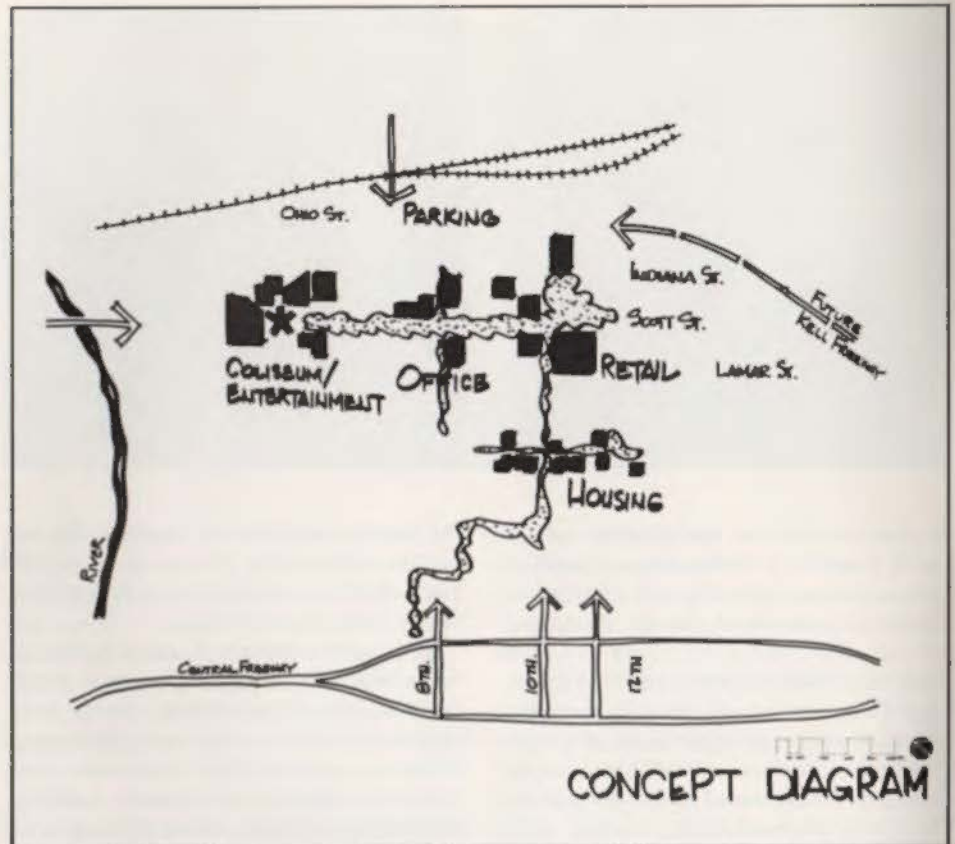




named streets are First through Eighteenth Streets. Adopting an idea presented in the original Midtown report, the team proposed to split Scott Street as it crosses the river, plugging one branch into Ohio Street and the other into Lamar Street, both of which intersect the future Kell Freeway at the other end of Midtown. The result could be a one-way circulation loop around Midtown, with Indiana and Scott streets in the middle and Scott as the major emphasis. "That's similar, in a way, to what you find in a suburban/regional shopping center," Albinson said, "and several of our suggestions have parallels with such shopping facilities. These are the facilities that Midtown has to compete with, and Midtown has to change to a certain extent to provide the kinds of amenities that these suburban centers now provide. It doesn't have to be exactly like them however, because Midtown has a lot going for it that suburban shopping centers don't have."

To combat the "overpowering uniformity" of the grid system, the team proposed to terminate Scott Street several blocks from the river. "What we were thinking of," Albinson said, "is that if you take any street downtown, terminate it, then put something there at the end of it, all of a sudden you have a very important visual point — a focal point, a landmark. So we chose that particular spot as the site of the coliseum, building on the entertainment area which seems to be developing there in the form of an existing new theater and two new restaurants. More high-quality entertainment uses might then follow, and perhaps even the need for more hotel rooms. That anchors the northern end of Scott."

The team theorized that their suggested pedestrian improvements would encourage redevelopment of vacant build-



ings and lots all along Scott Street. In addition, they would help achieve further unification, linking the new civic and inment area with the center of Midtown, presently concentrated with office uses. From there, the improvements would continue into the retail district at the south end of Midtown, which would be further enhanced by the addition of two small parks.

"You know when you put in certain public improvements such as parks you're increasing the surrounding land values," Albinson said. "And we're hoping that will spawn additional or relocated commercial uses. Right now there's a whole department store there with nothing in it."

Addressing the problem of parking, Albinson pointed out the opportunity for more parking areas along Ohio Street, the eastern boundary of Midtown. "We said 'Let's upgrade Scott Street all along it. Let's put the parking on the other side of Indiana, along Ohio. Then let's build nice pedestrian walkways from the parking areas along Ohio through Indiana to Scott.'" The result, Albinson said, would be a situation in which "people drive in on the circulation loop — it's easy to park — they get out of their cars and walk down a nicely landscaped walkway through the Indiana Street commercial area. That ar-

angement indirectly helps the Indiana Street merchants by forcing people traffic through their area to and from the major draws on Scott Street."

"Beyond that," Albinson said, "we suggest that some of these environmental street improvements be extended west along Tenth Street to tie in the nearest major residential area with downtown." In addition, the team saw some parts of Tenth Street as being potential sites for new housing — both for general occupancy and for the elderly.

#### Land and Heritage

Jay Barnes began his portion of the RUDAT presentation emphasizing the importance of a city's being committed to a land use plan such as the one being presented. "I think all of us agree that, not only in our private lives, but particularly when we as a community try to make decisions, we need some type of plan for the use of land around us that we can base our decisions upon. This is helpful to businessmen trying to make decisions for the future, and who want their investments protected. It gives the city confidence to proceed with its capital improvement programs. It provides a general cohesiveness throughout the city." Barnes then summarized proposed land use areas in the RUDAT plan — civic/entertainment, of-







fice, retail, housing and government — reiterating the reasoning behind each specified use.

Regarding transportation, Barnes pointed to the existing railroad, which runs along Midtown next to Ohio Street, as a potential boon for the city. "In the years ahead," Barnes said, "the railroad could be one of your greatest assets, as we get more into mass transportation. Here you have a transportation node from which you can bring people into the shopping area, and take them back again. This may become crucial as energy shortages continue."

Further, Barnes alluded to the assets Wichita Falls has in the form of beautiful old buildings. "All of us have a tendency — and I think it's changing — to consider old buildings useless, and to say that, if it's old, it should be torn down. And yet, many of these old structures have a rich architectural texture, beautiful brick details — things we could not duplicate today because of cost. Many are in good shape structurally and should be recycled. This would preserve some of the character inherent in your architectural heritage and, instead of expanding the city further, would make it more cohesive and intimate."

#### Getting it Done

Economist Doug Schwartz addressed himself to the practical aspects of implementing the plan, emphasizing that "these proposals do not represent a pie-in-the-sky approach but are implementable right now through utilization of available community resources and support." Schwartz said that within two to five years, most of the goals for Midtown could be realized, but stressed the team's realization that other areas of the city need attention as well. "Let me re-emphasize that what we have attempted to do is point out what we see as the immediate priorities which will result in the most benefit for all of Wichita Falls.

"As you know, the overall economy of the area is strong, vibrant, and healthy," Schwartz said. "I would like very much to be able to stand here today and tell you that the economy of the downtown retailing district is as healthy. Unfortunately, however, there have been continued declines in retail activity for many years, and the trend is not leveling off but is being accentuated by continued suburban commercial development. We feel strongly, though, that our proposals will help even out what is now an uneven dis-

tribution of commercial development and activity."

The key to implementation of the plan, according to Schwartz, would be formation of a non-profit development corporation composed of four elements: 1) City of Wichita Falls, 2) Downtown Association, 3) Board of Commerce and Industry, and 4) private citizens. The corporation would be chartered by the State to receive aid for improvements in Midtown, acting as a local community development agency which could also form subsidiaries for special improvement projects. It would become "an umbrella agency to spearhead the implementation of the proposed core area improvements" and would be funded from "city appropriations, dues, donations, and community development funds." Schwartz emphasized that, to be effective, the agency must be "headed by an aggressive individual who is knowledgeable and well regarded by the business community, city officials and citizens."

Following Schwartz's presentation, Team Leader Champeaux summed up, emphasizing that RUDAT had been for *real*. The team had not been in town merely to perform, but to come up with recommendations which could — and should — be implemented. "We'll be going home now," he said, "but the *real* work is in your hands."

