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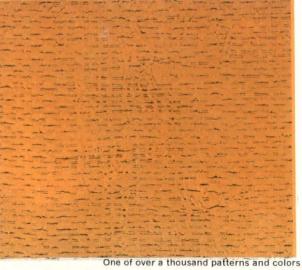
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THE KENTUCKY ARCHITECT

Volume VII, Number 1

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THE KENTUCKY ARCHITECT

is the monthly official magazine of the Kentucky Society of Architects of the American Institute of Architects, Inc. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Society or the Institute. The Kentucky Architect is available at a subscription cost of \$4.00 each year or 50 cents per issue. Subscriptions may be obtained at 804 E. Jefferson St., Louisville, Kentucky 40206. The Kentucky Architect reserves the right to refuse or alter editorial material. All material is reviewed by the Editorial Council prior to publication. EDITORIAL OFFICE: Quntin D. Allen, Editor, 663 West Cooper Drive, Lexington, Kentucky 40502; phone 266-4990. ADVERTISING AND PUBLISHING OFFICE: J. Marvin Gray & Associates, Inc., 804 E. Jefferson Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40206; phone 587-8806.



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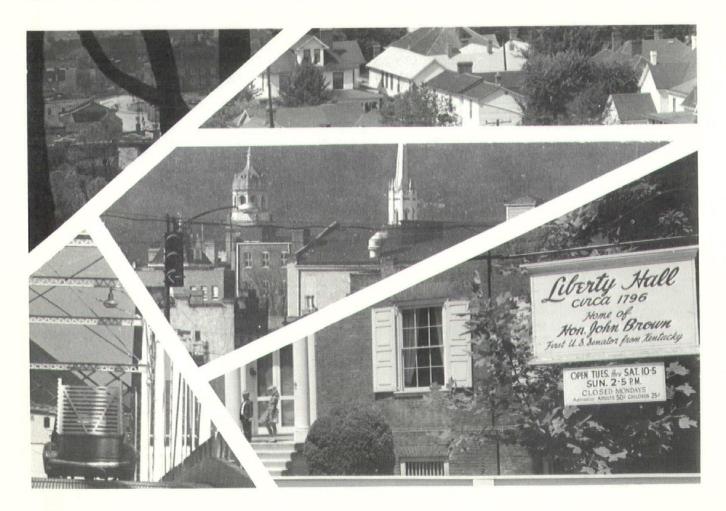
A CAPITAL REVIEW

Frankfort recently submitted to a municipal "physical" examination at the hands of two urban affairs experts sent by the American Institute of Architects as part of a new service relating to the review and evaluation of the urban scene. The examination was held in three days with Robert Sturgis, A.I.A., Boston architect, and Edward Hoerman, A.I.A., Urban Architect Professor at the University of Cincinnati, checking the pulse beat of Kentucky's capital city. While the data was gathered in a brief period, the summary presented to Frankfort and Central Kentucky officials was impressive. The new service may be requested by any Kentucky municipality through an area architect belonging to the American Institute of Architecture. The results of the three-day visit to Frankfort:

Two Urban Architects Look At Frankfort

STURCIS AND HOERMAN spent three days in Frankort, looking, talking, studying the city, and taking pictures of the entrances and exits to the downtown.

BOTH STURGIS AND HOERMAN agreed Frankfort had a major appearance problem caused by overhead utility wires, and suggested they might be put underground, particularly at the approaches of the city.



Their Recommendations :

That those who have a stake in the downtown should form a Frankfort Foundation, set up some common goals, and come up with a plan to revive the middle of the city;

That the development of the Kentucky River as a downtown drawing card was important;

That private enterprise be challenged to do what is needed to be done to make the downtown a more attractive place.

ROBERT STURGIS, AIA Boston, Massachusetts

"We have sensed agreement on the needs of the downtown after talking with many people, the need to welcome tourists into your city, to make Frankfort a good place to live.

"There is a recognition of Frankfort's importance to the state, especially as the seat of state government, but no effort has been made on behalf of the whole city's interest.

"We find that urban renewal was voted down here once, and also heard private enterprise can do the job for you. Now is the time to prove it."

Sturgis pointed out the Frankfort foundation would provide the organization needed to revamp the midcity area. Such an area would be composed of property owners in the area bounded by the St. Clair Street and Capitol Avenue bridges, the Kentucky River and Broadway. He proposed the foundation employ a consultant to study the economic potential of the city. Leadership, he said, would come from those property owners with the most at stake.

