



**THE TEXAS
ARCHITECT**

JULY

1966

AMIDST
THE ENORMITY
OF
THE GREAT HALL
OF THE
APPAREL MART
ARE THE
NOOKS & CRANNIES
THAT
ARE INTIMATE,
CLOSE,
CONCEALED.
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ARCHITECTS
FOR THIS 1965
TEXAS
ARCHITECTURE
SELECTION

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THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

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The highway program of the United States has made a magnificent contribution to the economy of the country. It has provided the nation with the greatest freedom of mobility of people and goods. It has ribboned the land with a magnificent network of roads, making freely accessible farm and factory, home and business, workplace and play place, providing the ultimate transportation of door-to-door service.

The work of our highway planners and engineers has been a notable achievement. State and Federal governments have on the whole performed superbly in building the highway system. The people of the country want the highways, use them and pay for them willingly.

Yet in recent years, it must be recognized, there has arisen some sharp discontent — not with the highway system as a whole but with a series of specific cases in which the highway threatens to become a destroyer rather than a creator, to rob assets rather than add them, to blight rather than build.

These situations have multiplied to an alarming extent and threaten the yet unfinished task of completing the kind of highway system the country needs and wants.

Up to now the highway system has moved well in the open countryside where more elbow room, less costly land rights of way and lower density of population have given the highway planner the opportunity to lay out modern highways with least hurt to other interests and maximum gain to all.

But the highways run up against the urban centers and metropolitan areas. What has happened is that the highway planners and engineers have tried to apply what can be well, effectively and most easily done in the open countryside to the more heavily built-up and populated areas. They have

slashed through residential neighborhoods, cut across college campuses, invaded parks and parkland.

Most of the time, they have invaded open spaces on the grounds that these are "free" spaces, despite the fact that the lands themselves have cost money, their development as parks cost more money, they have created important values of all kinds, and most important of all, they are needed by people. They are needed especially by people who have no great estates of their own, no large houses with ample grounds, no elegant and privileged country clubs.

It is ironic that at the same time the Congress has encouraged and provided funds for the acquisition and development of parks and other open spaces, it has permitted the highway program to take away just such spaces. It hardly seems consistent to pay Paul while robbing Peter.

Now, fine statements have been made about the desirability and virtue of respecting open spaces and parks while planning highways. Yet, curiously enough, there always seem to be overriding reasons why the highway through the park is more economical, that automobiles must be taken care of no matter what else. The reality is that the statements are fine but the parks are being lost, sometimes in the face of sound if not better alternate plans and routes.

The trouble is that the highway people have no guiding policy that will not only make them respect these parklands, college campuses and other open spaces, but give them support in avoiding them to save the precious assets of the people.

In no other time, in the great surge of a population explosion, in the vastly increased demand for facilities for the use of leisure time, in the prevention and elimination of air pollution, has there been an equal need for more rather than less park and open green space. We cannot sit idly by while parks are gobbled up.

This is not a little wayside problem. This is a crisis. The threat to the Brackenridge Park system by a highway in San Antonio and the threat to other parks and

historic places elsewhere are symbolic for the whole country. To let the present situation continue will make things worse. We cannot wait until it is too late.

It is still not too late to save some dreadful situations—such as that of Brackenridge Park. The people and the future will thank us for foresight if we declare forthrightly that these parklands must be protected and saved and for making the public policy clear. The highway people too will thank us so that they can go about their business of planning and building highways and not destroying parks, college campuses and historic treasures. The only assurance that the people of this country can be given is the word of Congress.

Therefore, I am introducing an amendment to the Federal Highway Act which would declare a national policy that in carrying out the provisions of the Federal-aid highway program maximum effort should be made to preserve Federal, State and Local government parklands and historic sites and the beauty and historic value of such lands and sites. The Secretary of Commerce is authorized to cooperate with the States in developing highway plans and programs which carry out this policy. After July 1, 1968, the Secretary shall not approve any Federal-aid highway program under Section 105 of title 23, U. S. Code, which requires the use of any land from a Federal, State, or local government park or historic site unless:

(1) there is no feasible alternative to the use of such land,

(2) the program includes all possible planning to minimize any harm to the park or site resulting from such use, and

(3) where possible and appropriate, substitute land will be provided for the park or site.

