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The Resourceful Alternative

Recycling the Strand

Would You Buy this Building?

Hacking at the High Cost of Energy

Country Collage

**Plus regular columns. See Contents.**

# Texas Architect

NUMBER 2 VOL. 26 MARCH/APRIL 1976



**It could  
have been  
recycled.**



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# Times A' Changing

Folksinger Bob Dylan has a song that goes "The times they are a'changing."

Dylan himself might well be shocked at how fast they are changing. Never before in our history have we Americans been so acutely challenged to modify so quickly the way we plan, organize, and build our communities, as well as the way we travel, consume, live and even think. This sudden challenge results primarily from a convergence of four well-publicized crises: energy, resources, environment, and economy. How do we respond?

Much of the answer is too complex to address here, but part of it is very simple. We must stop the daily waste of our resources. We must promptly achieve a whole new level of socioeconomic efficiency and prudence, a whole new dimension of modesty in what we demand of our environment and our political system.

The latter, for example, burdened with a tendency to try and solve more and bigger problems from the top down, has produced a federal bureaucracy so massive and uncontrollable as almost to *guarantee* inefficiency and waste. This apparatus must be shrunk and streamlined through a redistribution of decision-making powers to smaller, more manageable political units, like the state and the county.

In a sense, we can make the same "top-down" observation about the built environment: our cities, neighborhoods, factories, and freeways. Most of them were developed at a time when fossil fuels and other resources, including land, were considered as inexhaustible as the buffalo in the 1870's. Financiers and builders planning new structures have understandably not hesitated to demolish older buildings standing in the way. Collaterally, when told by their architects that a better-crafted, energy-efficient building would cost them more to construct, they have generally opted for less efficient buildings, assuming a continued abundance of cheap fuel now dwindling fast. This has resulted in an urban environment which wastes our limited resource pool as voraciously as big government wastes our tax-dollars.

So the time has come to "recycle" warehouses, schools, and city-halls in the same spirit of conservation with which we are learning to recycle tin cans and newspapers. We must also try to improve the energy efficiency of older buildings by "retrofitting" them with high-performance mechanical systems, including, where feasible, solar and wind alternatives.

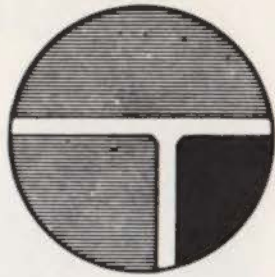
Finally, as with individual commercial and public facilities, certain older neighborhoods ought to be recycled too, and toward that end bills have been proposed to the House of Representatives for federally sponsored rehabilitation loans. Such loans would make it possible for low-income residents in deteriorating neighborhoods to renovate and improve their homes. I, for one, shall look closely at these proposals for "recycling" our built environment, because "The times they are a'changing."



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan Steelman".

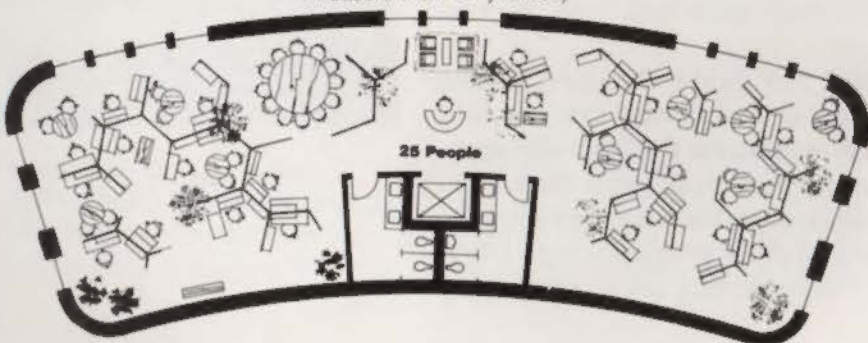
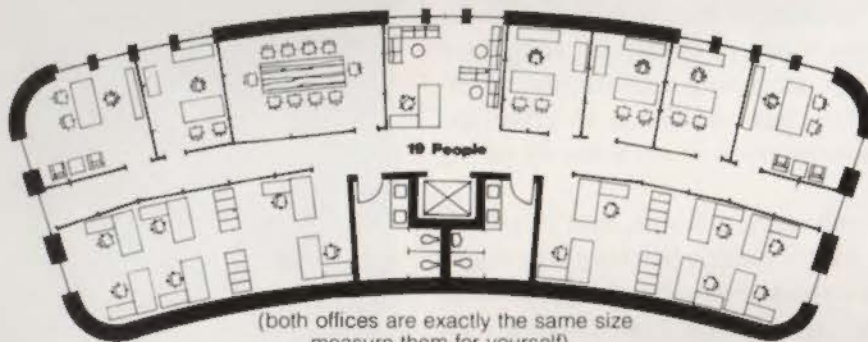
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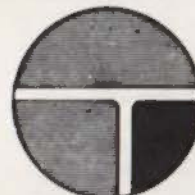
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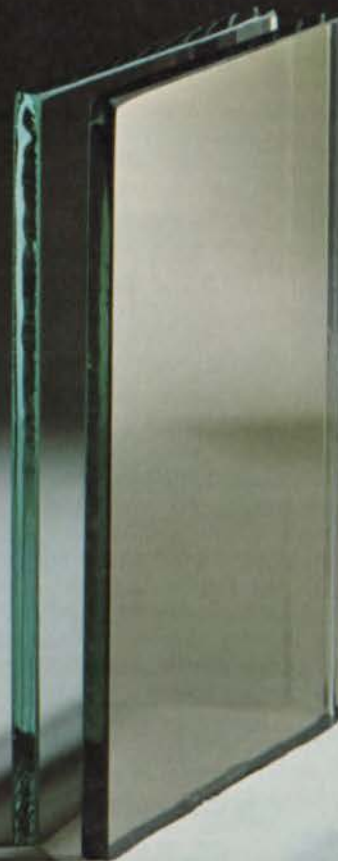
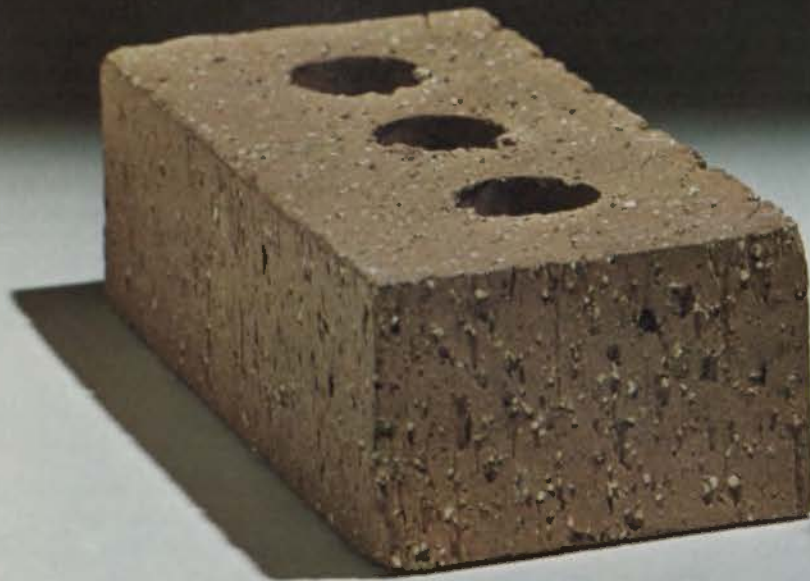
(1) The brick building will save 9% in initial construction cost, (in this study, \$848,735); (2) the brick building saves nearly 34% in cash equity required; (3) the brick building reduces heating and air conditioning bills by 9.8%; (4) the brick building's annual operating costs are nearly 4% less,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

What all of this means to you as an investor or architect is a larger budget for those luxuries that attract clients. A building with a prestige image, low upkeep and a high return.

