School Design in Louisiana

AMERICAN INSTITUTE ARCHITECTS APRIL 2 1961

The Louisiana Architect

Volume Vl Number 3

March, 1967

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CONTENTS:

The Ideal City AIA News Feature	6
Professionals in Construction A New Educational Program Truman Potts, AIA	7
School Design in Louisiana A Look into the Near Future William J. Dodd	9
AIA Ethics 1 Maintaining a High Standard	2



You'll Never Forget the Regional Convention in New Orleans

Regional Convention

From across the nation and continents near and far, adventurers, artists, antique hunters and architects too, flock to New Orleans to enjoy a world different from their own. With a warm and casual southern manner, this cosmopolitan city offers variety for every taste.

In the quaint old French Quarter, a Montmarte on the Mississippi, bearded painters sketch the passerby and show their art on the fences and in the alleys of the city that was a metropolis 200 years ago. Here in April you may expect the fragrance of the spring flowers to bring back romantic memories and a whiff of creole cooking to whet your appetite.

When the warm tropical sun goes down, bright lights and pretty girls seem to pop out from everywhere. Exotic entertainment and music of both strange and familiar beats invite you to swing free.

The charm and excitement of New Orleans is only an hors d'oeuvre for you wise and fortunate architects who will attend the AIA Gulf States Regional Convention. There is much more offered in the main course which is the convention itself. On Thursday after attending to regional business you'll relax with old friends at a cocktail party in the home of a New Orleans architect. Following the drinks and appetizers, you'll want to sample the cuisine of what Esquire calls the world's most famous restaurant city and have a night on the town.

Friday is your day to enjoy the grand exhibition. To insure our exhibitors the good attendance they deserve, there will be free beer and refreshment stands scattered among the booths. Our captive audience gets a free po-boy luncheon too and when 4:30 rolls around there's another bonus for the faithful in the form of music, free cocktails, Perez's GoGo dancers, and a mountain of booth prizes.

For the excellent and serious professional program on Saturday, nothing will relax you better than our colorful Friday night party, good food and romantic moonlit ride on the Mississippi. You'll be ready in the morning to hear outstanding guest speakers talk about "World Change and Architectural Purpose."

Years from April 20, 21 and 22 of 1967 you'll still remember the best regional convention in Gulf States history.

A Special A.I.A. News Feature

What would the ideal American city be like?

No one existing city as yet fills the bill, but parts of several of our urban communities give clues to what it would have. For example, the ideal city would probably have at its core an office building cluster much like Rockefeller Center.

Here, separate buildings are planned around a series of open spaces with plazas and pedestrian promenades. The buildings are harmonious in design and are carefully placed to come together in a pleasing composition. Public gathering places such as ice rinks and indoor-outdoor restaurants are graced by handsome landscaping. The city is developed on more than a single level, with shopping concourses and public transportation underground.

There should be variety downtown, and a sense of history, too. San Francisco's Jackson Square provides both. Here, blocks of decaying Victorian buildings were rehabilitated and turned into a colorful center for the home furnishings industry. History and great variety are also found in New Orlean's French Quarter and Washington, D. C.'s Georgetown —each with its own distinctive and valuable variations.

People would live in the ideal city in a wide range of dwelling types. Fine old houses would be restored. New developments might follow the pattern of Washington's Southwest Renewal area, which offers a broad range of apartments and town houses grouped around small parks.

Natural Beauty Enhanced

In such a city, natural beauties would be enhanced rather than obscured. While Washington scores low for allowing its waterfront to be ruined by industrial grime and ugly overhead expressway, San Antonio scores highly among architects for the intelligent and beautiful use of the river which runs through the city. Walkways and riverfront cafes line the banks, and the recent siting of the Vallita Assembly Hall on the river adds a stimulating new civic center to its recreational advantages. Boston's Charles River Basin also provides pleasant pedestrian paths and parkland along its waterways.

The ideal city would have plenty of parking, but it would be hidden. In Rochester's Midtown Plaza it's placed under

stores and office buildings; in Pittsburgh's Mellon Square it's under a park. In Detroit's Lafayette Park, parking is visible, but sunken below grade. Highspeed rail transit would be a vital part of the ideal city. Philadelphia has interlocked its subway system with buses and trains. New York, Chicago, and Toronto are buying new, air-conditioned subway cars. Stockholm is experimenting with a subway auto-pilot system. Brand new subway systems are being planned for San Francisco, Montreal, Milan, Oslo, and Rotterdam. Systems are being considered by Los Angeles, Washington, D. C., and Atlanta.

There would be ample opportunity for man to commune with nature in the ideal city. There would be large tracts of parkland and forest with roads, walkways, and bridle paths, as in Boston's celebrated park system, Washington's Rock Creek Park, and New York's Central Park. Other open areas would be small but significant interruptions in the city's density, as in Jackson Square in New Orleans, and Richmond's State Capitol building and park.