This amendment is consistent with the philosophy of the Federal-aid highway program, which is a program of close Federal-State cooperation. The amendment is patterned after Section 134, Title 23, U. S. Code, which was added to the Federal Highway Act in 1962 and which requires transportation planning in urban areas of over 50,000 population.

Adding this amendment to the law will work a hardship on no one and will benefit every man, woman and child in this country. On behalf of all who value America's parklands, I ask for its acceptance.

The preceding, made on the floor of the United States Senate, is a statement by Senator Ralph Yarborough in introducing an amendment to the highway construction appropriations bill. More power to him. Ed.



RICE SUN BONNET-RAIN HAT

At least one version of the cover proposed for the 70,000 seat Rice University stadium in Houston is this one by Rice alumnus architect John M. McGinty. University officials have received a grant to finance a feasibility study of several proposed designs for a "roll back sunshade or rain-cover" for the huge football bowl. If constructed, it would be the world's first all-weather open-air roof to be suspended over a full sized stadium designed for football. Rice officials hope the study will prove the financial, architectural and engineering soundness of a plastic cover over the stadium and bring more money into the school coffers to help stem the tide of a growing academic operational deficit. The trustees will carefully analyze the feasibility study when it is complete, University officials said.



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THE GREAT HALL

The design of an enormous interior space — the size of a football field and five stories high — presents a challenge in any case. But when the function of the room is to provide *relaxation* for busy wholesale buyers, the architectural challenge becomes as enormous as the space itself.

Surrounded as it is, by rectilinear, cellular setting spaces, the Great Hall of the Apparel Mart is intentionally, a shocking contrast to the atmosphere of its contiguous spaces. Utilizing fluid forms, varying levels, balconies, plants and fountains the architects created a self-dominating space in which great crowds can be served or a weary buyer find a secluded corner in which to rest.



THE GREAT HALL



THE GREAT HALL



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THE GREAT HALL

The Great Hall is a vast, open space with a high ceiling and large windows. It is a central hub for the building, providing a place for people to meet and work. The architecture is modern and functional, with a focus on open space and natural light.

THE GREAT HALL



THE GREAT HALL

This imaginative interplay of complex volumes is difficult to convey with photographs, but try to imagine yourself in the midst of the space, dwarfed by its height, but never overwhelmed by its size.

Walls advance and recede, rough textures give way to the textural exaggerations of scattered openings and formless light wells and jump then to smooth, velvet brick or splashing water. The great height of the ceiling moderates step by step with balconies or floor level changes or crashes down to almost head height over a small seating area.

It's a space to experience.



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TEXAS ARCHITECT



THE SAVING OF A SHRINE

ELORA B. ALDERMAN

This article is reprinted from the April,
1966 issue of TEXAS PARADE magazine.

JULY 1966

Today's high pitch of interest in preservation and restoration of historical things and places is in sharp contrast to the apathy of just a few years ago. It is hard to believe that less than two years ago the magnificent San Jacinto Monument was crumbling from the ravages of time and neglect.

On the face of the majestic monument gaping maws stared at onlookers where mortar had fallen from joints. High up, great holes yawned in unsightly testimony that lightning strikes in the same place—not twice, but many times. The entire shaft was discolored from grime and soot. Even the great bronze entrance doors sagged on broken hinges. Interior paint was peeling. Water was seeping into the area housing one of Texas' most famous museums.

That it has been repaired and restored to most of its former elegance is a tribute to a lot of people who bestirred themselves. That it should have needed repairing is testimony to the inexorable toll of the elements over more than three decades during which *no maintenance* had been provided.

It was actually in 1939 that the San Jacinto Monument was completed and dedicated. Constructed with revolutionary techniques, the octagonal tower raises a star-tipped finger skyward by a soaring 570 feet above the surrounding battlefield. The star itself is 35 feet high. It is made of structural steel and concrete, faced with Texas stone. And, of course, it symbolizes the lone star of the State of Texas.

Around the base of the shaft is a museum and art gallery 124 feet square rising 45 feet above the ground level. The shaft itself is 48 feet square at the base and tapers to 19 feet square at the base of the star. An elevator inside the shaft reaches to an observation tower at the top where, on a clear day one may view a vast expanse of the Gulf in one direction and the great Houston metropolitan area in another.