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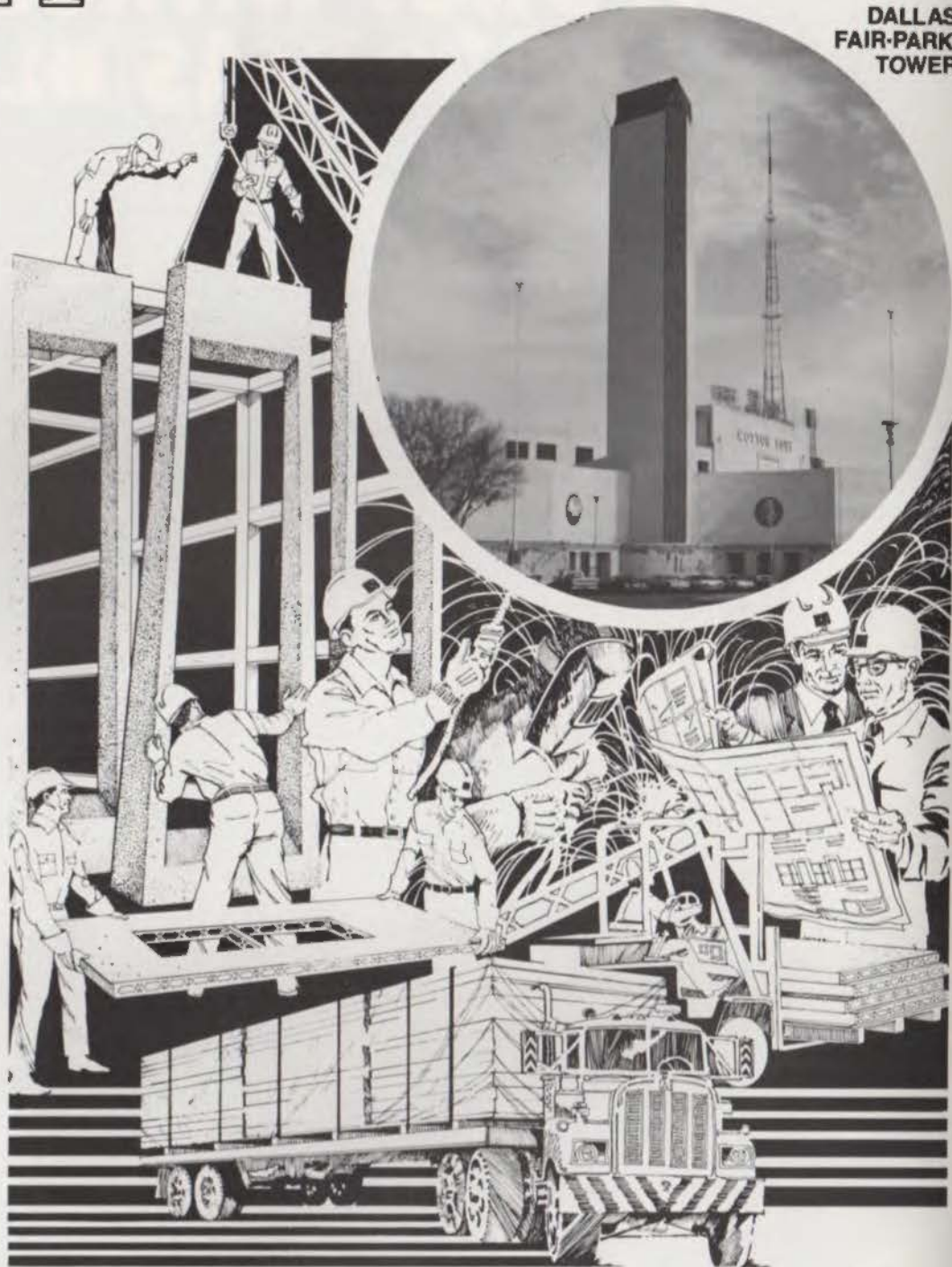
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# The Resourceful Alternative

## A case for recycling buildings, with six real examples

By Jim Hendricks

The recycling of buildings is nothing new; it's been going on for years. Recently, however, tight money, the rising cost of labor and building materials and the general economic slump ironically have occasioned a boom for architects who have been involved in the swing from new construction to recycling. Both architects and owners are being forced to take a fresh look at the recycling of old buildings—often "everyday" structures with no particular historical or architectural significance—to new uses. The trend presents a profitable alternative for architects as well as the interesting challenge of creating something new from something old.

### For the Client

There are also many advantages for the client in the recycling approach. In many instances, the owner conveniently can continue to occupy the existing location by renovating and adding new space. Other projects require looking for an existing old building in another location that can be recycled to meet the owner's requirements. Another advantage is a savings in construction cost of 20% to 35%. Recycling a sound, existing structure will generally cost from \$10 to \$25 per sq. ft., while a newly constructed project will cost at least \$30 to \$35 per sq. ft., not including land. It is not unusual for property to be purchased in the Central Business District for the cost of the land alone, with the old building included in the purchase price. If the structure is sound, the owner is able, with a few repairs, to utilize the existing structural system and walls. Most often, in addition to the architectural recycling involved, the mechanical and

electrical systems will have to be replaced to meet code standards and owner requirements.

### Pitfalls Expected

Despite the advantages, there are pitfalls in recycling an old structure which the owner and architect must anticipate. Because some buildings require a great deal of time and money to bring them up to new code standards, code and zoning requirements must be analyzed in the early planning stages. Still, there will always be surprises during construction, and the extent of these will not be apparent until completion of whatever demolition is required.

Given these intangibles, the architect never knows how much more work will be involved. Therefore, design fees for recycling projects often run 10% to 50% higher than those for regular work, and many architects prefer to accept a retainer and hourly fee rather than negotiate a fixed design fee. The owner must be aware that there will be some surprises and have money allotted for this purpose. The contractor, for his part, must approach the recycling project with caution, realizing the need to protect himself because of the unknowns on a fixed contract fee.

Recycled projects have been accomplished through many types of contracts. One of the best systems seems to be the Management Consultant approach, with complete understanding among architect, owner and contractor. The major recycling project demands an unbelievable amount of teamwork to produce a structure that all three parties will be proud of upon completion.

### Pride and Joy

Many projects involve structures of some historic significance; historic preservation can be accomplished at the same time a client is fulfilling his own personal requirements. This can be very satisfying to the owner and the people working in the completed structure, who usually display a great deal of pride in the building and enjoy being a part of it. This same pride is

seen during the construction phase in craftsmen working on the project. Generally, they are sincerely interested in doing the best job they can, whatever their part might be. This overall pride in craftsmanship is very gratifying to the architect, and it denotes a marked change in attitude from that normally found on a standard construction project.

Of course, historic preservation is popular these days. The owner, architect and contractor are likely to receive good publicity and perhaps some awards for their efforts. There is a great hunger in this bicentennial year for ways to relate to our past, and one of the best ways is to take part in saving some of these important old structures. However, from the standpoint of conservation and economics, even buildings of no historical significance are often well worth saving for adaptive use.

### Learning from Old Designs

Still another advantage for the architect on a recycling project is the enrichment that comes from understanding what the architect of an earlier time was doing. Valuable knowledge can be gleaned from different periods of architectural history by becoming personally involved with old designs, details, materials and methods of construction.

Finally, it is interesting that architects seem to have a different perspective on new projects after these recycling experiences. They are more determined to see that their new buildings are constructed well and have good design qualities—that they are not just fads of today—so that they too will one day be recycled. Hopefully, today's new buildings will be increasingly worthy of preservation in the overall perspective of architectural history.

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*Jim Hendricks is a partner in the Dallas firm of Burson, Hendricks & Walls, which has been a part of the recycling movement. He is co-chairman of TSA's Historic Resources Committee.*

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*Editors' Note: Hendricks' article serves as an excellent preface to the next nine pages, which feature reports on six recycling projects in Texas.*



# 1. Round Rock: A New Old City Hall



*Front view, before*

It used to house a fire truck—this trim little stone building in downtown Round Rock—but you'd never know it now.

In fact, time was when almost all city functions were carried on from this one small structure. But the fire and police departments moved to new facilities, leaving a city hall that looked like a fire station, and a decision to be made: build a new city hall or "fix up" the old one.

As in any potential recycling project, two basic considerations emerged. Was the existing structure physically suitable for transformation into the desired end result? And would the costs be reasonable? Architects said "yes" to both questions, and the city officials took their word for it.

With the final result, the Austin firm of Wilson Stoeltje Martin laid to rest any previous doubts. Minor structural modifications increased usable space by about 35%. Exterior touching-up and interior refinishing gave the whole building a "new" look. Yet the basic charm of the old stone structure was preserved. ("You might say it was 'liberated,'" says architect Horace Wilson.) For \$18 per square foot, City Manager Jim Hislop and his staff are happy. As for the folks of Round Rock, well they'd gotten sorta used to the old building after fifty years or so, and they're glad it's still around.



*Front view, after*



*City Manager's office*



*Added stairway*



## 2. Austin: A Hotel's Change of Face



*Future lobby*



*Current view*

The renovation of Austin's Commodore Perry Hotel is a project *Texas Architect* will be monitoring closely (from just across the street). The 1940s structure, located at Eighth and Brazos in the heart of downtown, will acquire a new name, along with a major facelift, while being converted into a luxury condominium complex for business/residential/commercial use. When completed some two years from now, the new "Texas Commodore" will combine under one roof facilities for office/living units, residential suites, restaurants, clubs, boutiques and other retail establishments.

Austin architect Max Brooks was involved with design of the original structure back in 1948 as a partner in the firm of Giesecke, Kuhne & Brooks. Now Brooks' present firm — Brooks, Barr, Graeber & White — is handling the renovation.

In its prime location just a couple of blocks from the Capitol, the Commodore became a popular stop for government



*Future view from Eighth and Brazos*

officials, executives, lobbyists and visitors to Austin. But in the sixties, with the influx of motor hotels, its fortunes began to decline until, in 1974, it ceased hotel operations entirely.

The ambitious attempt to give the old building new life will involve total renovation of the 211,000 square feet of floor space. Lower floors will be torn out to make way for a two-story lobby and a three-story atrium surrounded by small shops, offices, restaurants and similar commercial units. The upper floors, 4th

through 12th, will be remodeled to accommodate condominium units.

Plans for the exterior refurbishing call for an arched arcade and brick sidewalks around the building on Eighth and Brazos, sidewalk landscaping with trees and shrubs, and new brick finish for lower level exterior walls. A new parking garage will be constructed adjacent to the building on Ninth Street.

The new decor: "contemporary Texana." The anticipated price tag: \$2.8 million, and a bargain at that.



### 3. Corpus Christi: The Alamo Remembered

*Entrance, facing Mesquite Street*

Photos by John Freeman





Conference Room



For the decade following its birth in 1929, the building known to Corpus Christians as the Alamo housed a second box office for the then-flourishing Ritz Theater. Built as part of the original theater construction, the wing served as the Mesquite Street entrance and also housed a couple of shops. But in 1939, "Gone with the Wind" became the last picture show; this auxiliary entrance was deactivated and the entire wing became a tobacco warehouse, complete with a huge cigar sign out front. The theater itself closed years later, a victim of suburban competition, but was put back into use as a concert hall with the advent of country rock.

In 1974, Architects Brock Mabrey and Partners "took a chance," and purchased the then-vacant wing facing Mesquite, lovingly restored it, and made it the headquarters of their statewide practice.