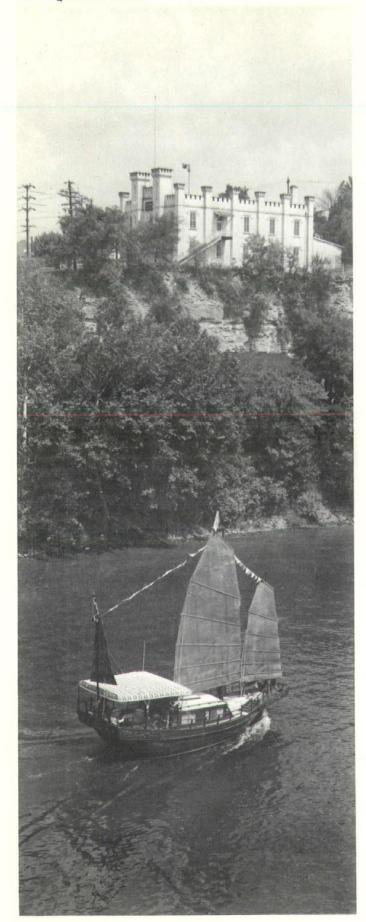
"This private group should have as one objective a proposal to offer the city, its people and its government. It should offer its cooperation in return for the various municipal services that would be needed," Sturgis said.

An urban design plan for the downtown and its entrances, prepared by a design concept team, should be a prime objective of the foundation, Sturgis indicated. This would be a three-man operation composed of a market analyst, a planner (Sturgis advocated using the city's planning staff), and a specialist in urban design. The latter is an architectplanner who is "aware of the arrangement of buildings, light, open space . . . a man who can give a special flavor or atmosphere to the downtown."

"When the plan is prepared," Sturgis told the group in City Hall, "don't let it be just another plan put on the shelf. After the foundation presents the plan to the city for its approval and commitment of services, carry it out."

Sturgis added a note of caution and urgency to the recommendations. "It appears business (retail) is going elsewhere but perhaps things aren't bad enough to do something about it now. You have good private resources, a stable economy, and we found no lack of ideas for new things. But we sense that something needs to be done, and we sense there are the people here with the money to do it."

Frankfort, Sturgis noted, has many advantages. He cited the fact the city is the capital city of Kentucky, its state buildings, the proposed Capital Plaza project, the historic area, the Kentucky River, a group of active and interested citizens, plans and projections for the future, and a good level of city service. "In fact the latter should probably be put first in your advantages," Sturgis said.



EDWARD HOERMAN: Urban Architect Professor, University of Cincinnati

Hoerman was particularly impressed with the advantages of river development. He said the terraced area behind Liberty Hall was one of the most beautiful spots in the city. "Use it for a pedestrian walk, put some benches there, turn it into a passive park area."

The University of Cincinnati professor also felt the development of a marina would be beneficial, especially in improving the appearance of the river front. He said the alley running east off St. Clair Street alongside the First Baptist Church "provides some character" and should get more attention.

"It's almost as if you've turned your backs on the river. It has tremendous potential and should be made more of a part of downtown Frankfort."

Hoerman showed photographic slides of the roads and streets leading into the downtown area, pointing out that roadside development of them has created a problem. "I wonder whether Frankfort should try to be like any other city its size. It is special. You are proud of your Capital City. If so you should do something about the approaches."

Hoerman suggested opening up a better view of the Capitol dome to those entering the city on the Louisville Road, and a different treatment of signs and buildings where the Capital Avenue Bridge meets East Main Street. "Treat the entrances to your business district differently, improve the character of the area."

He said the view from the Capitol Overlook was impressive. "The area over is well kept and in general good condition. This is something you seldom find." Hoerman indicated the train tracks on Broadway could possibly be integrated into the pavement, that the view north on St. Clair Street to the Old Capitol was good, that the architecture of many of the downtown buildings was something to be preserved, and that more directive signs were needed at Second and Bridge streets to show auto drivers the way to get to the downtown.

"But something more is needed to bring visitors downtown at Main and Capitol Avenue. Something is needed to show your advantages to the person just arriving in town."



Why should anybody in his right mind want to look at cities?

According to the conventional wisdom of the moment, cities are ugly, cancerous, gangrenous and suffering from a host of other maladies. They are bursting at the seams, overrun with those insolent chariots, the automobiles – objects of contempt fit only to be studied by pathologists, and anthropologists looking at the incipient ruins of 20th century civilization.