The monument commemorates one of the most spectacular battles of the world. It was here on April 21, 1836, that wily old Sam Houston and his polyglot, rag-tag band stood fast and struck blood to avenge the Alamo. The havoc Houston and his dwindling army raised that day on a 460-acre plot, hemmed in by the San Jacinto River and Buffalo Bayou, changed the course of history.

Indeed, this victory has given the Battle of San Jacinto a status co-equal with "the Sixteen Decisive Battles of the World," ranking alongside Waterloo and Ther-





mopylae in its significance. San Jacinto did more than win independence and ultimate statehood for Texas. It sheared open the great Southwest for settlement. It etched the permanent boundaries and set the profile for the contiguous United States.

More than 100 years after the battle Texans got around to erecting the monument and converting the battleground into a showplace of Texas History. The cost was paid with funds from the Texas Legislature, the Federal Government and contributions by Houstonians and other Texans.

A major oversight in the whole effort was *upkeep* of the structure. After some 32 years without proper annual maintenance this oversight brought a crisis. Newspapers sounded warnings that Texas' major monument to Texas Independence was tumbling down. The Daughters of the Republic of Texas took up arms. They had raised similar old Billy Ned some fifty years *before* at the prospect the Alamo would be razed to make way for a hotel!

The gallant ladies brought equal passion to the fight to save the San Jacinto Monument from a shame worse than demolition; the shame of disinterest, slow disintegration.

Persuasive enough was the clamour they raised that the 58th Legislature of Texas, reeling from the storm, saw fit in 1963 to allocate from the State Building Fund \$156,000 for a "monumental" purpose. As a budget item it read simply: "Repair damage to the San Jacinto Monument and its Terraces." A more eloquent spokesman might have phrased the item, "*Cost of Saving a Shrine.*"

What resulted was history's tallest face-lifting. The job began when the State Building Commission sought the counsel of Alfred C. Finn, the Houston architect who designed the structure in the first place. Ultimately the architectural firm of Goleman and Rolfe of Houston was named to refurbish the monument along the lines suggested by Finn.

The firm sanded Jacinto, sure, but it did much more than that. In harness with C. A. "Deke" Bullen, construction superintendent on the *original* San Jacinto job, the architects undertook a program of rejuvenation which they predict will "keep San Jacinto in good, dry shape for several years to come."



Pictured in the museum's newest room, "The Six Flags of Texas" are building engineer, W. K. Bean (l) and Col. W. B. Bates, vice president of the San Jacinto Museum of History Association.



Architect for the restoration, Albert Goleman, with Engineer Bean and Col. Bates pose on the steps of the refurbished monument.



The well-displayed relics of Texas history are in sharp contrast to their precarious condition of only two years ago.

THE SAVING OF A SHRINE



Workman high atop the shaft clean and waterproof the long neglected monument. Note the battleship "Texas" moored in the background.

THE SAVING OF A SHRINE

Actual work was contracted by Western Water-Proofing of Dallas. Working under the Houston architectural firm, Western's "human flies" did a superior and magnificent job.

The State Building Commission's Chairman, Admiral Harry R. Nieman, Jr. was so pleased with the work that he said, "Both the contractors and the architects responded over and beyond—far beyond—the contract specifications as a public service."

The Texas limestone shaft was completely cleaned, from base to the tip of the hugh Lone Star by craftsmen on "climbing spider" electric scaffolds. They removed loose particles ranging from pea-size to fist-size throughout their dizzying climb, replacing all damaged stone with matching mortar. All chipped joints, including the spectacular star's, were remortared. Doors were renovated, interiors sealed and repainted.

But the job involved more than the spire. The grounds were also unsightly. Large expanses of walkways on the battle site had sunken in places, puckering up, and bulging menacingly to the casual, high-heeled stroller. These were "mud-jacked," a process whereby a mixture the thickness of malted milk is pressured through small bores to elevate sidewalks to their original levels. Water seepage through the grounds and within the monument and museum had been a horrendous problem, too; so drains were updated, water-proofed. Cracks in walks were re-sealed, expansion joints replaced.