Principal Les Mabrey maintains that the large, interesting open spaces of the structure are well-suited for the firm's design activities. The architects retained the Alamo's arched hallway of white textured plaster, which begins at the glass entryway of the conference room and continues the length of the building. Free-standing cedar dividers and graphic fabric panels partition functional areas without disturbing unique open spaces.

#### Cost Advantage

The cost of acquisition and restoration of the old structure proved to be economically advantageous. "Our firm has made past studies that indicated the economies of creating new construction or restoring and renovating existing structures were equal," says Mabrey. "Now, however, rising construction costs indicate that renovation economies are much better in most instances."

An even more important factor to Mabrey, however, is commitment to the urban core itself. "Center city blight is the natural resultant of community growth," Mabrey said. "As residents move ever outward, sales and service activities must follow . . . Corpus Christi has experienced this phenomenon for the past two decades. Today, however, financial, legal, corporate and oil activities are experiencing a strong in-migration.

"The core will never die, but will change naturally — will reshape itself with some prodding and some small amount of understanding. For business entities relocating within the core, the never-ending, ultimate appeal of "being in the center of things" will mature center city into its own sense of place, so different than it has been in the past, but so imperative in its function."

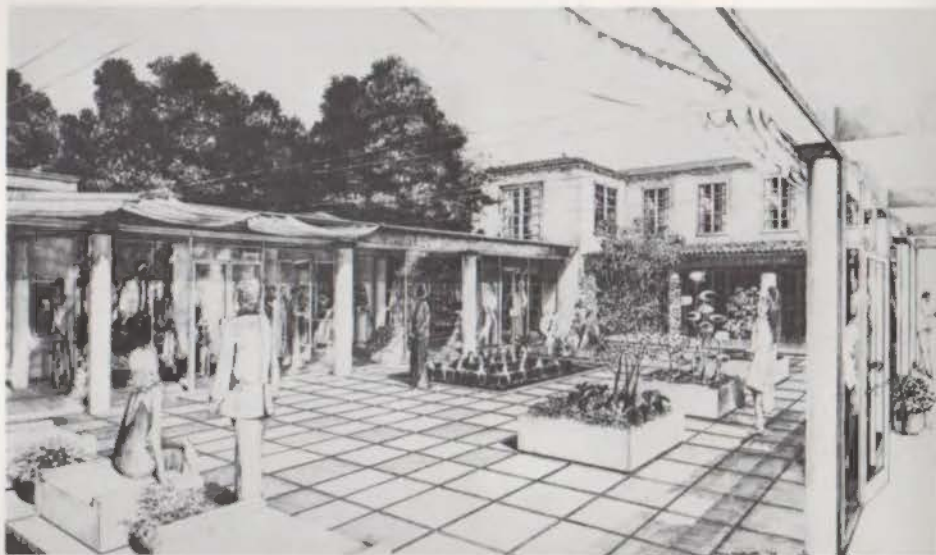


## 4. Waco: An Artful Renovation

It all began as a summer retreat for a wealthy lumber magnate and his young bride. In 1924, the late William Waldo Cameron selected perhaps the most beautiful site in Waco for a "simple summer cottage with a large livingroom." Located on the crest of a high bluff surrounded by woodlands, "Valley View" overlooked the beautiful valleys of the Brazos and Bosque Rivers and proved to be a popular retreat. To accommodate the Camerons' many guests, the relatively modest structure was enlarged into a three-level Mediterranean-style mansion — with swimming pool, courtyard and cabana — and became a favorite gathering place for the social elite. Cameron's death in the late thirties marked the beginning of Valley View's decline, though in recent years visitors could be seen strolling the grounds of the vacant mansion and lingering in the abandoned courtyard, enamored by its charm.

Under terms of an agreement with McClennan Community College, which purchased 160 acres of the Cameron estate in 1966, Valley View is being renovated as the future home of Waco Creative Art Center. The Art Center (as it will be called after its relocation) has over the last few years developed a highly successful community visual arts program — exhibits, classes, special projects and events — operating out of a storefront building in downtown Waco. The renovation of Valley View, being done by the San Antonio firm of Ford, Powell & Carson, will provide 10,000 square feet of space for exhibits, administration and classes. Future phases call for construction of a large exhibition gallery, conversion of the swimming pool area into a sculpture and water garden, and enclosure of pergolas and cabana.

The Cameron house was a "natural" for recycling, according to architect Milton

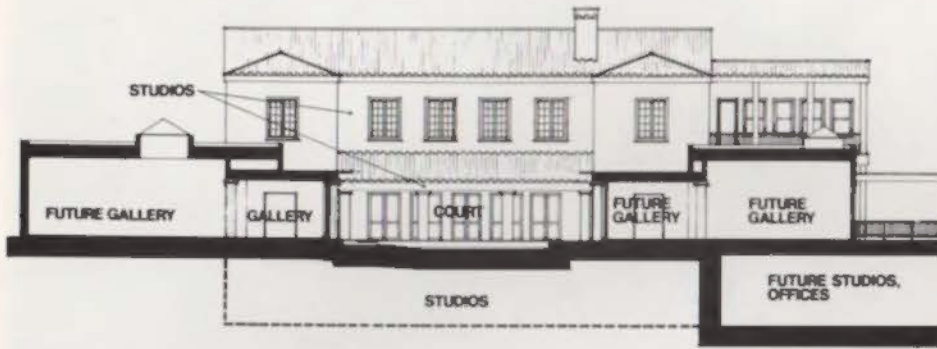


*(Below) courtyard area before and (above) after*



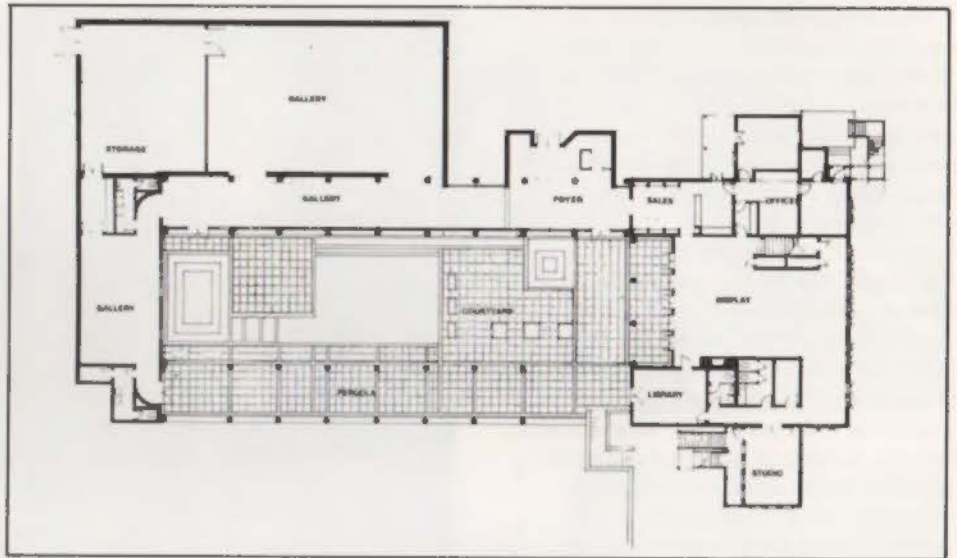


8. Awaiting  
Living with  
the Past



Babbitt. The site is prime, with access to parking. The relationships of house, courtyard, cabana and pergolas are perfect for anticipated uses and good for phased construction. All of these elements are distinctive and were designed at the same level of quality. As for the house itself, most of its charm is on the exterior, where it can easily be preserved, allowing for complete flexibility of interior space without sacrifice of any distinctive features.

With the initial phase of the project nearly complete, the cost savings are 25-35% compared to new construction. More significantly, maintains Babbitt, the ambience of the setting and character of the whole complex could not be duplicated at twice the cost.





## 5. Austin: Living with the Past

One of the most appealing things about recycling an old building, regardless of its architectural or historic distinction, is the possibility of inhabiting a structure which carries with it an established tradition or heritage of some sort — if nothing more than a string of colorful stories about colorful people and times.

The Austin architectural firm of Taniguchi, Shefelman, Vacker, and Minter (TSVM) has occupied such a building since 1966. Standing at the corner of Third Street and Congress Avenue, the "TSVM Building" was first erected in 1881 as the Pearl House Saloon, one of a number of such establishments aimed at garnering business from the mounting traffic through and around Austin's two old rail depots, each of which stood diagonally across Congress from the other. No one knows quite how long the saloon operated, but, according to architect Tom Shefelman, it functioned eventually as a House of Pleasure from whose second-floor balconies ladies in satin dresses beckoned to men on the streets below. Decades later, probably during World War II, the saloon became San Wah's Cafe, itself to become a favorite Austin landmark.