If you pay some attention to the literature of the disaffected, the frustrated lovers of undefiled nature, cities are to be studied only for the rapacious way in which they brutalize the natural landscape. All development is thought to be "bad" and the word "development" itself is a synonym for "destruction."

Should one be concerned above all else with the explosive tension between social-economic classes, and especially blacks-whites, one looks upon the city as a mechanism for "solving the racial crises." It is a deeply pressing matter. I do not want to underrate it.

Yet too little attention, in my view, has been paid by most urban experts to the *art of looking at cities* — the art which can be practiced by everyone who lives in or around cities. Unlike many of the fine arts, it is practical as a necessary basis for action. It is practical both in short and long runs.

It has been far too fashionable, in these days of increased visual awareness, to say "What's the use of looking, it's all so damned ugly," and to adopt one after another set of cliches which pass for description, but serve only to condemn.

Most of us have, in the process, become masters of the single-take, the averted glance, the other-directed stance. We look only to look away.

I want to redress the balance, to get us all back into connection with the world around us.

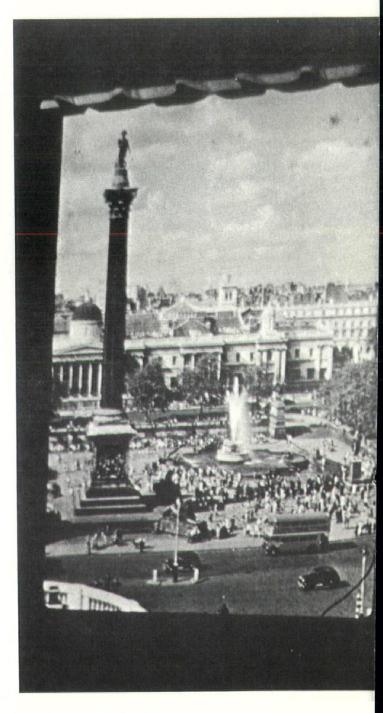
I do this because I am convinced that the city – by which I mean the entire environment which is influenced by urban life and processes – is an utterly fascinating subject for study. It is a changing, chancy, shifting, and often unpredictable environment. It is unfinished business. It is a perpetual happening. It is the place where we spend most of our lives. The chances of most people in this audience living anywhere but in towns, cities and metropolitan areas is quite remote.

First I hope to convince you that the city is *worth* looking at.

Not just for the fun of it, not just as an object of contemplation, but as a way of understanding and, to greater or lesser degree, coming to grips with it, and *having some control or influence over it*. That is, *looking is a basis for action*. It is a poorly organized laboratory – but it's the best we've got.

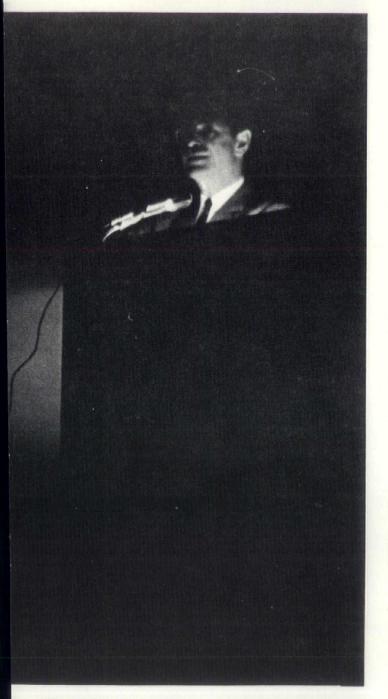
HOW TO LO

An address by Grady Clay, delivered at the University of Kentucky School of Architecture on November 29, 1967. Mr. Clay, former Urban Affairs editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal and Times, is editor



K AT CITIES

ot the nationally circulated magazine, Landscape Quarterly, and a consultant at the Urban Journalism Center of Northwestern University.



MR. GRADY CLAY, EDITOR, LANDSCAPE QUARTERLY

This is not easy. The city does not reveal itself to the careless or slipshod or casual observer. Any city that can be comprehended at a glance is a pretty dull place, which is one of the things wrong with Miami Beach: if you've seen one short cross-section, from beach back to Inland Waterway, you've "seen it all." For miles and miles, it's more of the same.

Now, this is not to suggest that Miami Beach is not worth visiting, but it does indicate that the capacity of the beach itself for surprise is limited; and for variety's sake you might pursue the people or the crazy architecture.

The city is *worth looking at*, therefore, for the messages it puts out so as to help you and me cope with it.

The city is actually composed of many message systems. One set is produced by the newspapers, magazines, signboards, posters, read directional signs, and all those other *words*, *words*, *words*.