There would be attention to details in the ideal city. Power lines would be placed underground. Traffic signs would be simplified and designed for instant recognition and beauty. In Europe, signs on stores aren't allowed to create a neonposter jungle in which no-one's advertising message gets across. Chaos would be replaced by well-designed signs selected from a large variety of harmonizing sizes, type faces, and colors.

Arcades Return

Arcades, an old device used in many American towns, would be placed over stretches of downtown sidewalks to shield pedestrians from sun and rain and recreate some of the age-old interest of the bazaar. Gay globes and balloons of light would create a festive community spirit instead of giving passersby the third degree. Important community buildings would be flood-lighted at night to give the city a skyline which wouldn't die each day with the setting sun.

In its every aspect, the architects' ideal city would be a city for people. As one noted architect has said, "It's time we showed people that life doesn't have to be so damned grim."

The Ideal City



Constitution Plaza in Hartford, Connecticut, replacing a blighted section of the city consists of eight individual buildings which vary widely in design but are unified by a series of open courts and squares. The complex was designed as a whole and is enriched with landscaping, fountains, and sculpture. Federal urban renewal funds were used to help clear the site. Occupants of the plaza buildings are enthusiastic about the beauty and vitality of the new commercial center.



by Truman Potts, A.I.A.

Northeast Louisiana State College, Monroe, Louisiana, is the home of a newly created Building Construction Department which will train construction professionals to fill positions in the construction industry not covered by the disciplines of Architecture or Engineering.

More young men and women than ever before are interested in college training for a professional career in construction. At Northeast Louisiana State College a new program designed for training a new professional is well established, namely, a curriculum in building construction. Professionals in construction do need an education, and part of it can very well be a college education. Let's make them fit!

You might compare the college training of the professional in construction to the red beam of the laser which gives off a "rosy" guiding light. A college training in management and building techniques offers construction a "rosy" future. As one of the nation's major industries, building construction needs many people who are trained in the areas of materials, products, manufacture, sales and contracting.

The objectives and purposes of the building construction program at

Professionals in Construction

Northeast are to train students and develop graduates capable of filling positions in various fields within the construction industry other than the design disciplines of architecture and engineering. Areas of the construction industry in which graduates should be capable of finding a career are: Contracting (construction companies); Manufacturing (management, product and plant staff, public and human relations, sales and promotion); government (construction coordinators, inspectors, etc.); financial (developers, construction coordinators, etc.); Architects and consulting engineers (estimators, inspectors, human relations coordinators).

This program is not intended to produce graduates who pursue architectural or engineering design as a profession; but to create a professional to execute the designs created by the architect and engineer. While engineering is an accepted part of his daily routine, his ethics will be established on his ability to deal with members of the construction team. His responsibilities in the technical area lie in the techniques of construction rather than the design of the building or system.

The construction industry is the largest single private contributor to the American economy; yet, construction education has been largely without status and often offered as an after thought in schools of engineering, architecture or business. On very few campuses has it received the identity and recognition it clearly deserves as an important academic discipline. We should recognize that there is as great a need for this professional as there is for the trained lawyer, the trained economist, the trained engineer or the trained architect. If lawyers are required to teach lawyers or doctors to teach doctors, it seems that we should select construction men to train construction men. We should not continue the unsatisfactory practice of teaching them as a sideline by non-construction faculties whose main duties, responsibilities and interests are to provide specific training for their own particular disciplines. For a time, the architect and engineer with construction experience may be the only source from which to recruit effective faculties.

A limited number of contractors or construction professionals, architects and engineers have put their heads together in a few schools to begin the building of separate academic programs, the sole purpose being to train men for construction. Such a group approached educators in this state and convinced them that this training was needed in Louisiana.

The building construction curriculum at Northeast is designed to supply the beginning student with a foundation in the basics: English, history and mathematics. As the students progress in the curriculum, construction courses are introduced-first a course in construction terminology (some students are not proficient in this area) and basic building materials and techniques. Structure design, heating and air conditioning, electric service and installation are approximately the same as required for architects and engineers; but the structure courses have more emphasis on design of temporary structures, and less attention is paid to theoretical problems. Courses in advanced scheduling such as CPM and PERT, estimating and other technology for the construction industry receives emphasis but is constantly subject to evaluation and review.

At Northeast Louisiana State College we are fortunate to have an excellent and cooperative School of Business Administration and courses in management, accounting, finance, human relations, collective bargaining and real estate are required from that school. The departments, within the School of Pure and Applied Sciences (of which Building Construction is one) have been most helpful in gearing some of their courses to our particular needs.

Another facet of construction education is the necessity of continuing "self education," due to the fast pace of today's changing technology. This year's graduate may soon find that half of what he learned is no longer valid or useful, so he must continue to study in order to keep current.

In addition to the academic work offered the student, his education must include some practical experience and apprentice training. This is when the architects, engineers, contractors and industry will be called on to give tangible assistance in hiring these students for summer experience and also for positions upon completion of their degrees.

The popularity of the four-year Bachelor of Science in Building Construction Program at Northeast Louisiana State College has surpassed all expectations. An enrollment for the first semester starting in September, 1966, was 78 students. At the end of registration for the second semester, there were 90 building construction majors.