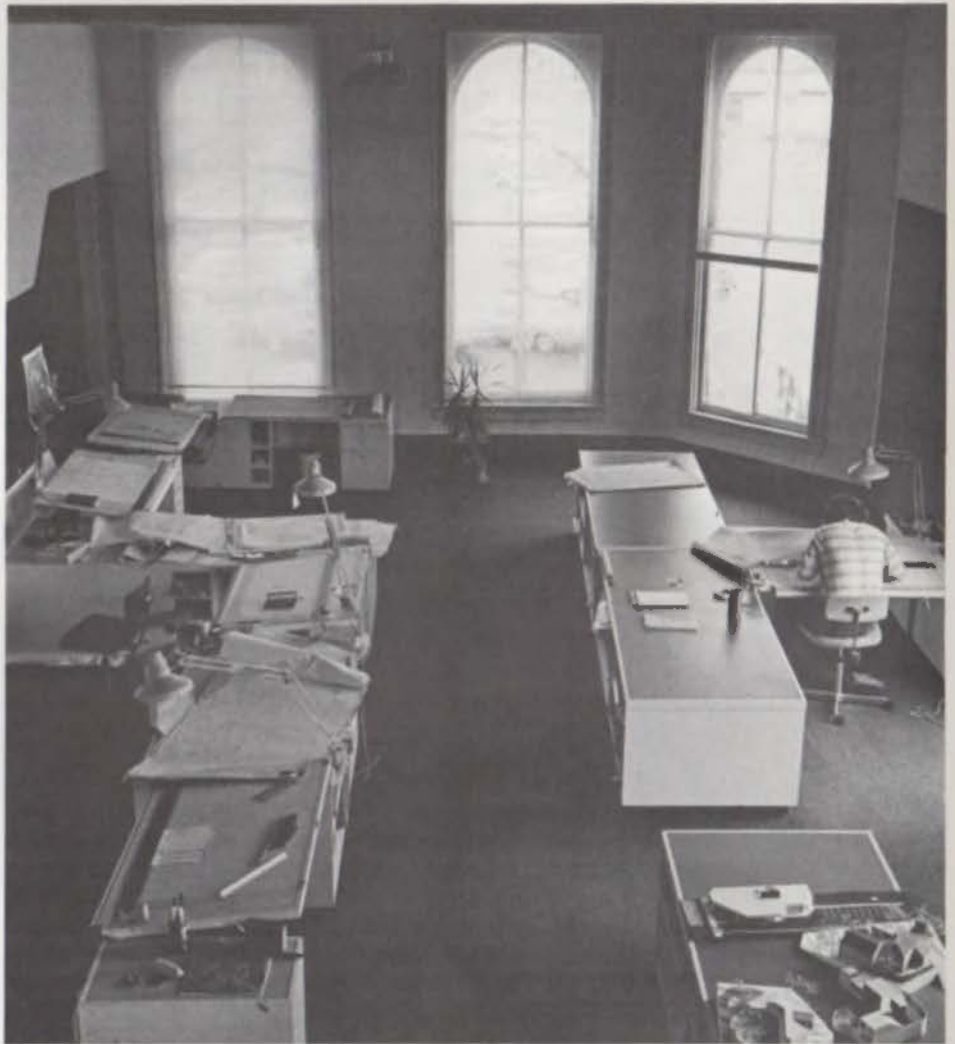
### Preventing Obsolescence

Shefelman originally learned of the building through a city-sponsored study which he himself was conducting on how to prevent commercial obsolescence in the downtown area. The building was for rent at the time, so the firm moved in and launched a renovation effort which has continued, in stages, for several years.

Besides sprucing up the exterior (a mixed bag of typical Victorian features, like pseudo-Corinthian columns tacked onto the front), the architects knocked down partitions on the second floor to create a sizable open space, over which, at the rear, they constructed a large loft, or mezzanine (made possible by the 15-foot



*View from loft (below) and toward loft (above)*



ceiling height). They also constructed a second set of stairs, to conform to city codes, replaced old balcony doors with high arched windows, installed central air-conditioning, modern lighting, and glass-enclosed cubicles for islands of quiet.

The total cost of TSVM's building to date, including some furnishings, has come to about \$67,000. Built new in 1976,

a comparable brick building of 4500 square feet would cost well over \$100,000 — excluding land. And you wouldn't have those stories about the Pearl House Saloon (or the one about the old Austin glass-installer who, upon entering the building, exclaimed to Tom: "Well, I'll be goldarned! This is where I *did it* for the first time!").



Dallas  
Hangar to  
Grew Pot

Photo by Gary Jernm

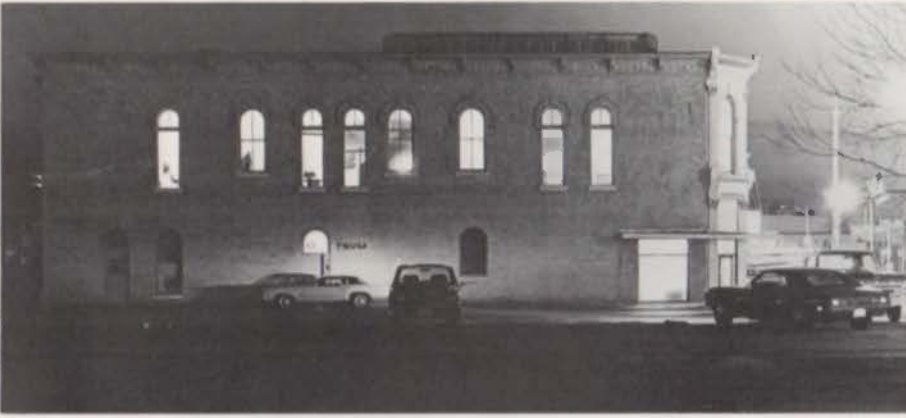


Photo by Gary Jernm

(Below) view from landing



Receiving area

Photo by Gary Jernm



## 6. Dallas: Hangar to Stew Pot



Scenes from Olla Podrida and (bottom, left) exterior view of the three converted hangars

Dallas developer Jim Coker saw more than an ugly tin building in the abandoned hangar at the old Highland Park city airport; he envisioned a fun place to be. And, besides, he needed a way to utilize all those architectural antiques he had collected the world over and assembled in the hangar next door. Thus originated the concept for Olla Podrida, a "bazaar of artisans and craftsmen, unusual wares, delightful foods and subtle surprises." Here, says one observer, "you can watch potters pot, carvers carve, weavers weave and sculptors sculpt. You can see stained glass in the making while dining on an elegant quiche, or just on corn and beans."

Two Dallas firms — The Architects Partnership and Pratt, Box & Henderson — were responsible for the amazing transformation of the huge (60' x 240') structure. The basic concept called for a European-style center street of brick, with two levels of shops on either side and ample skylighting overhead. Project architect Ron Bradshaw, of The Architects Partnership, says that although a full set of working drawings now exists, the actual project "was completed from sketches done as we went along." Bradshaw literally "lived on the site" during the construction year of 1972,



working with individual tenants — who purchased and utilized many of Coker's architectural antiques — and the carpenters themselves.

Construction cost was a low \$21 per square foot, less basic materials, most of which were themselves recycled. The project has been so successful that a second phase has been constructed in the adjacent hangar which housed the antiques. A third hangar containing a

dinner theater and indoor tennis courts, the first ventures on the abandoned airfield site, completes the complex.

"Olla Podrida is literally 'stew pot,'" Bradshaw said, "but a very special one which changes daily with the addition of new ingredients. It never runs out and is ever-changing. This is what we sought, and it's what we got. What was once a huge barn of hangar on its way to oblivion has been rescued and refitted into today."







# Laughter Is Its Own Reward

**But *Texas Architect* will pay you for it anyway**

We've decided to liven up the magazine with "arkitect" jokes and cartoons which we hope to attract from our readers. If you've heard a good one lately, or if you or someone you know has drawn a cartoon or even a piece of office graffiti, send it in to us. We'll pay you \$5 for every joke and \$20 for every cartoon or drawing we print, and we'll return the ones we don't use. (Jokes about *clients* of architects are okay too. Also jokes and cartoons about students, buildings, energy, transportation, government — your imagination is the limit.) Mail submissions to Humor Editor, *Texas Architect* Magazine, 800 Perry-Brooks Building, Austin, Texas 78701.

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*Swing-out spice rack.*

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# Recycling The Strand

By Sue Silverman Brink



*Sue Silverman Brink is editor of **Sacarappa**, the bimonthly newsletter of the Galveston Historical Foundation. Above is the Blum Building, currently for sale through the Foundation's Revolving Fund (see story on page 23).*

The Strand, in Galveston, comprises one of the most important concentrations of 19th century iron-front structures in the United States. Once dubbed "The Wall Street of the Southwest," it was built during the heyday of the Great Port of Galveston, and, though scarred, has survived well enough to be listed by the National Register of Historic Sites and the Texas Historical Commission. Now, after years of dormancy on a street whose fortunes faltered, these magnificent buildings are being rejuvenated, their facades restored, their interiors adapted for restaurants, shops, offices and apartments.

## Revolving Fund

Since early 1973, when the Moody Foundation granted \$200,000 and the Kempner Fund \$15,000 to the Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF), exciting things have been happening. This money was used to establish a revolving fund enabling GHF to buy historic Strand buildings and then resell them to private investors with preservation deed restric-

tions. Purchasers also agree to restore the facade and develop active uses in the interior. (The Strand buildings offer immense potential for adaptive use, with natural brick walls, 18-foot ceilings, tall vertical windows and rich-grained wood floors.)

## Busy, Busy

The Strand has since taken long, bold strides toward becoming a fascinating street and an integral part of Galveston's downtown area two blocks away. It is already a cultural center. The Galveston Arts Center on The Strand provides year-round classes in ceramics, photography, silk-screening, and oil painting, to mention a few. Last year saw a magnificent Festival On The Strand sponsored by the Galveston County Cultural Arts Council with artists and craftsmen from four states. Sculptor Harvey Bott has refurbished a Strand building for Loft-on-Strand Gallery. The Old Strand Emporium, The Strand Surplus Senter, Georgette's Cafe, The Strand Greenery, the 1882 Soup and





*Left: The 2300 block of The Strand was completely rebuilt in 1870-71 after a fire ravaged the area. All but one of the buildings are now protected by GHF preservation deed restrictions, and the J. F. Smith Building (right) is presently being renovated for apartments and studios. Below: cast iron column detail from the Blum Building.*

Sandwich Shoppe, and Vernon Pat's Antiques help make The Strand a varied, interesting place to be, while nearby Fisherman's Wharf allows a firsthand view of the Port of Galveston. One of the most exciting projects is the Whiteside Townflats, an 1870 iron-front building converted into apartments. Ford, Powell, and Carson of San Antonio were the architects of this stunning design. Other architects doing Strand renovations include Architects Incahoots of Houston, Lyndon McKnight of Houston, Louis Oliver of Galveston, and Charles Zwiener of Galveston.