Moreover, San Jacinto Battleground Superintendent Clifford Beaver unfurled an intensive landscaping program for the entire park area. The soft blush of 200 crape myrtle trees and the virile flexing of 150 live oaks were shortly seen in the shadow of San Jacinto Memorial. And—last spring another 810 rose bushes (roses symbolize "remembrance") and 3,000 lilies were added to the San Jacinto spectrum.

Today, once again, San Jacinto Monument stands at proud attention over a plot of ground where history once ricocheted. Amazingly, its own history is a kind of irony.

The monument memorializes a battle that itself memorialized a battle, two battles, "Remember the Alamo." "Remember Goliad."

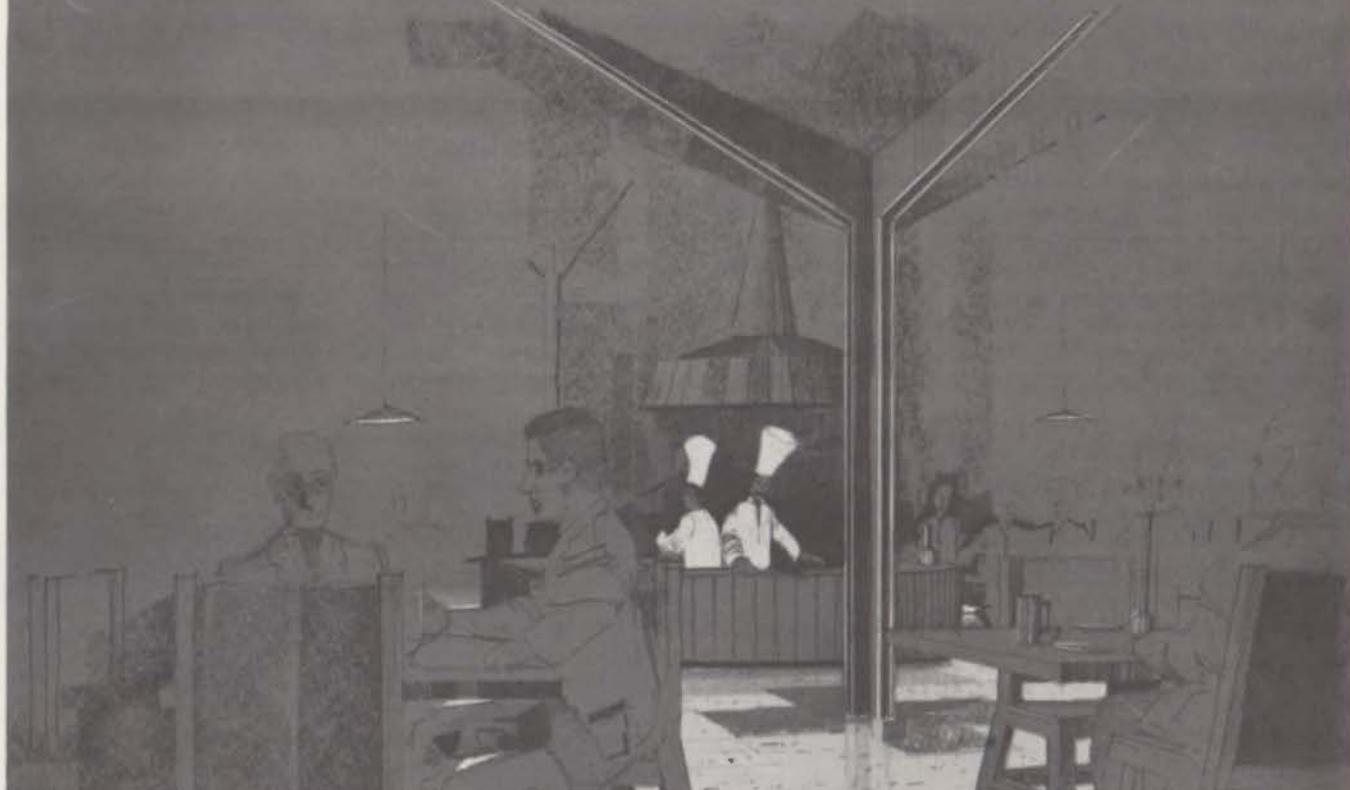
Texans remembered, struck a memorial, and promptly forgot. Now they have remembered again, and San Jacinto stands at attention, spangled by its strutting star. The last battle cry seems to have been: "Remember San Jacinto!"

JULY 1966



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