Another set comes from graphic symbols - stopand-go signs, red for "Danger" and so on.

Still another set is invisible: the radio signals from the traffic helicopters, for instance, that tell you which streets and intersections are clear, and which to avoid.

I propose tonight to deal with other sets of messages which all of us can read.

These messages are spelled out by whole neighborhoods, by large hunks or sections of the city. Those are functional areas, pieces of the city which do special kinds of work. And once we learn to recognize what goes on there, the city will never again look quite the same to us.

What I suggest is that we sit back, relax, and assume we are total newcomers to a city, and ask: What are the things a stranger must learn to notice? What message does he read? Not the stranger looking for a motel, or the highway to the next town, but a newcomer looking for clues as to "What kind of place is this? What goes on here?"

First a good work for first impressions. Maurice Rotival, the French-educated planner, has described his firm's reconnaissance technique. When called upon to produce a plan for a city, he and all his associates spent weeks searching for, treasuring and recording first impressions. Fleeting responses to a scene, remarks caught in passing, casual comments, quiet confusions - all these early details of encounter with townscape they put to paper, or captured on tape while memory was fresh, and impression was hot and clear. Many tedious months later, having made all necessary statistical, rational, gathering and analyzing of facts that goes into the city plan, they discovered all over again what their first impressions had suggested. The validity of many first impressions, the special insight they offered, was borne out by

How to Look at Cities

later studies. The lesson is clear: treasure and record first impressions. They come only once.

When a newcomer first drives through a city he makes comparatively little sense of it. Unless he is highly tuned-in, the messages don't penetrate. He has no "feel" for the place; he is more or less lost.

All of us gradually learn the "feel" of a new place. We gradually get familiar with a pathway, a route; with landmarks, and turning points; with those accidents or incidents which give a place a special personality or memorability.

This is a fairly random process for most of us, but I want to suggest "handles" which may make the job easier; and ought, indeed, make it possible to see a familiar place with new eyes.

These five handles are: EPITOMES or epitome districts BREAKS EDGES VESTIGES

and VERGES

In linguistics, an epitome is a brief statement expressing the essence of something. Or it may be a brief presentation of a broad topic.

In reading the city, I use EPITOME to mean: "A place which embodies in brief or in small space, essential facts about the entire community."

Or, briefer still: "ALL IS HERE."

The term "epitome district" was first coined by journalism graduate students of mine at Northwestern University in 1966. They were looking for ways to grasp quickly the changes taking place in Chicago; and hit upon the term "epitome district" for those parts of the city which were undergoing the greatest changes and offered clues to broader changes taking place in the whole metropolis – or, as I have suggested, they were places "which embodied in brief essential facts about the entire community."

BREAKS is a term which I have borrowed from the economists, who have long analyzed the "breakin-bulk points" where goods are transferred from one form of transport to another; or cargoes are broken down from shiploads to smaller units; from carloads to less-than-carloads, etc. A "break" can also be a break in the *physical pattern of the city*, where you suddenly move out of the skyscraper district into Skid Row, or where the racial dominance changes from white to black. Or it may be a "break" in the pattern of streets – often caused by topography, or an early change of surveys.

EDGES sound simple but can be quite complex. The edge of the Ohio River may be easily defined – until you realize that the river floods every spring, and the edge moves a half-mile or more. The visual edge is not the invariable edge. An edge is often the meeting-point of two dynamic energy systems: one may be the natural energy systems that prevail in a mixed woodland-open-pastureland farming areas, adjacent to a growing city; the other system may be chiefly man-directed.

In many parts of the U.S. you can travel for a hundred miles or more and never come to what appears to be the "real edge" of the built-up area. You have traveled through a continuous strip of built-up areas along the highway. Yet a few hundred feet back from the edge of the commercial road you may be in rough or wild country.

VESTIGES are in many ways the most fascinating parts of the city . . .

These are the historic reminders of yesterday. Evidence of the city that was. Patterns of old economies, buildings, neighborhoods, boundaries, or fences, built by long-dead hands, in a style never to be repeated.

The vast majority of what we see in cities was, in fact, built many years ago. The city is composed of tens of thousands of vestiges, some more conspicuous, some more valuable than the rest. Gradually, one learns which vestiges are important; which one are the icebergs – concealing more than they reveal, yet far more important than their size or number.

VERGES are often the most significant, for these are the scene of things about to happen.

Nobody can make you an expert in VERGES, for to be an expert in VERGES is to be an expert in prediction, of a very special sort. On the verges, then, is where you need observation, long study, intuition and much experience.