The discussion period which followed demonstrated an encouragingly high level of interest among the citizenry. Perhaps they *had* taken the team seriously. And, again, there prevailed an unmistakable air of "our town" cohesiveness. "I see people in this group you don't see together on anything," observed Mayor Pro Tem Boyd. Still, there were uncertainties: Will this momentum be lost before real action is taken? Have these people *really* been 'sold'?

There were profuse thank you's, as the session ended — lots of handshakes, genuine LBJ hats for the honored guests. Senior Planner Dan Porter distributed fresh copies of the bound RUDAT report, a fitting climax to the presentation. But then Porter left the room abruptly. "There's work to do," he said.



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# Chicago Unfinished

Everybody's heard of DeVry Institute in Chicago. They're the folks who run those ads in *Popular Mechanics* showing a fellow improving his life through a DeVry correspondence course in computer programming. Now it turns out that there are 125,000 of those students, plus another 11,000 who actually attend classes at one of DeVry's three physical plants in Phoenix, Chicago and Columbus, Ohio. The schools are owned by a division of Bell and Howell Corporation which recently decided to build a new headquarters/classroom/laboratory facility in Chicago. Since the Houston-based architectural firm of Caudill-Rowlett-Scott had designed the DeVry buildings in Columbus and Phoenix, they were chosen for the Chi-town job as well. For their efforts, they have received three important design awards, including a Distinguished Building Award, given jointly by Chicago's Art Institute and the Chicago chapter of AIA, and now a TSA Design Award.

Perhaps more than other schools, DeVry is characterized by constant growth, periodic fluctuations in resident enrollment, and chronic changes in curriculum to keep abreast of changes in the mostly technological fields in which it offers training. DeVry is also a virtual symbol of the Age of Technology itself. The owners of the new building wanted their structure to reflect this symbolism, as well as to provide a unique headquarters unit that would "make a significant contribution to the architecture of Chicago" on a budget of \$27 per square foot. For clinchers, they wanted the school to be operational within one year of the contract date.

The latter requirement was met through a mix of programming and construction methods which CRS has long advocated under similar circumstances: fast-track scheduling (assuring completion of the building envelope by winter); construction management; pre-bidding of four key sub-systems (structure,



Honor Award  
Texas  
Architecture  
1975

heating/ventilation/cooling, exterior skin, ceiling/lighting) on the basis of schematic drawings before completion of final design details.

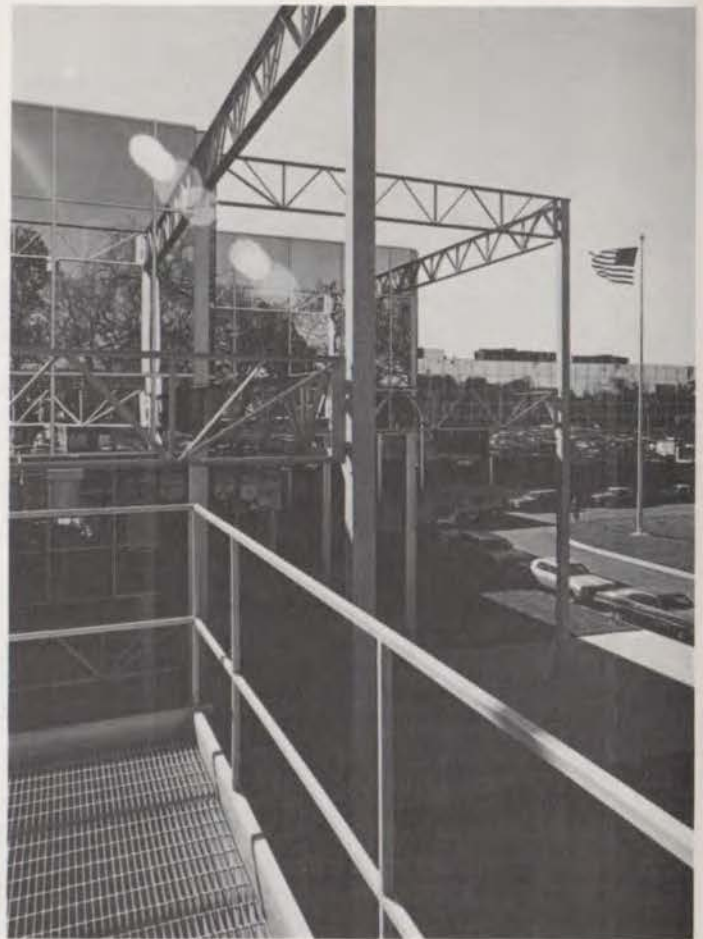
Two of the four sides of the 17-acre building site fronted on drab industrial property, so the architects, under the direction of CRS executives Peter Gumpel and G. Norman Hoover, designed the structure to face a wooded area within view of the Chicago River. Then, both as buffer and as gesture of harmony with adjacent industrial plants, they put up a rear facade of windowless weathering steel. This freed them to focus their efforts on the prime objective: a functional building whose very function and mode of construction became the basis for its design.

CRS puts it this way: "The major design influence was DeVry Institute's receptiveness to growth and change. We wanted the building to reflect this externally as well as internally. Our approach was to *avoid* defining the limits of the structure and instead to let the visual imagery convey the unlimited, fluctual, 'unfinished' nature of the school itself—its program, faculty and students."

**"Chicago Unfinished"**

What this meant, among other things, was a fast-track design which not only made no attempt to disguise the use of prefab construction techniques but in fact attempted to spotlight these techniques, elevating them to the status of a *design motif* which might be called "21st Century Dynamic" or "Growth as Form" or "Chicago Unfinished." The new Institute, writes CRS, "is an additive piece of architecture with all the parts growing at different rates. The center of the structure (the 'commons area') is the most complete portion of the facility with the remainder of the building asymmetrically emanating from this central point. The boundaries of the building are never finally defined . . ."

Indeed, the steel skeleton of future additions, with stairways which seem to lead nowhere, stand there boldly attached to the "finished" components covered with mirror-glass. "By day, the exterior windows reflect the sun and surrounding greenery, but by night, the character of the building reverses to illuminate a showcase of activity within the lab areas."



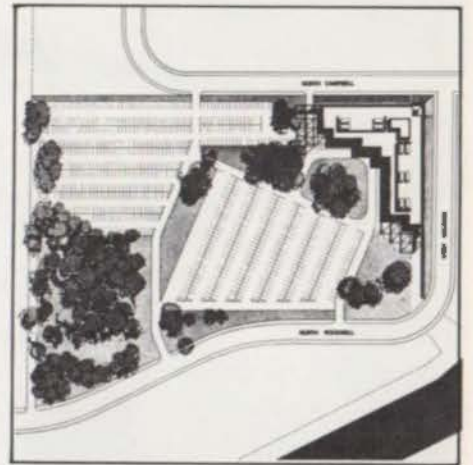
**Open Space**

The fluctual character thus achieved outside the building was also achieved inside, where "open loft-type spaces can be quickly and inexpensively rearranged by the school's own maintenance staff, as there are only four fixed core areas containing toilets, stairs, elevators, custodial space, storage, and duct space. The clerestory-topped student commons area, which runs the entire three stories of the building's height, forms the 'elbow' of the L-shaped structure, with balconies on each floor creating spatial variety and excitement. All floors are carpeted throughout, except for quarry tile in the kitchen, dining room, and first floor of the commons. With a total square footage of 99,625, the school is designed for an anticipated 'resident' enrollment of 4,500 to 5,500 students."

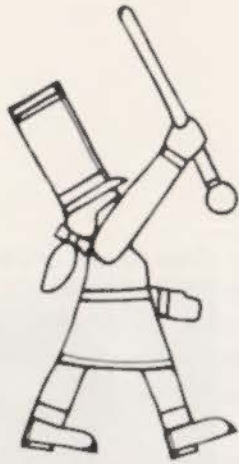
The final effect of all of this, according to Bell and Howell vice president Don Carter, "is a building designed to accommodate an educational process rather than an educational process designed to fit a building." What we have, said Carter, "is a building caught in motion."



*Peter Gumpel of CRS*







# great space for little people



Photos by Richard Payne

It's not just a school, it's a forest, and the people who go there like it—perhaps because of the way it works on the imagination, or vice-versa. The architects had expected the teachers to relate to their open classrooms as squares defined by columns, or "trees," at each corner, but instead the teachers went for the "trees" themselves, which thus became primary focal and classroom-organizing elements. There are cartoons on the walls, and a sun smiling down from atop an entrance which one little boy especially likes because it makes him happy. A parent couple said they felt "serene" in the little people's forest of apple-green oaks and elms and walnut trees.