Greatly aiding The Strand restoration project are the many private wholesalers on the street who have voluntarily painted the exteriors of their buildings. Restoration of the historic Stewart Title Building is slated to start soon, and the Moody Foundation has recently purchased the Santa Fe Railway Terminal building which anchors The Strand at 25th Street.

#### **Storefront Dioramas**

An Action Plan for The Strand was recently completed by the Philadelphia architectural and planning firm of Venturi and Rauch. Christopher J. Brown and Associates, a Houston consulting firm, did the economic and marketing feasibility study for the Plan. Funding was provided by a City Options grant from the National Endowment for The Arts and the Moody Foundation. Action Plan ideas include "street exhibits" in vacant storefront windows, showing the activity of The Strand during its great days in the 19th century, along with portraits of original buildings. Visitors will thus see The Strand as it was and as it is being restored today. There are

also plans for pedestrian walkways to link The Strand with the central business district, including the 1894 Grand Opera House, the ANICO Tower, the wharf at Pier 22, and shuttle buses to connect The Strand to the beachfront, University of Texas Medical Branch and the rest of Galveston. (The Grand Opera House is being restored by the Galveston County Cultural Arts Council as a performing arts center.)

#### **Mansions, Storms, Ships**

And that isn't all: Ashton Villa, an 1859 Italianate mansion recently restored and furnished for tours, had 25,000 visitors in 1975. The Bicentennial Visitors Center, located in its carriage house, includes the "1900 Storm" multi-media presentation. *Elissa*, an 1877 square-rigged sailing vessel, which visited the Port of Galveston twice in the 1800's, has been purchased by GHF, and vigorous fundraising efforts are underway to bring the *Elissa* back to Galveston as an operational sailing vessel and maritime exhibit. Restoration of the 1839 Samuel May Williams House will be completed in time for tours this summer.

#### **Dickens on the Strand**

GHF has also developed a superb schedule of programs, including the annual Dickens Evening on The Strand, which drew 6500 people last December; the Annual Historic Homes Tour in May; the Galveston Bicentennial Heritage Tours for out-of-town groups; a successful Speaker's Bureau and research facility. GHF is further completing a comprehensive historical survey of Galveston, with help from the City of Galveston and the



Texas Historical Commission, and a study funded with HUD 701 funds to analyze how the historical districts are working, how they can be improved, and how other historical areas in the city can be encouraged to preserve and restore themselves.

Naturally, GHF has needed strong community support to accomplish these varied objectives. Galveston financial institutions have made long-term financing available on favorable terms for purchase and development of Strand buildings, the City of Galveston has allocated \$55,000 for permanent historical exhibits and improvements for the Bicentennial, the Moody Foundation has lent invaluable support, while many hundreds of volunteers have also helped in this massive revitalization effort. (Supporters of historic preservation can keep abreast of these exciting developments by becoming members of GHF. For more information write P.O. Box 302, Galveston, Texas 77550 or phone 713-765-7834.)





## Economic Analysis

# Would You Buy This Building?

(at \$1.50 per square foot)

By Christopher J. Brown

The Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF) Revolving Fund was established in 1973 on the basis of grants from private Texas foundations. It is used primarily to buy and resell commercial Strand buildings to private investors. These resales, on occasion subsidized, always include deed restrictions which prohibit demolition, insure facade restoration, and require some minimum interior investment for active use. While the investor is subject to these limiting deed restrictions, he is able to take advantage of an innovative financing pool (25-year permanent financing at a subsidized interest rate of .25% below FHA lending rates with no service fees), provided he meets traditional credit requirements. The loans generally amount to 75% of project cost.

### **Iron-front Bargain**

A prime example of the investment opportunities afforded by a project like The Strand is the Blum Building, a 28,000-square-foot, iron-front masonry structure now on the market, via GHF, for \$42,000. The purchase must be made in cash, but loans are available through the local financing pool described above. The question now is to what new use might such a building be put, and what would be the economics involved?

### **Building Market in Galveston**

Market conditions in Galveston suggest a high, unmet demand for restaurants and

*Christopher J. Brown is a principal in the firm of Christopher J. Brown and Associates of Houston, an economic and marketing consulting firm which in 1975 conducted a major marketing and economic study of Galveston and The Strand for the GHF.*

specialized retail facilities. Demand is a result of the significant tourist industry and the growing local economy in Galveston. The residential market, particularly apartments, where occupancy levels have reached 97% in the city, is very strong. Office demand is weakest, with current supplies likely to hold for several years. Adaptive re-use of the Blum Building, therefore, might best utilize the first floor for a restaurant and retail shops, with office space on the second and third floors. (A design requirement of this building, as well as most Strand buildings, is the introduction of a skylight and atrium to serve as the circulation core while providing natural light indoors. An elevator might also be installed.)

### **Rents and Tax Shelters**

Rents in the building should average \$.35 to \$.40 a square foot per month for retail space, \$.40 to \$.45 for upper story office space, which compares quite favorably with rents in office towers. Operating expenses are estimated at 40% of effective gross income. (A significant operating expense in Galveston real estate is the property tax, which amounts annually to about 3% of the market value of the building.) The return on a cash investment of \$170,000 would amount to \$17,000, or a 10% simple rate of return. However, significant tax shelters are also available, including a straight-line depreciation schedule based on a 25-year life, plus extraordinary expense deductions during the construction period — not only normal interest charges and operating expenses, but also deductions for roof and facade restoration, which would be classified as deferred maintenance.

The total project budget of \$680,000 or \$24 per gross square foot includes a construction budget of \$517,000 or \$18.50 per gross square foot. Obviously, the investor must be cautious about controlling costs. He might in fact opt to perform some of the work himself, as other investors have done. Otherwise, the investor's architect must obtain contractors who know the reconstruction business and are not afraid to work with high-contingency bid items. Furthermore, the architect must provide the imagination and ingenuity to design an adaptive use building within a limited construction budget.

### **\$1.50 Per Square Foot?**

Galveston's Blum Building, thus selling for the unusually low price of \$1.50 a square foot, is but one example of the unique investment opportunities available on The Strand. The ingredients for a successful development include a sophisticated investor, a clever and imaginative architect, local bank support, City Hall backing and flexibility, plus a strong local organization (in this case GHF and the Moody Foundation) promoting both the area and the concept of downtown renewal.



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## Retrofitting Buildings

# Hacking at the High Cost of Energy



By Ray Reece

The chickens, as they say, are coming home to roost, at least in Central Texas, where geysering energy costs are making believers out of building owners who just three years ago scarcely hesitated to leave 800 tons of air-conditioning roaring all night for clean-up crews of 10 or 12 people. Natural gas prices have risen eight-fold since 1973, while electricity costs have quadrupled. In dollar terms, this means that an Austin bank and office building which paid \$117,000 for heating, cooling and lighting in 1973 now pays \$419,000, and the end is not in sight.

### **New Enterprise**

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the owners of such buildings, along with certain architects, engineers and government funding agencies, have stepped up their search for ways to cut those expenses not only in new buildings but in older ones too. The latter approach generally calls for a "retrofit" of the building's energy system, which might include anything from reducing the flow of hot water to installing a solar collector. This in turn has called for a new awareness of the dynamics and technology of energy conservation. In fact, it has generated what may be a brand new enterprise altogether — "energy management" — with extensive implications regarding both fuel consumption and the role of the engineer in relation to building owner and architect.

The sort of technical knowledge required by "energy management" in general, and retrofitting in particular, is likely to give the engineer a more active position on certain projects.

### **Psychological Factors**

A clear illustration of this development is a pair of "retrofit studies" conducted in Austin recently by the local firm of Hammer Consulting Engineers under contract with the Federal Energy Administration (FEA). The firm, headed by Glenn Meredith, has for some time been cultivating its potential in the sphere of "energy management," including the technology of solar installations. Meredith stresses, however, that a retrofit need be neither exotic nor expensive, and cites the case of an Austin church which cut its fuel bills \$2000 last year through a retrofit investment of \$1800. What is often most important, he says, are the attitudes of a building's owner and maintenance staff — the degree to which they are willing to change their "energy habits" in connection with a given retrofit. So important is this "psychological" dimension that it became a major factor in Meredith's FEA study.

### **"Real-life" Conditions**

What the government wanted was a detailed evaluation of a two-volume Energy Conservation Manual which had been compiled by the New York engineer-

Office building studied for "energy conservation opportunities" (top). Engineers Glenn Meredith (middle) and Pike Dobbin.

Photos by Larry Paul Fuller



ing firm of Dubin-Mindell-Bloome Associates, Volume I (ECM-1) had been written for use by "owners and operators" of buildings while Volume II (ECM-2) was directed toward "professional engineers and architects." Before printing these manuals for mass distribution, the FEA needed to determine their viability under "real-life" operating conditions: what were their strengths, in the hands of actual users, and what were their shortcomings? Ham-Mer was one of four U.S. engineering firms selected to make this evaluation.