Land speculators live or die, financially, by reason of their expertise on the VERGES. City planners must stake their reputation on the likelihood that changes will go as they predict on the verges.

On the VERGES, the future is often writ small, and the clues are contradictory. Yet to understand one's city and what it is *becoming*, the verges are full of important clues.

The landscape is usually verging toward something else. Most clearly it is in the act of *becoming*. To keep in visual touch with the verge is to sense significant changes; here one is clearly in touch with *the future*.

Learning to look beyond the present scenery forces you to learn a good deal about what you are looking at - plus much that you cannot see.

Looking across open farmland on the edge of one's city, you cannot see – except in your mind's eye – the subdivision plans that have already been platted at the Court House. You cannot envision the long zoning battles that will take place, once the new highway is built through the old farm. You cannot actually measure the traffic that soon will be flowing across that scene.

But the *educated eye*, trained to look for the possibilities, as well as to observe the actualities, will always catch a sense of the future.

This is what makes it exciting. Every day offers the chance to be your own prognosticator; to make your own guesses; and often, with not too long to wait, to learn whether you were right or wrong.

But beyond the excitement of prediction likes the even more exciting possibility of *discovery*.

The traditional city, with everything in its place and a place for everything, is breaking up before our eyes. For brief periods, everybody "knew where things belonged" and things stayed in their place. Such periods were always brief, transitional moments. But, so powerful is the notion of fixity, that people welcome these moments of "a place for everything and everything in its place." They immortalize that moment, call it a Golden Age, and consider the much longer periods between those moments as "transitory phases." Our own "transitory phase" has many beginnings, certainly one of them being the development of the automobile. We're living in dozens of phases, overlapping and mixing. How do we sort them out? That's one thing each of us can do himself. We need historians, but above all else we need our own perception.

Something new is being created out there, right before our eyes, and very few people know exactly what it is.

New forms of metropolitan life, new shapes, new patterns of movement – growing, sometimes by chance, sometimes by plan and design.

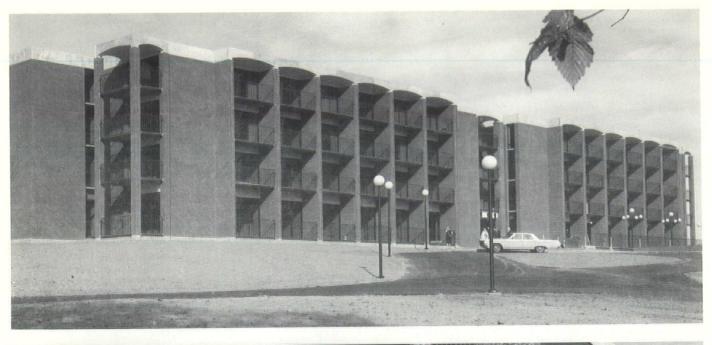
Each of us has the capacity (in varying degrees with our abilities, time, motives, and equipment) to discover what those new patterns are.

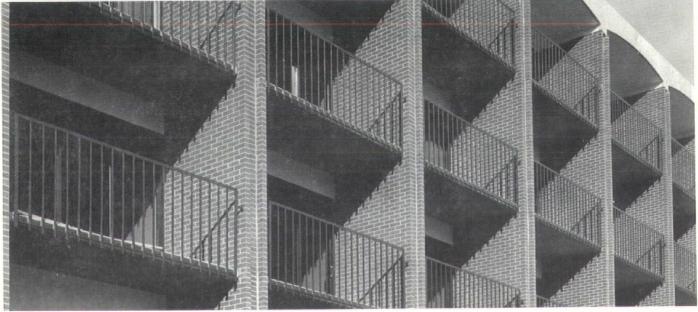
And for the more observant, and more persistent, there's the possibility of discovering new patterns almost *before they form* – and of helping to bring them into being.

This is a new frontier. It needs people willing to explore it; people who train themselves to look behind the scene at the forces, patterns and pressures; and finally, people willing to help shape those patterns and pressures into a better environment.