The school is Oak Ridge Elementary, in Conroe, designed by the Houston firm of McKittrick, Drennan, Richardson and Wallace, and the number one design problem, according to the architects' report, was the huge general learning area, equivalent in size to 36 classrooms: first, how to keep the space (180 by 196 feet) from overwhelming the children, and second, how to provide electrical outlets and intercoms without walls in which to locate them.

## Stylized Forest

The solution was a grid effect in the big area which would not limit flexibility but would psychologically break the big space into a series of smaller spaces. A structural framing system with short spans, expressed by a grid-work of beams and columns, gave the desired effect while providing chases for electrical wiring, outlets, and communications. Then, by changing the form of the column and using color, each one was turned into a stylized tree

Honor Award  
Texas  
Architecture 1975



and the whole space into an imaginary forest.

Flexibility in the general learning area is further enhanced by mobile shelving, storage, and wardrobe units with tackboard surfaces. In addition, there are five "teacher team rooms" and five "project rooms" spaced around the perimeter of the "forest." These rooms, enclosed, with exterior windows, are private areas for use by teachers in planning lessons, projecting films, and conducting other "noisy" activities.

Two other major components in the school's design are an administrative/special learning unit and a cafeteria, each fixed on opposite sides of the general learning area. The former includes a special soundproofed music room, art room, and kindergarten with its own walled play area and toilets. An entrance foyer separates these facilities from the administrative section, which provides a faculty office, workroom, lounge, bookroom, clinic, and principal's office. The cafeteria, with its carpet, high ceiling, and cartoon murals, is intended for dining, indoor physical education, large group presentations, and shelter from inclement weather for bus-riders. Adjacent to the cafeteria are related facilities, including kitchen and P.E. office, with loft space overhead for storage and mechanical systems.

Finally, according to the architects, the problem of an "overwhelming" exterior scale, compounded by a minimal window format in the interest of fuel conservation, was solved by imposing smaller elements above the roofline via "light scoops" which also provide indirect natural light within the school.





# BIG D



Photo by F.L. Thompson



Big D needed a big convention center. Its existing facility, including an arena with a seating capacity of 11,000, comprised only 95,090 square feet—not enough for the mammoth gatherings of establishments like the National Homebuilders Association. At least another half-million square feet were required, plus a circulation system that would bear the sudden transport of thousands of conventioners and hundreds of trucks, buses, cars. The new center would also have to provide for the rapid assembly and disassembly of umpteen exhibits as varied in size and description as American industry itself, and it would have to accommodate small meetings as well as large, often more than one at a time. Besides bigness, Big D needed flexibility.

Enter the Dallas firm of OMNIPLAN, Harrell + Hamilton, who spent five years researching, designing, and supervising construction of the new center, striking a balance between bigness and flexibility which won them a design award.

#### Site Problems

There were site problems. The city had intended to orient its facility north toward Young Street, making it adjacent to a city hall and plaza to be designed by I.M. Pei. But this configuration was cramped and

not a little awkward, so the architects suggested an orientation west toward Griffin Street, a major new boulevard with more traffic capacity than any other adjacent street. This arrangement, which the city accepted, offered two advantages: (1) improved vehicular circulation and (2) preservation and incorporation into the site-plan of Pioneer Park, an historic old cemetery immediately north of the convention center, with oak trees and monuments dating to the Civil War.

A second major design challenge was a circulation system that would integrate the myriad components of the new facility not only with each other but with the existing arena and theater as well. This was accomplished through a network of tunnels, concourses, ramps, corridors and elevators judiciously directed toward a huge main lobby which faces onto the plaza and Pioneer Park. The lobby houses escalators to underground meeting rooms, parking meeting rooms, parking and a subterranean and a subterranean passage to City Hall.

#### "People's Hall"

The principal space in the complex is an exhibit hall built on two levels with a total area of almost 500,000 square feet, which vastness will accommodate meetings of 28,000 people and banquets of 22,300.



Honor Award  
Texas  
Architecture  
1975



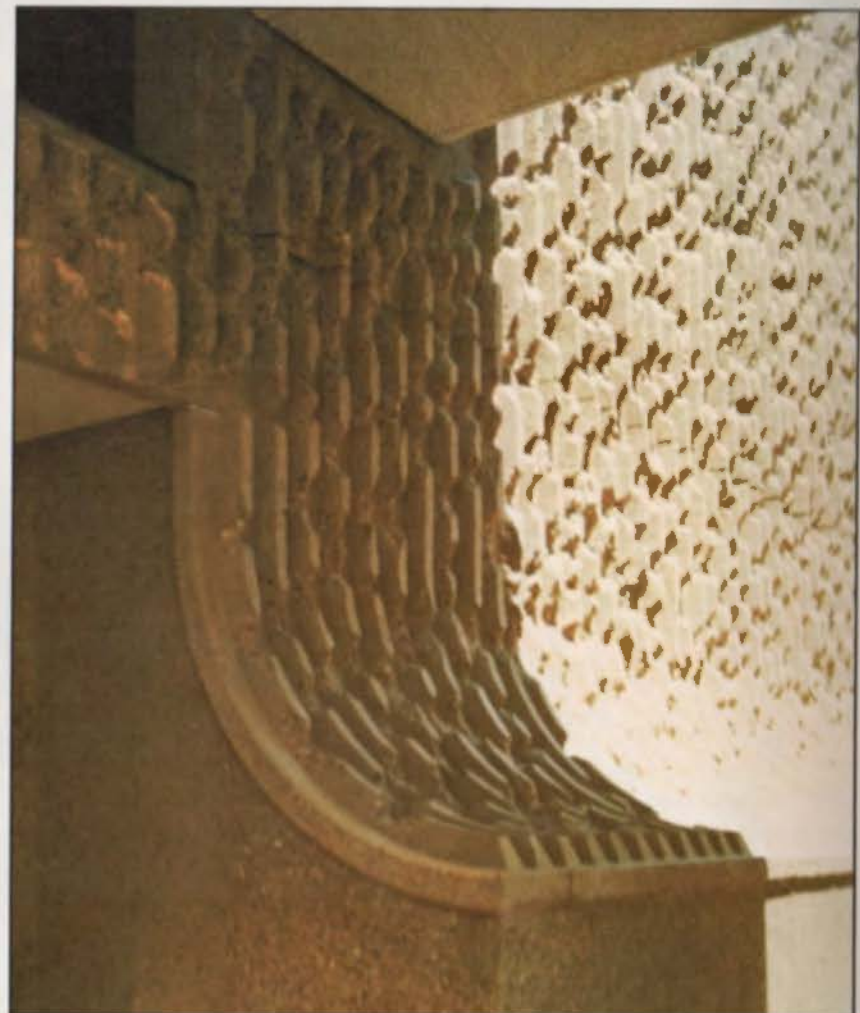
This "People's Hall" is spanned by an exposed steel truss system, painted orange, with trusses and fascia separated from a concrete service ring by a continuous band of clerestory windows. Within the service ring, punctuated by deeply recessed entrances, are toilet facilities, telephones, concession space and mechanical equipment which circulates conditioned air through the hall without a system of ducts. Utility connections for exhibits, including steam, compressed air, and gas, are located in boxes beneath the floor, while trusses overhead carry a system of quartz and H.I.D. lighting facilities as well as wiring for sound. Finally, a huge dock along the rear of the exhibit hall makes it possible to unload as many as 30 semi-trucks side by side.

Apart from the "People's Hall," there are beaucoup facilities for almost any combination of smaller meetings and banquets. The latter are served primarily in a dining room and "telescoping" ballroom situated round a large kitchen. The former take place in some 53 permanent meeting rooms (expandable to 63), ranging in capacity from 24 to 3,000 persons, with a total capacity of 7,456.