Originally, the FEA had suggested that Meredith conduct his studies on an office building and shopping center in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, but Meredith pointed out that Central Texas might be a better test zone because of the relatively higher fuel costs there, particularly natural gas (a phenomenon resulting in part from the now-famous supply difficulties which buyers have experienced

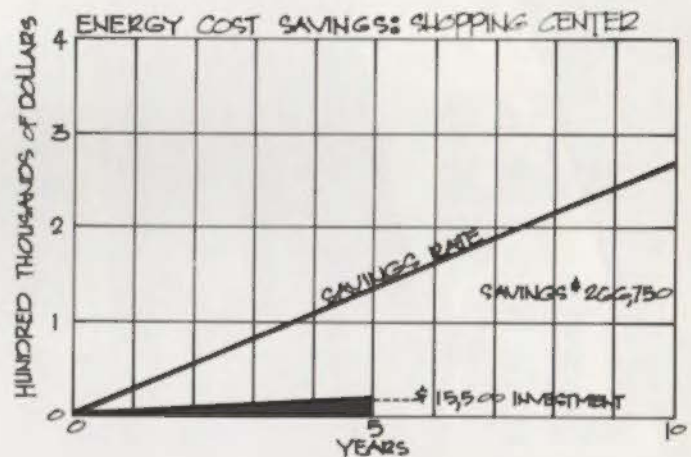
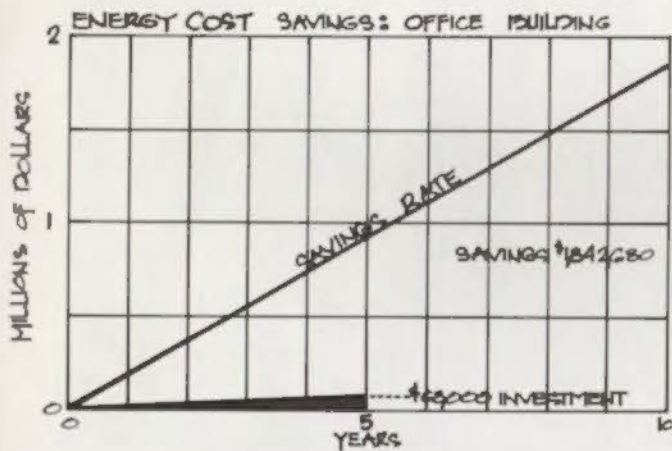
to keep a record of their results. Meanwhile, Ham-Mer set about the assembly of its own evaluation team — which ultimately comprised, in addition to the engineers themselves, a sociologist (Dr. Sally Lopreato of UT/Austin), a recognized expert on fuel conservation (Dr. Jerald Jones, also of UT/Austin), and a certified public accountant (Henry, Shelton, Dumond, and Company — to analyze the financial data bearing on the study). The role of the sociologist was to examine the manual in terms of coherence and "motivational psychology" (i.e. its ability to "inspire" an owner to apply its suggestions), while that of the energy specialist was to make recommendations based on the latest developments in the technology of energy conservation.

#### Instant Relief

According to Meredith, the people at City Bank applied the data in their

employers and maintenance workers (in addition to "attitudinal" interviews by Dr. Lopreato, who devised a questionnaire tailored specifically to the contours of ECM-1).

Six months after commencing the project, Ham-Mer came up with two different sets of specific recommendations, one to the FEA concerning revisions in both manuals, another to the owners of City Bank and H.E.B. Shopping Center concerning means of cutting their utility bills — in some cases quite dramatically. The bank, for example, were it to implement all the Energy Conservation Opportunities (ECO's) suggested by the study, could lower its annual fuel costs by 54%, from \$338,578 to \$154,310, with a "retrofit" investment of only \$68,060 (yielding a "payback" period, incredibly, of 4.3 months). Even the shopping center, despite its less manageable sprawl, could trim its fuel costs by 33%, earning back its



with Lo-Vaca Gathering Company, the area's chief distributor). The government accepted this reasoning, along with Meredith's suggestion that a "strip-type" shopping center be tested, instead of a newer "mall-type," because 90% of the shopping centers in Texas are of the "strip" variety. Meredith's willing "targets" were City National Bank (a multi-story office building in downtown Austin) and H.E.B. Shopping Center on South Congress.

#### Evaluation Team

The first step was delivery of ECM-1 to each of the owners and managers involved, with instructions to have their maintenance staffs attempt to apply the conservation data on their own, sans the assistance of a professional engineer, and

ECM-1 immediately, with a corresponding diminution in their utility bills. The shopping center staff, however, confronted with 10 different retail firms, each having its own estimation as to energy needs and difficulties, appeared to have made little use of the manual (another factor here was the overly technical and therefore intimidating language of the manual itself, a shortcoming mentioned by Ham-Mer in its final report to the FEA).

Ham-Mer then conducted its own professional energy analysis of each building, using both ECM-1 and ECM-2. Meredith's "task force," under the operational direction of Pike Dobbins, pored over records of utility costs, studied original plans and specifications, monitored equipment, figured in meteorological data, and interviewed managers,

\$15,501 investment in only seven months.

It is because of results like these, which represent a highly sophisticated, multi-disciplinary approach to one of the nation's most urgent problems, that the concept of "energy management," unheard of three years ago, is likely to become a household word within the next decade.







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## COUNTRY COLLAGE

It is, one might say, "far out" — this countryside dwelling. Situated in a pastoral setting away from the city, it exudes an unreal quality all its own. The architects, W. Irving Phillips Jr. and Robert W. Peterson, who have their own firm in Houston, have nicknamed the design concept "Country Collage" in the spirit of Belgian surrealist painter Rene Magritte. Just as Magritte's canvases are mysterious and dream-like (a huge green apple pushes out at the walls of a room or a giant boulder floats across a clouded blue sky), the Sanford McCormick residence is an exercise in illusion and spatial incongruity. It is, indeed, a dream home.

The basic requirements called for a three-bedroom residence on this 300-acre site which would respond to the view of a large lake and the rolling hills of the countryside. The specific site was selected with regard both to view and relationship to a stand of large oak trees.

### Beckoning Arms

Approaching the house, the entrance area is compellingly defined by massive stone walls extending from each end of the two-level structure like outstretched, beckoning arms. The intent was to set up the surprise of a spectacular view that is reached only after the observer passes through very massive stone-defined spaces that telescope down to a three-foot-wide

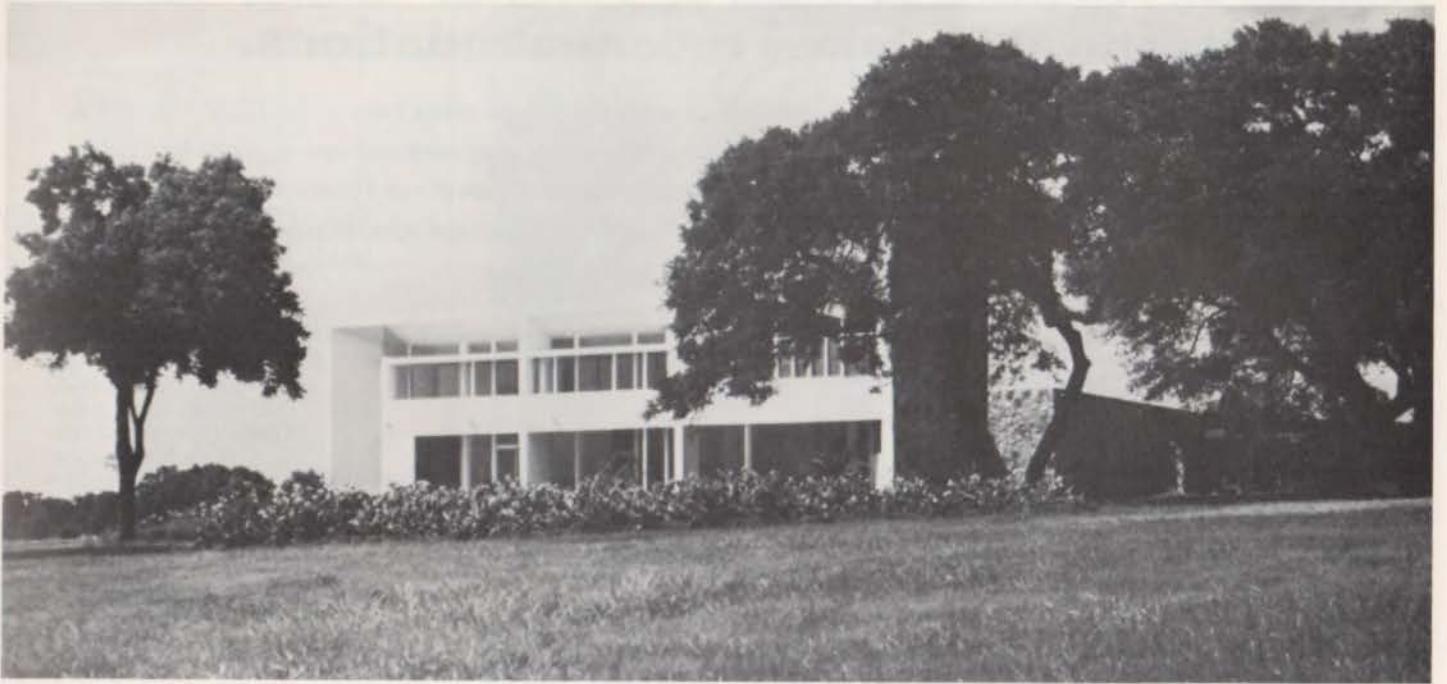
archway leading into the glass-encased living area. The archway frames a view so idyllic, say the architects, that "its very nature seems to flatten the scene, creating a two-dimensional, painting-like effect." Through the archway awaits "an explosion of space whose defining walls are a collection of scenes both real and illusory, juxtaposing real and phenomenal spatial frames like a three-dimensional montage. Indoor and outdoor spaces merge in ambiguity, causing an aura of fantasy and dreams."

### Collage of Styles

Much like the selection of the interior furnishings — an assembly of objects which recall memories and pleasures in the life of the collector — the means of fusing various elements into one architectural work was pure "collage." The view side of the house is "purist modern," while other faces reflect more traditional styles. The indigenous stone of the entrance area recalls the spirit of Nineteenth Century Texas architecture, but the scale is almost medieval.