Architects: The A. B. Ryan Partnership, AIA

Westminister Terrace, Presbyterian Home for Senior Citizens, Buechel, Kentucky





PROBLEM

The problem was to provide housing for 100 to 150 people past age 65 in an apartment type housing with individual privacy and ample opportunity for communal living. Services provided by owner for apartment rentals are:

- (a) maid service;
- (b) all food (dining in common area);

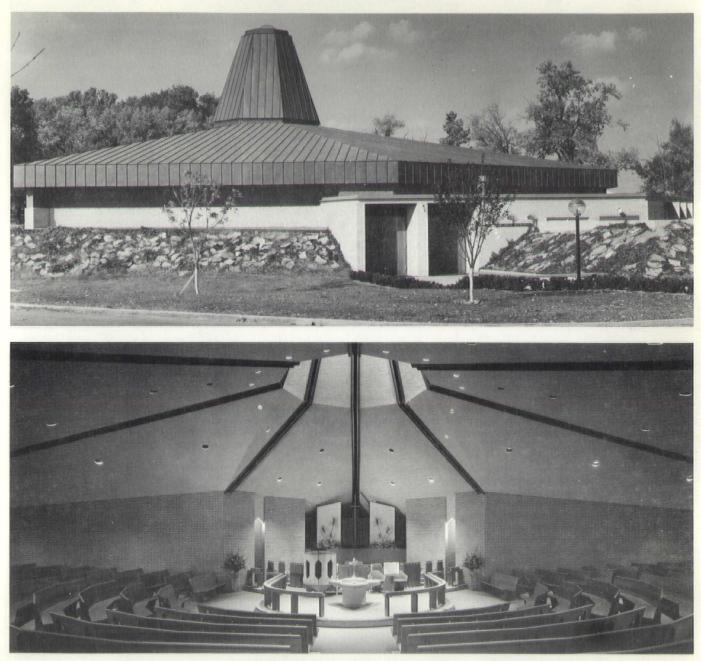
- (c) infirmary for convalescents;(d) recreational facilities, and
- (e) spiritual leadership.

This is a church sponsored project with the desire to furnish total needs of the tenants past the age of 65, and yet the architects were instructed to avoid the prototype of an "institution". The site is located in residential suburbia, within walking distance of shopping center, church and recreational center.

There was a need to vary the size of apartments to provide rental range (small one-room, large one-room, two-room and three-room apartments). The budget was limited to the projected rentals to allow a self supporting project.

Architects: Chrisman & Miller, AIA

Southern Hills Methodist Church



PROBLEM

Since the organization of the Southern Hills Methodist Church, its youthful congregation, led by a vibrant and progressive minister, expressed the need for church architecture inspirational to intimate church fellowship which would foster a sense of involvement and participation. It was considered most important that the design of the sanctuary blend the worshipper into services as a participant rather than a spectator.

For these reasons, the church committee made a strong request that "participants" be dramatically directed to the Sacraments of the Communion Table which symbolically reflects and refocuses the meaning of Christianity. It was requested that the choir was to be "heard, and not seen" and that appointments were to be simple to prevent distraction from the chancel and sanctuary. It was requested that the sanctuary be designed without provisions for expansion inasmuch as the church committee felt a loss of fellowship is suffered by the individual church member in an overgrown congregation.

The site was such that the building faced two streets on a dogleg lot. Access was possible from several directions providing a dispersal of parking areas for ease of circulation.



Chrisman Elected President

Norman Chrisman, Jr., AIA, a senior partner in the firm of Chrisman and Miller, AIA, of Lexington, was elected President of the Kentucky Society of Architects at the Annual Meeting held December 7 at the Holiday Inn in Frankfort. President Chrisman, as well as the presiding officers of the Western and Eastern Kentucky Chapters, will outline their programs for the year of 1968 in the February issue.

New Officers Elected

New Western Kentucky Chapter officers for 1968 are Lloyd Schleicher, AIA, President; Edward Cooke, III, AIA, Vice-President; Larry Melillo, AIA, Secretary, and Robert F. Crump, AIA, Treasurer.

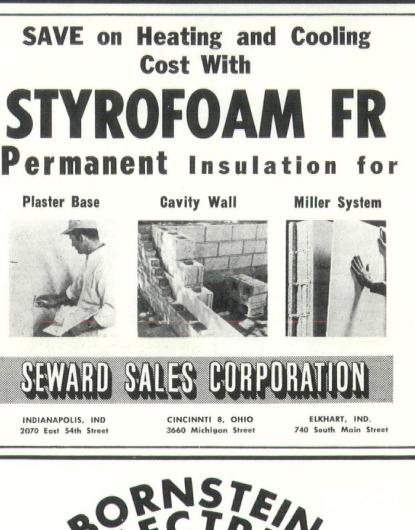
Cent Joins Firm

Timothy D. Cent, a 1967 graduate of the University of Illinois, has joined the staff of Peck Associates, Architects, Paducah, according to a recent announcement. Other members of the firm are Don D. Peck, AIA, Architect, Gary E. Peck, AIA, Architect, and Curtis E. Flannery, Associate Architect.