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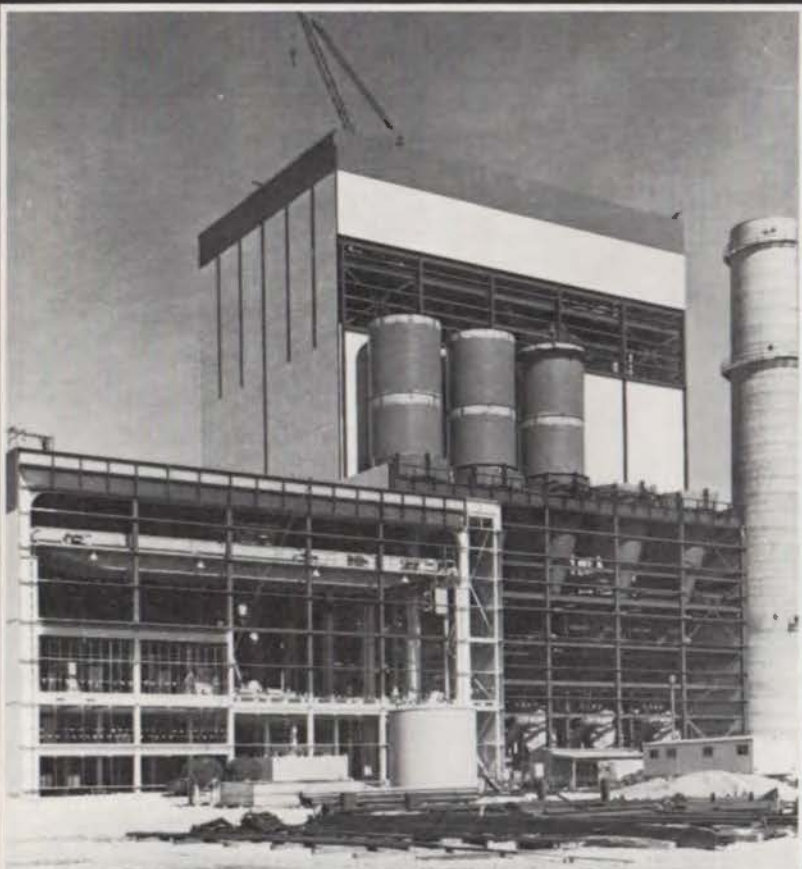
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# Cornering a Lame Duck

## David R. Braden on TSA, Crayfish, and other things

**TA:** What we want to do, now that your term of office is almost over, is to corner you here for a while and get some of your thoughts on a variety of things, particularly TSA from the viewpoint of an outgoing president. So, to begin with, what's it been like being in the number one slot this past year?

**Braden:** Well I must tell you that it's been great—and I underline "great"—being president of TSA. I don't know where you'd have the opportunity to meet so many architects on their own home turf, and I have felt that it was a rare and treasured privilege. Now that may sound a little bit "corny", but it's very true. After you have spent considerable time working with architects—and this has been my pleasure—you begin to understand that they are unique people.

The thing I liked least about being president was a feeling of frustration. I've been president of a lot of things before and I sensed that in every one of them. I like to give everything my all but I find that I am unable to. I feel frustrated if I'm always just the concept guy and never get into any of the detail. The main thing is that being

president of TSA could be a full time job. Unfortunately there are not too many of us who can devote that kind of time to it. However, I think the TSA staff is outstanding, and I must say they take a lot off the load of being president.

**TA:** Looking back over the year, what would you say have been TSA's major accomplishments?

**Braden:** I felt that the most important ones had to do with getting a handle on governmental affairs and public relations programs. I consider both to have been very successful, even though we lost in our attempts to strengthen the architects registration law. It was very significant that we lost by only eight votes and we did have some objective input into some other forms of legislative concerns such as energy. Also, I think we learned how to do better next time around.

**TA:** How? What do you think we've been doing wrong?

**Braden:** I think it's time architects began to understand that they can't isolate themselves from people who are in positions of political leadership. We're simply not going to be effective in securing the

goals and objectives that all of us share from a position of logic and reason. It's been my experience that politicians at all levels respond initially to the concerns of those who operate from a base of power. And there are an awful lot of power bases around. Second, they form their opinions on the basis of judgments rendered to them by their friends and close associates. I'm not sure they ever really make decisions based on deductive logic or reason. If they do, that certainly comes after the other two considerations have been met. As I see it, what that means in our case is that if we really wish to have an effective legislative program, we must operate from a base of power and strength.

**TA:** How do we do that? Certainly we don't have the advantage of numerical strength.

**Braden:** Numbers of voters are important, but, individually, we need to be reaching people in key leadership positions. We need to be friends with our legislators, to know them on a first-name basis. And supporting your candidate's campaign by giving him five dollars—or a hundred or three thousand—is even better





**“We’re simply not going to be effective in securing the goals and objectives that all of us share from a position of logic and reason . . . Politicians at all levels respond initially to those who operate from a base of power.”**

than knowing him. But, if we can't support them financially, we can evidence our support in other ways. We need to have very active legislative committees in each chapter, with members who will go out and shake a few hands for their candidates.

But another measure we might take is to try for the first time to build a coalition of professional and business societies, perhaps even serving as catalyst to form an organization we might call the Texas Council of Professional Societies, wherein we share information and support each other in our common interests. We have a lot in common with the bar association, with city managers associations, the engineers, the doctors—we haven't been taking advantage of that.

Last of all, we need to be the “good guys.” We can't go off supporting every kooky cause that might appeal to a few of us; neither can we be interested only in things that are self-serving.

**TA:** That pretty well covers governmental affairs. What were you saying about other accomplishments?

**Braden:** I'm proud of progress this year with regard to our communications programs—position papers, the ad campaign, and the continuing improvement of *Texas Architect*. In addition, some of our committees have been particularly productive—Ray Reed's Energy Committee, for example, and Jim Bishop's Historic Resources Committee. And I'm pleased that, at long last, it looks as if we're going to succeed in finding a historic building for our state headquarters.

**TA:** Surely you can think of something negative to say. Other than in legislative affairs, what were our shortcomings?

**Braden:** I'd be less than honest if I didn't say we suffered a few setbacks. For one thing, I'd hoped to get some environmental resources workshops going across the state, and we didn't succeed. Also, it

seems to be tougher and tougher to make our professional development program click, in spite of the hard-working efforts of some really top-notch people.

**TA:** Being president of an organization the size of TSA obviously has been demanding of your time—all the meetings and travel, the correspondence, having to stay on top of everything that's happening. You have your own practice to think about. Why were you willing to make the sacrifice? Why was being president important to you?

**Braden:** Maybe it wasn't really all that important to me personally, but I feel that the TSA is important to the profession; and I think that people ask you only once to do a job such as this one. So if you have the opportunity offered to you, and the least bit of ability to do the job, then you should do it. It's a real honor to be asked by your peers to take positions of responsibility, and I for one believe that, as you go through life, you ought to grab all the gusto you can. That was a phrase made popular by the late Andrew Faubacher.

**TA:** You say TSA is important to the profession. How?

**Braden:** It's the best communication vehicle we have—for communicating with governing bodies at the state and community levels, with the general public and with other professionals. Communication is what TSA is all about; the same goes for AIA. What is really significant is that it compounds the resources of smaller chapters, giving them a more powerful base from which to operate.

**TA:** Assuming that TSA can succeed in this communications capacity, what remaining concerns do you have with regard to the future of the profession?

**Braden:** My chief concerns about the future of TSA and of the profession revolve around the fact that the role of the architect is changing in our society, and I think it will be very difficult for us to keep

up with those changes at the level of the professional organization. We have to be extremely flexible in our attitudes about what's happening to our profession. There's no way that we can stick our heads in the sand and ignore it.

And I'm concerned that perhaps the architectural profession doesn't have the resources to really fight for the things we believe in. It seems to me this is becoming more and more a legalistic world. We have to do something about our liability insurance problems and our registration problems. And we have to see that the design professions are involved in efforts to cope with energy problems.

**TA:** What about the architectural scene in Texas as compared to that of other states you've visited?

**Braden:** I think I've been luckier than many of my fellow professionals in that I have been exposed to architects in other parts of the country at the professional society level and I am literally appalled at the difference in their attitudes and those of architects in Texas. I'm also appalled at the opportunities we have to practice architecture in a truly significant way that they do not have. A young person in Texas has a much greater professional future than in some states where there isn't a lot of building activity and an architect is relegated to the role of maintenance man.

Another aspect of this regards our professional society. I think TSA already is probably the model component of AIA, yet I think it's time we began to take more of a leadership role. And with our own Jack McGinty coming forward as AIA president-elect, we will have an excellent opportunity to do this.

**TA:** Let's get back to a little more of Braden-on-Braden. You're a pretty funny—that is, humorous—fellow. What are some amusing anecdotes from the past year we can include to keep this interview from being so “straight.”



**“I certainly recognize that almost every good thing that has happened in my life has come about because of my sense of humor . . . Laughter has got to be the most beautiful sound there is.”**

**Braden:** Well, there were some things that happened which were funny at the time. Take the El Paso Chapter visitation for example. The chapter took Des (Executive Director Des Taylor) and me across the border to a Mexican restaurant to have dinner and address the members of the chapter. But there was no private meeting area and no public address system. And you can imagine the scene of Braden trying to tell political jokes over the noise of mariachis in a public dining room in Mexico.