Here a bit of modern, there a bit of gothic; here a bit of Texas farmhouse and there a bit of English garden — but everywhere a kind of playful interaction that ties it all together and to nature itself. Far out. —LPF





*View side of house*



*Below: view from living area*



*Stone archway leading to living area*

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# Endangered Species

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Sketch by Jack Tisdale

## Robert E. Lee Slept Here



Paggi House, family, c. 1885

Some years ago, when asked how best to approach the restoration of an historic Texas building, noted architect O'Neil Ford said: "Fix it up like it was and use it for something. We can't afford any more museums."

What Ford had in mind was a method of building-salvage which has come to be known as "adaptive-use preservation." Now, as historic preservation in general continues to gain popular momentum, "adaptive-use" in particular is emerging as the favorite way to go. And down in Austin there's a project unfolding which should prove a virtual model for this most logical of solutions to the problem, and the opportunity, of saving what is left of Texas' architectural heritage.

### Plantation Headquarters

The Austin project, conceived and developed by the local firm of Pfluger and Polkinghorn, Architects, is a unique complex of shops, offices, and restaurants to be tagged Colorado Crossing (a reference to its location near a spot on the Colorado River, now known as Town Lake, where

early settlers and travelers could catch a ferry to the opposite bank). A primary feature of the complex, and the historic inspiration behind the idea to begin with, is an elegantly primitive restaurant which started out in life — 150 years ago! — as a plantation headquarters, family residence, and roadside inn where Robert E. Lee once spent the night.

Though long known to Austinites as the Michael Paggi House — which will also be the name of the restaurant — the dwelling was originally constructed by Colonel Sterling W. Goodrich, a native Virginian who operated a 1,010-acre plantation with a cotton gin, grist mill, and 27 slaves. After the Civil War, Colonel Goodrich fell on hard times and sold his property in parcels to men like Michael Paggi — entrepreneurs of the ante-bellum "carpet-bag" era—who purchased the house and 35 acres of land for \$3,000 in 1884.

### Ice Cream Entrepreneur

Paggi was a prosperous businessman who opened the first ice-making plant in Central Texas with machinery imported





Sketch by Jack Trulake

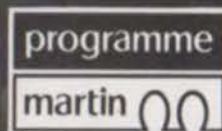
from France (along with his second wife Eugenia, a Parisian who bore him eight children). He also ran a grist mill on Barton Creek, a soda-water bottling concern, Austin's first ice cream plant, and a wagon dealership called The Alliance Wagonyard. It was Paggi who enlarged the home to its present size, adding a total of five rooms and a detached milk house to which were connected "bathroom facilities." Thanks to its high perch, the house escaped disaster when the old Town Lake dam burst in 1900, flooding much of the rest of Austin.

#### Recycled Barn

As is often the case with historic restorations, the architects confronted and mastered a variety of problems not generally posed by new construction. One was procurement of "H" (Historic) zoning from the city, along with a raft of variances to the city's standard building code. Another was preservation of myriad old trees on the site, and still another was what to do with a dilapidated barn and other outbuildings not structurally sound enough to restore. The latter problem resolved itself through the architects' decision to recycle materials from the outbuildings in renovating the Paggi House itself.



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photo by alexandre georges



### Civil War Atmosphere

When the restaurant is opened, according to the architects' brochure, "guests will walk past shuttered windows and huge pecan trees to enter the Paggi House through a carefully restored front porch overlooking the Colorado River. Refinished wood plank floors and original handcarved mantelpieces will assure the visitor that he or she is dining in the same atmosphere as a traveler of the Civil War era when the house was used as one of the few inns around the Austin area. A short walk under a vine-covered trellis to restrooms in the old milk house will reinforce the authenticity of the restoration. (The milk house, located in the courtyard next to the old cistern, doubled as the original wine cellar.) Back in the entry hall, visitors will wander among antique furnishings while examining pictures and documents on the walls depicting the history of Austin's second oldest remaining structure."

### Sunday House Tradition

Immense care has been taken to assure that the rest of the Colorado Crossing complex will synchronize with the style and scale of the old house itself. "The contemporary barnlike forms of the office and

retail structures, accented by balcony walks in the Sunday House tradition, are reminiscent of Texas architecture often found in conjunction with old homes like the Paggi House. While no attempt has been made to rebuild an actual barn, the use of certain elements of traditional Texas architecture, rendered in a combination of brick (matching the Paggi House) and rough textured wood used in vintage Texas barns, creates a comfortable blending of the old and new elements of the complex."



*Seton Hospital to be razed.*

## SPECIES BRIEFS

### Austin Demolition

If you've ever lived or visited for long in the westerly environs of the University of Texas at Austin, you're probably familiar with the friendly old red brick face of sprawling Seton Hospital. It's been there since 1901, when it was established by the Catholic Daughters of Charity, Order of St. Vincent. The Daughters have moved to a gleaming new building on Austin's "medical strip," to the north, and soon the original, though structurally sound, will be razed — victim of a market

economy which hasn't adapted yet to the advantages of recycling over tearing down and putting up again.

When the structure was completed as a 40-bed hospital in 1902, the total cost, including the 4.52 acres on which it stood, was \$5300. Now the price is \$2.2 million, and the vagaries of the market are such, according to Seton spokesman Gene Attel, that the land will be more "salable" without the old building than with it. (In the two years the place has been on the market, it has been considered and rejected by a number of prospects, including the University.)

So long, old friend.



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# In the News

## AIA Awards

Ten persons, including a U.S. Senator and the mayor of one of the nation's largest cities, have been elected Honorary Members of The American Institute of Architects in recognition of their distinguished contributions to the architectural profession or to allied arts and sciences.

The new honorary members are: Weld Coxe, Philadelphia management consultant; Dr. Dwayne E. Gardner, executive director of the Council of Educational Facility Planners; the Hon. Gordon Gray, chairman emeritus of the National Trust for Historic Preservation; Andrew Heiskell, chairman and chief executive officer of Time, Inc.; Henry A. Judd, chief historical architect of the National Park Service; Sen. John L. McClellan (D.-Ark.); S. Dillon Ripley, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Vincent J. Scully Jr., professor of art and architectural history at Yale, the Hon. Pete Wilson, mayor of the City of San Diego, and William Zeckendorf, New York real estate developer.

The honorary memberships, extended

to persons outside the architectural profession, will be presented at the annual convention of the Institute, to be held in Philadelphia, May 2-5.

## Houston PDP

A TSA/PDP, "Planning Interview Strategies For Improving Your Win-Lose Record," will be held at Stouffer's Greenway Plaza Hotel in Houston from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday, March 26.

Instructor for the program will be Weld Coxe, popular Philadelphia management consultant and marketing specialist who has researched changing criteria and shifting approaches for what clients want from an interview and what architects are doing in interviews to win.

The PDP is intended to help architects (1) analyze strengths and weaknesses of actual interviews, from the client's viewpoint; (2) secure information needed to plan a successful interview strategy; (3) develop a complete and reliable strategy for conducting interviews; and (4) set specific action plans for implementing an interview strategy planning process.

Registration is limited to forty persons. Registration fees of \$75, which includes

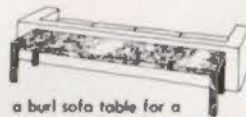
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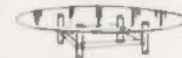


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lunch atop the new Greenway Plaza Hotel, will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Checks, payable to "TSA/PDP," should be sent to 800 Perry-Brooks Building, Austin 78701. Hotel reservations may be made directly with Stouffer's Greenway Plaza Hotel, Six Greenway Plaza East, Houston 77046 (713) 629-1200.

## Barrier-Free

A new book, *Arts and the Handicapped: An Issue of Access*, highlights more than 130 new facility planning and program solutions for removing architectural and attitudinal barriers that have made arts inaccessible to millions of handicapped citizens.

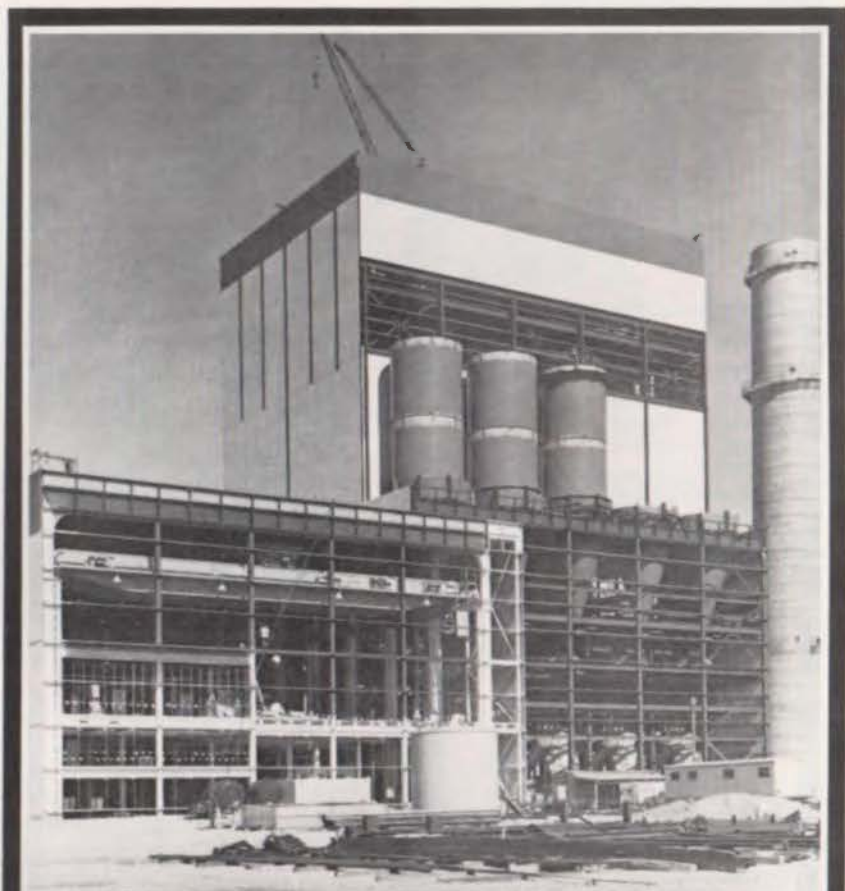
The report was researched, written and published by Educational Facilities Laboratories under a contract with the Architecture + Environmental Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts. The 80-page, 5-1/2 x 11 book is available from Educational Facilities Laboratories, 850 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022, \$4.00 prepaid.