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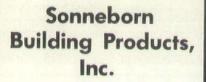
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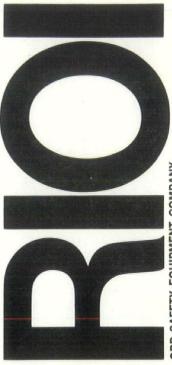
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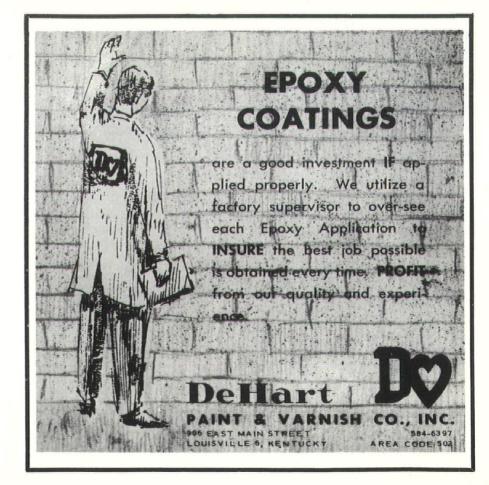
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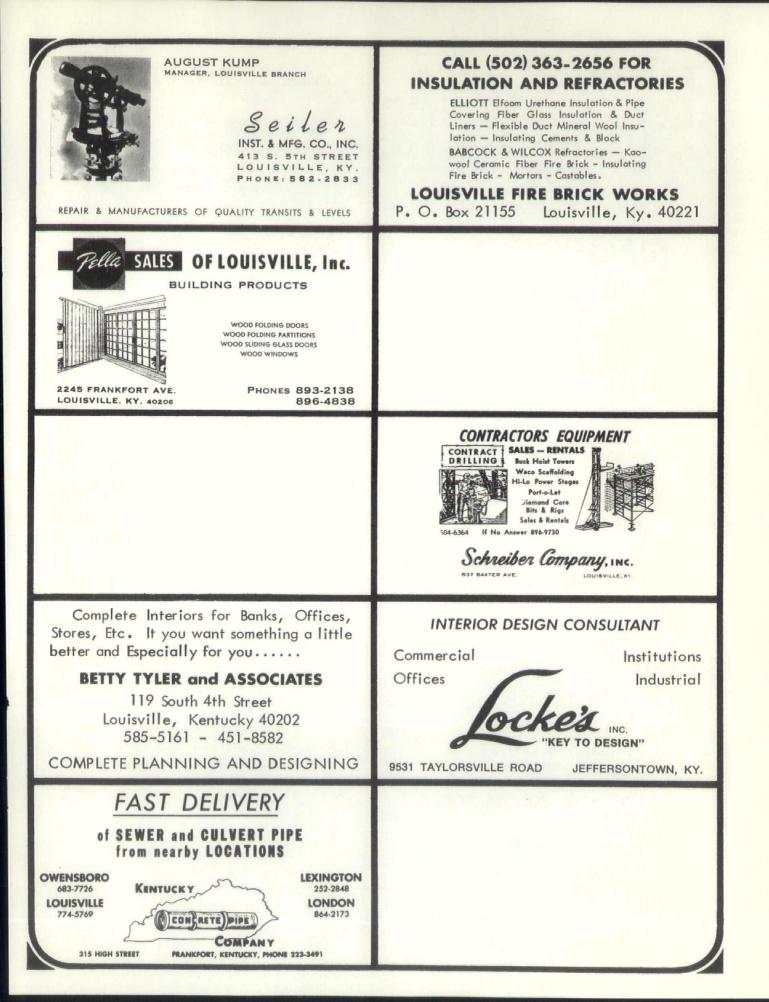