Then there was the time the Northeast Texas Chapter served a full 300 pounds of boiled crayfish to the 30 of us who were present. If you've ever tried to take a little beer and wash down ten pounds of crawdads at one sitting, you know something of what our problems were.

But of course the wildest time was when the bogus sister and the original “fat girl next door” roasted me at the President's Ball during the TSA Annual Meeting in Fort Worth. Now that was wild!

**TA:** Of course you're the one who usually does all the roasting. Give us some insights into being a political humorist.

**Braden:** I think that one of the activities I enjoy most in life is being a professional after-dinner speaker and humorist. And I guess the reason I enjoy it so much is that it's the only activity I have in which I'm solely on my own. I'm no part of a team. Anything I do is totally dependent on me. This relieves me from worrying about what other people are going to do and allows me to concentrate on what I'm doing myself.

I'm really an insufferable ham, but I think probably one of the really great gifts that any man can have is the ability to make other people laugh at themselves and their problems, and that's a gift that I have. I really don't know what makes people like me think funny, but I do. And I

feel my sense of humor is the most valuable facet of my character. In fact, I financed the education of all three of my daughters at the University of Texas on speaking fees, and I'm kind of proud of that. It's like finding a gold mine in your back yard, just when you need it most.

The greatest thing that happens to me now is that when I get sort of terribly locked into my work, all of a sudden I have to jump up some night and fly across the country to make a speech which makes people laugh and creates all kinds of new friendship bonds that I didn't even know were out there. I think it's an unusual opportunity to make friends as a person and to make friends for the architectural profession. A lot of people have never really known an architect before.

I certainly recognize that almost every good thing that has happened in my life has come about because of my sense of humor, and my ability to communicate to people through humor. Laughter has got to be the most beautiful sound there is.

**TA:** Sounds like a hectic life. What does an architect/humorist/politician do with his spare time?

**Braden:** I really have very little spare time. I seem to work all the time these days. However, I guess that once I have quit my political activities with the Citizen's Charter Association and the Texas Society of Architects presidency, maybe I will have some spare time again. I enjoy traveling very much and I read a great deal. I have to read a lot to keep up with the kind of topical and political humor that I do. I find that my act changes every morning when I pick up the paper; however, it may not seem that way to people like Des Taylor, who have heard it so many times. I spend a lot of time writing, some of it funny, some of it serious. And I spend a lot of time trying to do things I feel are constructive in my community. What little time I have left I spend work-

ing around my house. I live in the woods and it seems like there is always something to rake up or pick up or cut up on my lot.

**TA:** You'd probably be disappointed if we didn't ask the “if you had it all to do over again question.”

**Braden:** Yes, if I had it all to do over again, I'd still be an architect. I think it's the most exciting thing a person can be. Two of my daughters are married to lawyers—I give them a hard time, and vice versa—but the remarkable thing is that the whole family thinks architects are about the neatest people of all. And I kinda think they're right.

I do wish I had bloomed a little bit earlier, professionally. If I hadn't been forced to condense my education so much after World War II, I think I would have achieved professional maturity a lot earlier. I'd have been able to take things slower, visit other places and work in other parts of the country.

**TA:** Well, we're getting down to the end of things this year. What are some of the things you plan to do, now that your term is over?

**Braden:** Well I'm certainly not through with TSA yet. My hope is that I won't waste the education I gained this year in attempting to deal with concerns of TSA in the legislative area. I want to continue making contributions to the profession which will be meaningful to my colleagues.

Also, I'm looking forward to DBJC (Dahl, Braden, Jones & Chapman) doing some significant work in the years ahead. And I plan to be very much a part of that. But as soon as things quiet down a little, now that my term is over, I think Sara and I will probably travel a lot more and take up some things that are appropriate to people in our age bracket—like motorcycle racing, skydiving and making pornographic movies at home.



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# Endangered Species



Photos courtesy of Houston Heights Association

## G.W. Hawkins Day

Were some inspired soul to establish an order of priorities relating to historic preservation, it might look something like this: (1) if possible, rescue and preserve entire towns or sections of towns, keeping even the streets, fire hydrants, sidewalks and streetlamps intact, for that will give the clearest, most coherent view of the historical period in question; (2) next best is the preservation of a whole street or block of structures; (3) preservation of a single structure or structures *in situ*, standing on the original site; (4) preservation of a structure which has to be moved to a different location.

Given the economic vagaries of this society, with its traditional emphasis on the new over the old, on "progress" over stability and heritage, it is too much to expect most local governments and ruling classes to opt for number one above, as towns and villages in Europe often do. It then becomes necessary for a "mass movement" of citizens actually *living* in a particular area to come together in a determined struggle to preserve the historic character of their neighborhood. Fortunately, this seems to be happening more



Fakes home, Houston Heights, 1911

and more in the United States, and in Houston, Texas, the people who live in Houston Heights have unified both with zeal and with imagination.

### Mosquito-proof

Houston Heights was chartered as a municipality in 1891 and incorporated by Houston in 1918. It has long been a popular place to live (at least before the advent of airconditioning) because its relatively high elevation above sea-level, with relatively active breezes, has offered a relative freedom from Houston's infamous heat, humidity and mosquitoes. Early in its history, therefore, people with means would move to the Heights and build fine houses for themselves. Many of those houses are still standing, but since World War II a growing number have inclined toward neglect and deterioration. Until two years ago, even things like sewage and sanitation had fallen below the standards of Houston proper.

The last decade has brought a kind of youth revolt: young adults in Houston, like their counterparts in other U.S. cities,



have become attracted to those solid, dignified older homes as a superior alternative to the far-flung, look-alike suburbs. These younger families have started to renovate the old dwellings (some dating back to 1890), to demand better services from the city, and to organize themselves in the interest of the Heights as a whole. Hence the birth, in 1973, of the Houston Heights Association, which, in September of this year, reached a new crest of activity with a "Bicentennial Celebration" called "G. W. Hawkins Day."

### 35,000 Strong

The purpose of the celebration, according to chairman Ken Bailey, was to stir up further interest in preserving and improving the Heights area, and if numbers be a measure of success, the idea was a winner: 35,000 Houstonians poured into the Heights to watch a parade of antique autos, tour some of the vintage homes, and view an array of local brass bands, ethnic dance troupes, and barbershop quartets. An elaborate pamphlet was printed for the occasion, listing names and brief descriptions of 52 of the old Heights structures, as well as identifying George W. Hawkins: "... well remembered by early Heights residents as being the first man to own an automobile. Mr. Hawkins is actually the first man in South Texas to buy a gasoline engine automobile. As the story goes, Mr. Hawkins did not even know how to drive the 'New-Fangled' contraption and the factory had to send a man to Houston to teach him how. Hawkins was obviously a fast learner, for in 1905 he became president and treasurer of the Hawkins Automobile and Gas Engine Company."

"G. W. Hawkins Day" thus combined an interest in historic preservation with an interest in other strands of a city's history, and the Houston Heights Association has now established itself as a strong force in the battle for neighborhood survival.

## SPECIES BRIEFS

### Federal Funds for Restoration

A bill has been proposed to the U.S. Congress which would help remove a major obstacle to the preservation of certain older homes: the paucity of funds available from savings and loan institutions traditionally biased toward new-home construction exclusively.

Illinois Representative Frank Annunzio, chairman of the House consumer affairs subcommittee, has tendered a plan

for a Community Reinvestment Fund to be administered by the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. This Fund, if established, would provide federal insurance on loans made by private institutions to owners of old dwellings needing repairs and renovations.

In order to qualify, the borrower's house would have to be at least 25 years old or located in a neighborhood designated as a "community reinvestment area." (Curiously, according to a dispatch in the *Austin American-Statesman*, such designation would come only on the initiative of "a lending institution belonging to the fund.") Should the borrower default, up to 80% of his or her obligation would be covered by the federal government.

As with FHA and other conventional mortgage insurance plans, the borrower would pay a premium for this service, but interest rates would be the same as on uninsured mortgages. The premiums so remitted would be expected eventually to make the Fund self-sustaining, though the U.S. Treasury would provide the seed money.

### New Roof for Old Main

The Old Main Building at Baylor University in Waco, whose gothic towers were excised following hurricane damage in 1953, is being restored under the direction of the Houston architectural firm of Calhoun, Tungate, Jackson, and Dill. Old Main was first constructed in 1903.