## State-wide Appointee

H. Davis Mayfield III, director of business development for Neuhaus + Taylor, Houston, has been appointed state chairman of Young Businessmen for President Ford, according to U.S. Senator John Tower, chairman of the Ford Committee in Texas.

## Beautification Awards

In celebration of the Bicentennial, the Beautify Texas Council has announced the 1976 "Janey Briscoe Bicentennial Awards." Open to all Texans, the competition is "for the purpose of giving state-wide acclaim to the many communities, counties, civic and service organizations, garden clubs and youth groups that are beautifyin' for the Bicentennial." An entry will consist of a typewritten, narrative report of 1,000 words or less describing a particular community Bicentennial project. Awards certificates will be presented at the Beautify Texas Council's State convention in San Antonio June 10-11. Deadline for entries is March 21. For entry forms or more information, write Beautify Texas Council, Drawer CS, College Station, 77840, or call toll free 1-800-292-9642.



## Mosher energy generates power

Mosher's commitment to power plant construction was again demonstrated by the fabrication of 7,462 tons of support steel for Southwestern Public Service Company's Harrington Unit #1.

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and Associates has announced the relocation of its Fort Worth offices to 2100 Fort Worth National Bank Building, Fort Worth, 76102, and change of the firm name to Geren Associates — Architects Engineers Planners. Telephone remains 817-336-5601.

The Houston firm of **Pierce, Goodwin & Flanagan, Architects, Engineers and Planners**, has announced the advancement of Joe M. Powell to Associate Partner. Bob Stowe, George Mahoney, Bob Thomas, and Christi Oliver have been named as Associates. Ray L. Redburn has

joined the firm as Group Director of Interior Architecture.

The Houston-based firm of **Caudill Rowlett Scott** has four new vice presidents: William A. Feathers, Dan R. Stewart, Perry King and Robert R. Daniel, Jr.

**The Klein Partnership**, of Houston, has announced that Henry T. Winkelman and David M. Burdick have joined the firm as Associates in the Health Facilities Group.

The Houston firm of **Wilson, Crain, Anderson and Reynolds** has announced the election of James M. Waite as an associate.

The **White Budd Van Ness Partnership** is the new name of a Houston and Beaumont firm formerly known as Pitts Phelps & White. Principals of the firm are Robert White, James Budd and John Van Ness.

**Price-Moreland, Architects** is the name of a new Fort Worth firm formed by New York architect Martin Price and Frank L. Moreland, of Fort Worth. Address: 908 Boland, Fort Worth 76107. Telephone: 817-335-2883.

The Corpus Christi firm of **Ben A. Terry & Associates** has announced that William A. Reynolds has been named a partner in the firm.

Richard Buzard, Architect and Jerry Rosser Structural Engineers have formed the partnership of **Buzard and Rosser Architects Engineers**, with offices at 471 Cypress Street, Abilene, 79601. Telephone: 915-672-9012.

Austin architect **Earl J. Nesbitt, Jr. and W. R. Coleman** have opened new offices at 2724 Bee Caves Road in Austin.

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## Candidate

Houston architect Don Williams has filed for the May 1 Republican Party primary, seeking the party nomination for state representative in Houston's District 90. Williams' campaign is based on a pledge to work for "more responsible handling of the state's fiscal affairs" and for "needed legislation from the professional's point of view."

## Industry News

W. Ray Wallace, president and chief executive officer of Trinity Industries, Inc., has announced the following changes for **Mosher Steel Company**: Oscar W. Stewart, Jr. will be president and chief executive officer; R. Trent Campbell will remain Mosher's chairman of the board and

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## Can 300 people find happiness living in a piano factory?





will assume other responsibilities for Trinity Industries' companies, particularly in the area of steel mill relations. Don H. Johnson has been named vice-president and general manager of sales. In his new capacity, Johnson will be responsible for all of the company's sales activities throughout the organization's Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio plants.

**Wilson Art**, of Temple, has announced the appointment of Zebra Industries, Inc., 1910 Myrtle in El Paso as a new distributor of Wilson Art brand laminated plastics.

**The Masonry Institute Houston-Galveston**, has awarded its first research grant to the Civil Engineering Department of the University of Houston. J. Gregg Borchelt, Executive Director of the newly formed Institute, announced that the organization is providing a grant of \$2090.00 to evaluate procedures leading to a test to determine the strength of masonry units.

## News of Schools

**Texas Tech** — IBM Corporation has

provided a \$2,000 grant for OMNIAN, a team of 5th year Texas Tech architecture students (see *Texas Architect*, November/December, 1975). The grant is to assist the students in a year-long study which will lead ultimately to proposals for the planning and redevelopment of Window Rock, Arizona, as the Navajo Capital/National Center of the Navajo Indian Nation.

**Texas A&M** — The Department of Architecture at Texas A&M University is seeking a full-time faculty member to direct and develop an on-going Interior Space Design option in the professional Master of Architecture program. The successful applicant must hold a degree in architecture, a graduate degree in architecture or a related field, and have professional experience. The position will be available in September 1976. Salary and academic rank open. Send resume and references before 19 April, 1976 to: David G. Woodcock, Head of Department of Architecture, College of Architecture and Environmental Design, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, 77843.

**UT Austin** — Four architects outstanding in teaching, writing and design will serve as visiting critics this spring in The University of Texas School of Architecture: Dr. Ann Griswold Tyng, visiting professor at Cooper Union in New York City, and long-time associate of the late Louis I. Kahn; Frederick St. Florian, a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, known for his works of "imaginary" illusionistic architecture utilizing optical phenomena; Dr. Peter Eisenman, director of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York City and one of "the New York Five;" and Dr. Robert Hershberger, director of graduate studies at Arizona State University, whose work has focused on the measurement of meaning in architecture and on the development of tools to assist architect/client understandings.

## Deaths

Two members of the Houston Chapter died recently. They are Jack L. Boller and Elmer W. Ellisor, P.E., a professional affiliate member of TSA.

Texas A&M University Architecture Professor Dudley Watkins died January 18. A memorial scholarship fund has been established in his honor. Contributions, made payable to the E. Dudley Watkins Scholarship Fund, should be mailed to Box J7, Aggeland Station, 77844.



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# Letters

**Editor:** "When R/UDAT Came to Town" was excellently written and photographed. Mr. Larry Fuller did a superb job in capturing the spirit and intensity of the R/UDAT held in Wichita Falls.

The assistance provided by the R/UDAT is well recognized by the City's Planning Division, Planning Board, Board of Aldermen, and many interested citizens. The project has been of great benefit, and I would recommend that other communities investigate similar R/UDAT's.

The American Institute of Architects can be proud of this public service program, for it offers a unique approach to urban problem solving.

Stephen J. Ondrejas  
Director of Planning  
Wichita Falls.

**Editor:** This is, solely and simply, a fan letter for the Jan./Feb. issue of "Texas Architect." The story on the Wichita Falls R/UDAT does a great job of explaining the R/UDAT process; the articles on the Oak Ridge School and the Dallas Convention Center are super, and so is the Ernest Parker profile.

One of the greatest things about the school and convention center pieces is the fact that — unlike many honor award stories — they're written to be read by PEOPLE as well as architects.

Marilyn E. Ludwig  
Director of PR Publications and  
Component Counseling  
American Institute of Architects

**Editor:** The Comptroller's Department has recently inaugurated two taxpayer information services which I think might be of interest to your people.

First, we have installed a toll-free incoming W.A.T.S. line to answer taxpayers' questions. The number is 1-800-292-9687. We would be most appreciative if you made this number available to your members throughout the state.

We have also recently put together a little display showing some of the services and publications available from our office. We have taken this to a couple of trade shows and enjoyed some very fine comments.

The past year has shown us once again that the Comptroller's office is a service agency which does

March/April 1976



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Bob Bullock  
Comptroller of Public Accounts

**Editor:** I very much enjoyed the interview with Dave Braden as printed in *Texas Architect* (January/February, 1976). Mr. Braden's calling for a "Texas Council of Professional Societies" struck a responsive chord, and I could not agree more. If such a group were started, he would make a perfect president.


Regarding TA's article listing the newly elected officers of the Texas Society of Landscape Architects (TSLA), I would like to share a point of information of which you may or may not be aware. Unlike TSA, which is the official organization of the AIA, the TSLA has nothing to do with the ASLA (American Society of Landscape Architects). The regional professional organization comparable to the TSA is called the Southwest Chapter of the ASLA. I've attached a listing of their officers, also recently elected.

I make this point as I believe relatively few members of the TSLA would meet the professional standards of either the AIA, ASLA or, hopefully, Dave Braden's Council.

Lawrence A. DeMartino, Jr.  
San Antonio

**Editor's Note:** Officers of the Southwest Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects are: J. Steve Ownby, president, Stillwater, Oklahoma; Glenn Cook, vice-president, San Antonio; Kent E. Besley, secretary-treasurer, Arlington; Robert F. White, trustee, College Station; Gene Schrickel, immediate past president, Arlington.

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