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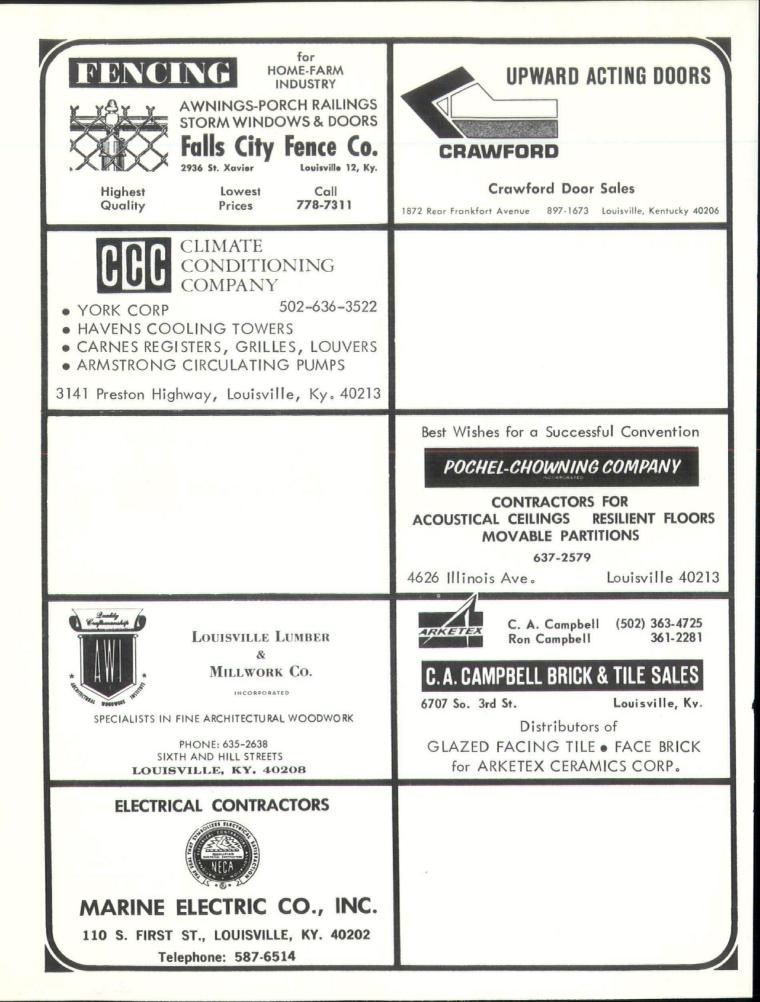
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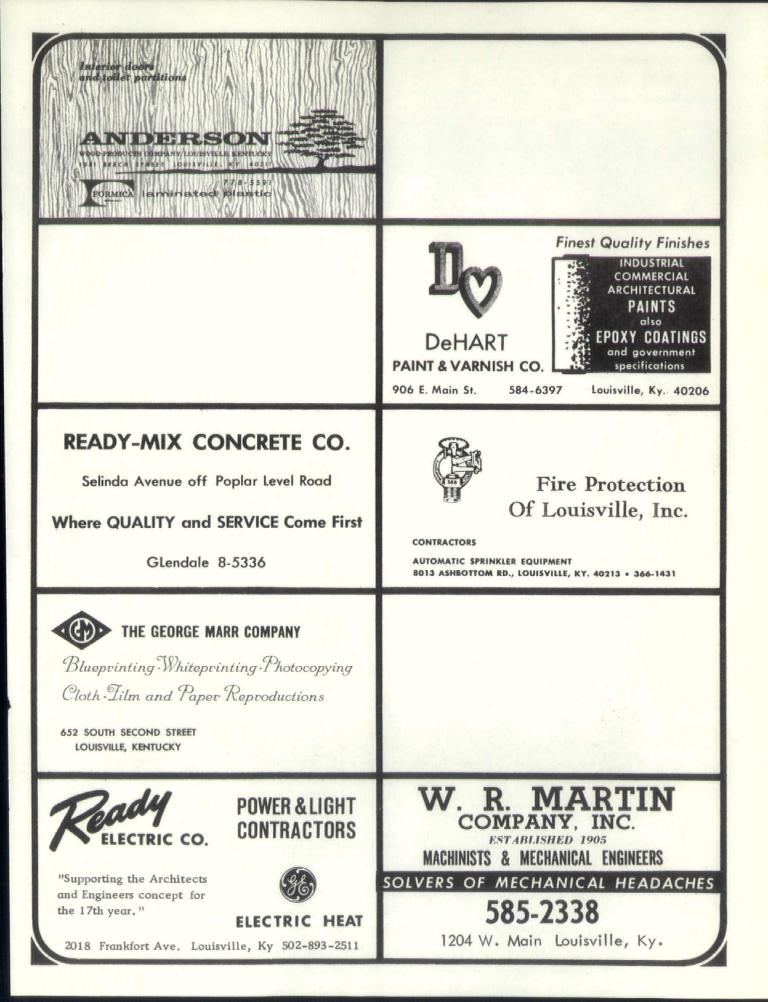
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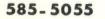
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