*Baylor's Old Main before and after tornado in 1953*

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Tips House restoration in progress



Photos by Ray Reece

## A Man of the Old School

By Ray Reece

The carpenter's apprentice was working too fast on the window he was installing, so a foreman walked up and said to him: "Now listen, son, you might as well take a little more time, 'cause the boss, he's not gonna buy this stuff the way you're casin' up this window. He don't even have to look at it. He can just run his hand along it and tell it ain't right."

The house in which they stood was the old Walter Tips mansion in Austin. The men were part of a construction crew restoring the house as a branch office of Franklin Savings Association, which in June had salvaged the historic building and moved it to its present location on South Congress. The "boss" was Ernest Parker, 82-year-old master carpenter and owner of the small construction firm in charge of the renovation.

### Master Mechanic

Like the fine houses he has built and rebuilt for over 50 years, Parker belongs to an "endangered species" of what he himself would probably call "master mechanics" — arduously trained craftsmen who care as much about the grain of their woods and the quality of their work as they do about the dollars which completion of the work will bring. When that apprentice was told to slow down, it was Ernest Parker whose money was involved, not the owner of the house. Parker later said of the apprentice: "He's turned out to be a pretty good carpenter. Trouble was, he'd been working for some of those fellows who don't care, who just run



Parker, right, foreman George Weise

through their jobs as quick as they can."

Born in Round Rock in 1893, Parker descended from a line of craftsmen already well established. Besides his carpenter father, his maternal grandfather was a stonecutter in Round Rock, a specialist in marble who "cut all the tombstones for miles around." In 1904, the Parker family moved to Austin where Parker's dad was employed in the remodeling of the main building at St. Edwards University. For ten hours work, he was paid "a buck six bits a day," which, with a wife and five kids to support, didn't go very far. Young Ernest helped out in the summer, "pulling nails, cleaning up — I made enough money during the summer to buy my winter clothes." In addition, back of their house on East 15th Street, which Parker still owns, the family kept a garden, raised chickens and cows. Still,

says Parker of his father: "He really had to work — really, and I don't know how he made it."

### Homemade Motorcycle

On finishing high school, Parker took a job repairing motorcycles, staying there "long enough to get a motorcycle of my own, a homemade affair. They let me have some parts you know — it was half Harley Davidson, half Indian." He tried his hand at other kinds of work too, but nothing felt as good as carpentry, and in 1913 he went back to it to stay. He married in 1916, interrupting progress on an "International Correspondence Course" in architectural drawing, went off to fight in World War I, and finally, in 1923, established his own construction company. He was working for an Austin lumber mill at the time, and one of the owners suggested he stay at the mill, where he was putting in six days a week. "Out on my own," replied Parker, "I can work just five days and earn more money." The owner asked him what he would do when he got rained out for several days. "I'll make it up," said Parker, "and I'll still come out ahead."

Nonetheless, Parker values that phase of his six-year apprenticeship which he served in the mills, especially the shop, on East 3rd Street, of "Old Man Ludwig — a master mechanic. He turned every one of the bannisters on the stairs in the Driskill Hotel. He liked to work with pecans and hardwoods, and he taught me how to work them." Parker furthered his apprenticeship with vintage Austin construction companies, like McDonald Brothers. "I was lucky," he says, "that I got to work



under several different foremen, doing different things. That was a break a lot of apprentice boys these days don't get. Now they start out and they keep them on sheetrock — something like that."

### Don't Look Back!

Parker contends that much of the art and skill have waned from carpentry apprenticeships: "Some of the apprentices today, they're not interested in the craft. The old men are passing on, and I'm afraid that a whole lot of the new ones don't measure up. It's because the construction companies are doing a different class of work, especially this promotional work, developers and such as that — everything's done the fastest way possible, and don't look back!" Parker traces the origins of this degenerative trend to the mid-1940's: "Way I remember, just after World War II, there was a slacking up of quality work. During the war they got behind on construction, and people were desperate to have houses. The developers took advantage of that. They made a lot of money. They kind of built those houses by the dozens — I've seen 'em take on 75 houses at a time. Same floor-plan, maybe change the roof and the color of the paint."

This trend continues today and ironically accounts for some of Parker's own work — he is often called upon to shore up virtually new homes suffering from poor construction. "There was a couple bought a house out in a field off Burnet Road, called me up and said: 'This house is coming apart at the seams.' The slab was cracked and it couldn't be repaired. All the couple could do was just learn to live with it or sell the house, which they couldn't do either, unless it was after a rain. That house was five years old." Even with houses two and three years old, Parker is asked to come out and bolster sagging doors, adjust cabinets, and realign joints.

### Quality Over Quantity

The great bulk of Parker's own construction has been residential. His first big job, again ironically, was a house he built in 1928 for Eugene Tips, grandson of Walter. Since then, Parker and his crews have averaged six to eight homes per year, doing work of such high caliber that they have been asked to come back decades later to remodel or make additions. When a house they built in 1936 was eventually sold, the new owner, acting on the advice of his predecessor, commissioned Parker to remodel the place, then gave the same advice to the people who bought the house

from him, and again Parker was summoned for a remodeling.

### Eye for Detail

One thing his customers like is the craftsman's eye for detail. In a recent conversion of a bathroom into a sewing parlor, the lady wanted a ceiling molding that would match the trim on her bureau. "I got a wax profile off of it," says Parker, "and took it to the mill. They did a good job, so I had 'em run me an extra thousand feet of it. I often do that with moldings I like which aren't available anywhere else."

The same concern with detail has pervaded Parker's work on the Tips House restoration. He pointed to a stack of window-frames: "We made these sashes here, because they had to be exact duplicates of the originals." He also attempted to find a source of old-time "wavy" glass panes for the windows, but finally had to settle for conventional modern glass twisted to produce the "wavy" effect.



*Tips House gable trim*

Parker's success is due in part to the men he has trained and kept with him — some for as long as 40 years. George Weise, for example, a foreman on the Tips House job who signed up with Parker in 1936, was specifically requested to work on the project by Franklin Savings Association (the Parker firm had earlier restored the old Radke House for Franklin). Still another of Parker's foremen first came to work for him in 1926. Consequently, says Parker, "when I get a letter from a satisfied owner I show it to the men. I want them to know they're getting credit for their work." Parker has developed a similar rapport with some of his subcontractors, including one J. Donald Francis, the highly skilled painter on the Tips House who originally discovered, under layers of old paint, the intricate murals on one of the ceilings.

### Circus in Town

Parker believes a trend is developing in favor of restorations like the Tips House. "The public is getting more conscious about not tearing down old houses just because they're in the way." He was present the night the Tips House was moved. "It was like a circus was in town that night," he says with a gleam in his eye: "I stayed with 'em till four in the morning, when they were on this side of the (Congress Avenue) Bridge." He was recently told by an officer of Franklin Savings that the firm's deposits "had jumped like crazy" in the weeks following the move.

A possible side-effect of Parker's long career is the fact that both his sons elected to become architects. They used to work on some of his projects, and both have remarked on the value of that experience in their work as designers. Indeed, son Morris, while still in architectural school, was working for his dad one day when the project architect came along and noticed him studying the house plans. "Boy," said the architect, "you're lucky to be getting that. When I was in school, studying architecture, my uncle had a grocery store, and I worked in the store. I'd have been better off pushing a wheelbarrow." Morris is now in practice in Fort Worth.

### The Parker Theory

Ernest Parker has other stories to tell about architects. Once, during construction of a house for Austin architect Arthur Fehr, a young Fehr employee brought Parker some plans he had drawn for a window assembly. It was a brick veneer house, and the young architect had so designed the windowframe that the wooden sill was to extend out over the brick. Parker showed the drawings to Fehr, who apparently had not studied them, and Fehr, laughing, said to his master carpenter: "You know what we want. Just use The Parker Theory of window framing." Parker thought highly of Fehr, and Fehr of him: "If I told Arthur how I figured something ought to be, that's the way it was."

Ernest Parker knew then and knows now what he is doing. Perhaps more important, he cares about what he is doing. Earlier, in discussing the Tips House job, he had said: "I consider this kind of work to be a challenge — can you or can't you?" That's the kind of fellow he is.



# In the News

## Correction

In the November/December *Texas Architect*, page 34, the S.I. Morris Associates Design Award credit for KPRC Television Studios in Houston indicated: "Building commissioned when firm was Wilson, Morris, Crain and Anderson." More accurately, the building was "commissioned, designed and completed" when firm was Wilson, Morris, Crain and Anderson.

## Flowers Award Winners

Not available for inclusion in the last issue of *Texas Architect* were the results of TSA's John G. Flowers Memorial Award for Reporting the Built Environment. Receiving \$500 awards during the TSA Annual Meeting in Fort Worth October 31 were Gay Elliott McFarland, of Houston; Ray Miller, of Houston; and James Stanley Walker, of Austin.

Ms. McFarland, who also received a 1973 Flowers Award, won this year in the newspaper category for a series of articles in the *Houston Post* dealing with a variety of architectural topics. Now a free lance

writer, she formerly was home furnishings reporter for the *Houston Post*.

"The Eyes of Texas," a documentary series produced by Ray Miller of television station KPRC in Houston, was the winner in the broadcasting division. The entry consisted of four programs dealing with the Pollock-Capps House in Fort Worth, Ashton Villa in Galveston, the Fort Worth Water Garden, and the restoration of log cabins in the Houston area.

James Stanley Walker won in the magazine article category with his story "Upward Nobility," published in *Texas Monthly*. The article was a catalogue of significant architectural styles.

## Dallas Contract/Design Show

The Dallas Contract/Design Show, CONDES III, to be held at the Dallas Market Center January 14 through January 16, will offer panels and guest speakers presented by four major design and industry organizations.

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), the Institute of Business Designers (IBD), the Office and Con-

tract Furnishings Division of the National Office Products Association (NOPA), and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) will each present one of the four seminars scheduled for Wednesday (Jan. 14), Thursday (Jan. 15), and Friday (Jan. 16).

"Design Effects of Flammability Legislation" will be presented by ASID Wednesday, 8:30-10 a.m. Thursday morning (8:30-10 a.m.), IBD will offer a seminar on "Designs for Energy Conservation." The Thursday afternoon (3:30-5 p.m.) seminar will be a presentation by the Office and Contract Furnishings Division of NOPA entitled "Return on Investment—Your Customer's Key to Justifying New Office Furniture Installations." Friday morning (8:30-10 a.m.), AIA will have "Update on Contract Documents," a progress report by the AIA-ASID Joint Contract Committee. The AIA program will focus on the development of professional practice documents for use in writing work contracts for interior design services. Alan B. Stover, director of documents, division of professional practice, of the American Institute of Architects, and William S. Pulgram, president, Associated Space Design, Inc., will be the guest speakers.

For more information: 214-748-6832.

## Architecture for Health

TSA Architecture for Health Committee Chairman Jim Polkinghorn has submitted the following pertinent items of information:

The 1975 update of *Construction Cost of Health Facilities* is available for \$2 per copy from: New York Chapter AIA, 20 West Twentieth Street, New York, NY, 10018.

The National Health Planning Information Center has been organized (Public Law 93-641) to provide improved access to health planning information to state and local agencies. Inquiries should be addressed to the Center at P.O. Box 31, Rockville, Ma. 20850.

The American Hospital Association, one of the best sources of hospital design information and seminars, has substantially reduced its dues for the type "B" personal membership (architects) to \$100 annually. For further information, contact: Richard A. Strano, Director, Division of Registration and Membership, American Hospital Association, 840 North Lakeshore Dr., Chicago, Illinois 60611.

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## News of Schools

Ralph Gordon Echols, former chairman of the Architecture Department at Miami University of Ohio, has been named associate dean of **Texas A&M University's** College of Architecture and Environmental Design. Echols succeeds Richard E. Vrooman, who is returning to full-time teaching.



*Ralph Gordon Echols*

Echols has been professor of architecture and departmental chairman at the Oxford, Ohio, institution since 1971. He previously taught for 11 years at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and served one year as visiting critic at California State Polytechnic College. He holds a B.S. degree in building design and an M.S. in architecture from V.P.I., a masters in architecture from Harvard and a master's in city planning from the University of Pennsylvania.

TSA Executive Director Des Taylor was guest speaker for a meeting of the Student Chapter AIA at **Texas Tech University** November 19. Faculty advisor for the Tech Chapter is Jim White, chairman of the TSA Student Affairs Committee.

Architect Carl O. Happel has been appointed the new superintendent of construction and maintenance in the **University of Texas** physical plant division. Happel replaces Ralph Huber, who retired from the university September 30 after 39 years of service. Happel has been

with the UT System for 17 years, and served as Huber's assistant for the past two years.



*Archibald Rogers*

Former AIA President Archibald Rogers and Anthropologist/Planner Constance Perrin were guests of the **University of Texas at Austin** School of Architecture November 19th. They spoke on "Land Use and Social Order" as part of the school's guest lecturer series.



### Best Booth

Metroplex Business Interiors, a Dallas based office furniture and services firm, was selected by convention registrants as "Best Booth" at TSA's 36th Annual Meeting Exhibition in Fort Worth October 29-31. The booth, designed by Jim Marquess, Executive Vice President of MBI, was an example of the open office system concept adapted to a booth format. More than 60 firms participated in this year's Exhibition.

### News of Firms

The Houston firm **Starnes Group Inc.** has announced the relocation of its offices to 1502 August Dr., Houston 77027.



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The Fort Worth firm of **Patterson, Sowden, Dunlap and Epperly** has announced the retirement of partners Jay T. Dunlap, Don Epperly, and Charles J. Pfeffer. The firm will continue under the name of **SOWDEN-KELLEY-BARFIELD**.

The San Antonio firm of **William E. Parrish, Architect** is now incorporated and has a new address: Suite 217, 2101 Lockhill-Selma, San Antonio 78213.

**John Only Greer** has been appointed to his second three-year term on the City of Bryan Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

The firm of **Neuhaus + Taylor, Architects and Planning Consultants**, has announced that Bob G. Moore, Vice President, is relocating to the Houston office; Richard W. Jennings, Vice President, has been named Director, N + T/Dallas; and Robert J. Young has been appointed as Operations and Administration Director of the Interior Architecture and Graphics group.

**Jay Tonahill**, formerly with Barnes, Landes, Goodman and Youngblood, of Austin, has accepted a position as senior project architect with Caudill Rowlett Scott in Houston.

Austin architect **Terry M. Wadsworth** has announced the change of his address to **The Office of Terry M. Wadsworth**, 4111 Medical Parkway, Suite 202, Austin 78756.

Houston architect **Kenneth O. Wise**, formerly with the Keeper Company, has announced the opening of his own architectural office at 2707 Ferndale Pl., Houston 77006. Telephone: 713-527-9909.

The Dallas firm **Envirodynamics, Inc.** has a new address: One NorthPark East, Suite 420, Dallas 75231. Telephone: 214-750-1945. It also has formed a new energy systems division—headed by Joe Guthrie and William Davis—for development of solar heating and cooling systems, energy management studies and the implementation of energy conservation modes for new and existing structures.

Longview architects **Richard Malloy and Rudolph Bresie** have announced the formation of their new firm, **Malloy & Bresie, Inc.**, P.O. Box 3221, Longview 75601 Telephone: 214-758-0332.

Fort Worth architect **Robert H. Lemon** has announced the opening of **Lemon Associates Architects**, 1303 West Freeway, Fort Worth 76102. Telephone: 817-335-2333.

The firm of **Pitts, Phelps and White**, of Houston and Beaumont, has announced that **Albert J. Carter IV** and **Howard L. Vestal Jr.** have been advanced to the position of associate partner.

**Earle S. Alexander, Jr.**, has been named managing partner of **Pierce, Goodwin & Flanagan, Architects, Engineers and Planners**, in Houston.

## Industry News

General Portland Inc. has announced the election of **Dr. Harry Huntzicker** as chairman of the board and **James Lendrum** as president and chief executive officer.

**Edmund Kirk Associates**, located in Dallas' Oak Lawn Plaza design complex, recently has annexed adjacent space and has announced that its redesigned showroom will be completed prior to the Dallas winter market January 11-16.

**Sam Flax, Inc.**, distributors of architectural furniture and drafting materials, has opened new showroom and sales facilities at 3525 Turtle Creek in Dallas.

## Concrete Course

The Portland Cement Association will conduct an "Advanced Concrete Tech-

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nology" course at its Cement and Concrete Center in Skokie, Ill., January 19-23. The five-day session is designed to increase the problem-solving abilities of cement and concrete industry technical service personnel, contractors, engineers, architects, and inspection personnel.

## Pitts Award

Philip D. Creer of Austin has been named the 1975 recipient of the Pitts Award, the highest honor which TSA can bestow. Creer's selection was announced during the President's Banquet at the Fort Worth convention October 29-31.



Phil Creer

A Fellow of AIA, Creer is executive director of the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners. He served as head of the Department of Architecture at Rhode Island University from 1933 until 1956, and subsequently as director of the School of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin.

The Llewelyn W. Pitts Award was established in 1967 in honor of the former president of TSA.

## Galveston PDP

A highly successful Professional Development Program (PDP) on "townscape preservation" was conducted at Galveston's Ashton Villa Nov. 14 by AIA, TSA, and the Galveston Historical Society (GHS).

Highlights of the day-long affair, attended by 50 architects and interested parties from across the state, included a walking tour of the famous Strand area, led by GHS executive director Peter Brink, and a series of afternoon seminars which took the form of design charettes focusing on particular projects in historic preservation.

## Solar Energy

If you are interested in studying and developing solar energy or doing solar energy research with federal funds, ask for document ERDA-23, ERDA Technical Information Center, P.O. Box 62, Oakridge, Tenn. 37830.

## License Revocation

The Texas Board of Architectural Examiners, at a meeting in Fort Worth October 29, revoked the license to practice architecture in Texas of Vollie M. Piland, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Piland was found guilty of charges in violation of Section II of the Architects Registration Law, Article 249a, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes.

## Roscoe DeWitt Dies

Roscoe P. DeWitt, prominent Dallas architect and Fellow of AIA, died November 1 in Dallas at the age of 81. Among his many design projects were St. Paul, Parkland, and Presbyterian hospitals in Dallas, as well as federal government buildings in Washington, D.C.



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## Landscape Architects

The Texas Society of Landscape Architects (TSLA) elected the following officers and directors at its recent Annual Meeting in College Station, Texas:

President: John F. Teas, Bellaire; vice president: Steven D. Dodd, Jr., Dallas; secretary-treasurer: Charles F. Heinselmann, Houston; and directors: Mancill Allen, Houston; John P. Classen, Jr., New Braunfels; Albert T. David, Dallas; James A. Foy, Jr., Lubbock; Gratz C. Myers, Jr., Del Rio; C. O. Smith, Jr., Austin. Robert

W. Caldwell, of Bryan, is immediate past president.

Special Awards were presented to the following members for outstanding service and dedication to the profession of landscape architecture: Mancill Allen, past president of the Texas Landscape Association (predecessor of TSLA); Robert W. Caldwell, immediate past president of TSLA; and R. C. "Bob" Suggs, past president of the Texas Landscape Association. All three recipients of engraved plaques have also served on the board of directors of TSLA.

## Austin Chapter Awards

Honorary TSA Member Roberta Crenshaw (formerly Mrs. Roberta Dixon) received the Austin AIA Chapter Citizenship Medal at its annual gala December 7.

Mrs. Crenshaw was honored for her contribution to the betterment of Austin's environment. Her efforts have covered a broad spectrum of public service, spanning many years. She was a member of the city's parks and recreation board for 12 years, chairman for four, and is presently member emeritus. She is a former member of the board of directors of the National Recreation and Parks Association, trustee



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Photo By Mike Fluitt



Roberta Crenshaw with 1975 TSA President Dave Braden.

of the National Recreation Association Foundation, and a life member of the University of Texas Fine Arts Association. In addition, she was a founder of the Austin Ballet Society and has been active in a broad range of civic affairs.

Other honorees were: Lowell H. Lebermann, Jr., public service; Isamu Taniguchi, fine arts; Otto Jurgen Hofmann, industrial arts; W. Clark Craig, allied professions; J.C. Evans, construction; all of Austin; and, Tyrus T. Cox, craftsmanship, Fredericksburg.



# Letters

**Editor:** I have read with interest Raymond Reed's recent article published in the November issue of Texas Architect magazine. I commend his timely and significant explanation of the importance of incorporating energy conserving capabilities in newly designed buildings.

The Texas Society of Architects can be a useful tool in helping to lessen current energy wastefulness. The charge to change the criteria for annual design awards to include the category of energy conservation is an excellent one.

Let me also say that my Division of Planning Coordination stands ready and available to assist in the effort to make energy conservation a top priority for both the private and public sector.

James M. Rose  
Director  
Division of Planning Coordination  
Office of the Governor

**Editor:** In the November/December issue of Texas Architect, a portion of the article "Renaissance 75: Resources" dealt with the current status of nuclear power generation at Dallas Power & Light Company.

While nuclear power has been in the news recently, we think it is premature to label the reports as negative signs. DP&L, along with some 20 other electric utilities, is presently engaged in litigation with Westinghouse Corporation over uranium supply contracts. However, the question is not one of actual uranium supplies, but one of price. In essence, Westinghouse claims it cannot supply uranium at the contracted price, and the power companies feel that a deal is a deal. Your article also notes that uranium reserves, like fossil fuels, are limited, but it needs to be kept in mind that uranium contains much more usable energy than an equivalent amount of fossil fuel and that the U.S. Geological Survey has estimated that known recoverable uranium supplies exceed the supply of natural gas and oil in the U.S.

The Glen Rose nuclear power plant you refer to is a joint project of DP&L, Texas Electric Service Company and Texas Power & Light Company. The cost of that facility has increased, and inflation and governmental regulatory actions are responsible, but power companies are hardly the only organizations feeling the effects of those two factors. And, even so, this power plant will produce electricity in the 1980's at a cost less than could be produced from natural gas —

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if any gas is even available then for use as a boiler fuel.

Your article, in closing the nuclear review, cites a study by unnamed "blue ribbon scientists" whose doomsday claims have been refuted over and over again. I hope you will find the opportunity to review the study released in preliminary form in 1974 and in final form this past October by a task force of qualified scientists under the leadership of Dr. Norman Rasmussen of MIT. This study, done for, but independently of, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, states the likelihood of a nuclear accident such as you describe as one in five billion, compared to the one in 4,000 chance a person takes on a motor vehicle.

While the achievement of energy independence is still years away, we are moving as rapidly as possible toward that goal. Nuclear power is safe, efficient and absolutely vital.

L. R. Ward  
Manager  
Communications Services  
Dallas Power & Light Co.

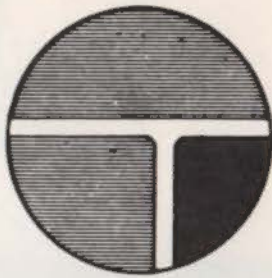
**Editor:** If my handwriting seems wavery, it's because I'm still quivering and tingling after reading your article (on Gruene, "Endangered Species," November/December, 1975). "The project is so rife with potential." . . . we're all giggling and gleaming down here.

Very well-written and seemingly effortless, which is the real test and indication of skill.

Gruene thanks you.

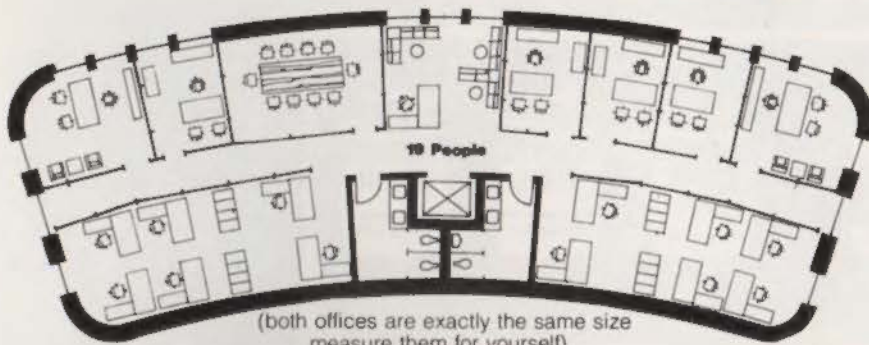
Chip Kaufman  
Gruene



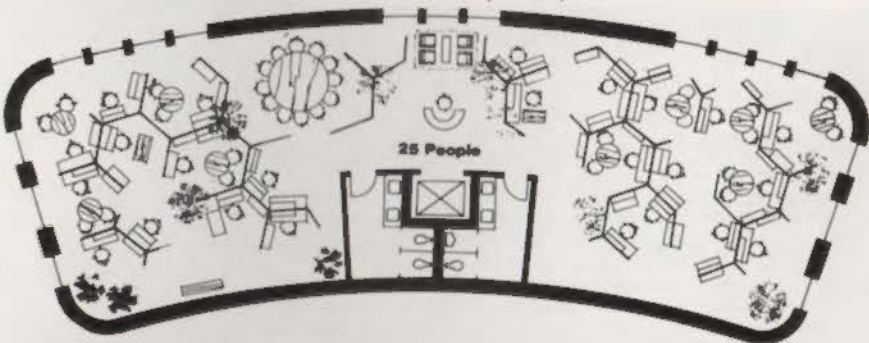


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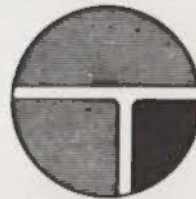
(both offices are exactly the same size  
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