One of the primary reasons for the success of Northeast's construction program will be its teaching staff. All full-time faculty members should have had practical construction experience. They should each make a point to keep in close touch with the latest techniques and innovations. In addition, they should

(Continued on Page 14)

Professionals...

Truman Potts, A.I.A.

Associate Professor and Head, Department of Building Construction, Northeast Louisiana State College. Former construction employee. A registered architect since 1950 and president of Potts & Associates—Architects, a South Dakota corporation. ... to provide every child with the opportunity to develope his own capacities and interests to the fullest possible extent.

School Design in Louisiana

State Superintendent of Education

other group, are aware of the impli-

Education and architecture have a great deal more in common than most people have imagined.

While architects, with continuously greater vision, feeling, and creativity, are shaping the physical world we live in, educators are striving to shape the characters, the intellects, and the awareness of the people who will inhabit it.

More and more, the paths of the two professions are crossing. Educators have placed more extensive and intensive demands upon the architect's resourcefulness in the last few years than in all the centuries before. And architects, responding to the challenge, have created daring new environments for the educational process, designing brilliant, distinctive schools tailored to the precise needs of the community the schools will serve. As innovations and departures in education pass from theory to reality, the architect is there to help mold the context for tomorrow's learning.

In a very real sense, the school of the future is already here. Some Louisiana children are today benefitting from the felicitous marriage of educational research to architectural genius; many more will surely do so in the near future. Pupils at Baton Rouge's Sherwood Forest Elementary School, for example, work and study in a circular building in which classrooms, like spokes in a wheel, radiate outward from a central library and audio-visual resources area. Completely air-conditioned and carpeted throughout to reduce noise, the pace-setting building also features movable walls to facilitate team teaching and multiple use of films, guest

speakers, and other programs. The built-in flexibility of the school is but one notable example of the manner in which schoolmen and architects have worked together in pursuing an optimum goal of today's educational system: to provide every child with the opportunity to develop his own capacities and interests to the fullest possible extent.

Considering the vast distances the art of school design has travelled in such a short period of time, it would be foolhardy to predict what new forms and substances we will see in the school buildings of tomorrow. There is only the certainty that discovery and innovation in education will continue apace, and that architecture will not only be equal to every challenge, but also will itself continue to make valuable, positive contributions to learning theories and practice.

Apart from speculation about theories and plans, grand and small, there is a great deal about the future of which both educators and architects can be quite sure, and in fact are already well aware. Perhaps the most impelling consideration is that the number of schoolage children will continue to increase, and that more and more classrooms will have to be built to take care of them. There are already over a million educables in Louisiana. Last year school registration totalled 975,229, and by now the total has surely reached the million mark. The State Department of Education estimates that by 1975 there will be over 1.3 million educables in the state.

Architects, better than almost any

cations of an additional 300,000 children in the school systems. On the basis of recommendations made by a statewide committee and published in a State Department bulletin, "The Planning and Construction of Louisiana School Buildings," these additional children would necessitate the construction of over 91 million square feet of floor space, including classrooms, libraries, auditoriums, gymnasiums, cafeterias, and rest rooms. The figure is more idealistic than realistic, considering that today's pupils get by with somewhat less than optimum space per individual, but it should nevertheless be illustrative of what school people would like to have. Actually, about half that much will be built if present construction trends continue.

Citing trends is helpful, although inconclusive. We don't really know the extent to which the future will be based on the past. Over the past ten years, the average statewide capital outlay expenditures for school construction and remodeling was a little over 42 million dollars annually. At this rate, some \$420 million would be spent on new construction and building improvements in the next decade. Of course, we are unsure whether this rate will continue. In fact, during a couple of recent years it has been considerably lower, yet we have reason to hope it will go up in the years ahead. Projections for the future vary according to the statistical bases on which they are developed, and the State Department of Education, working with a wide range of data, has evolved a variety of projections. They all point upward, to be sure, but the closest we

can come to pinning anything down is to say that within the next ten years the number of new classrooms and related school construction will equal from less than onethird to better than two-thirds of what we now have. Because school planning, financing, and construction are carried out at the local level, and because there are so many local cultural, economic, and educational factors at work, it is simply not possible to project an accurate, precise statewide picture ten years ahead of time.

There are other reasons why predictions about the future are risky, one of which is that we can expect the overall operation of the state's schools to undergo more changes in the next decade than it has in the entire twentieth century up until now. To what degree these changes are going to take place, no one can be certain, but their general outlines can be found in the recommendations made by the One Hundred Man Committee for Curriculum Study. Some school boards are already actively implementing one or more of the Committee's recommendations, and others are planning to do so shortly. There are some recommendations whose effect will scarcely cause a ripple on the waters, others that could produce startling and dramatic changes in the education of the coming generation.

Implicit in some of the Committee's recommendations and prominent in the thinking of many educators and

School Design...

The Program of Sherwood Forest Elementary School required a climatic and acoustically controlled environment with flexible classroom space for large groups, small groups and individual instruction. An aesthetically appealing design by AIA architects Roy Haase and T. A. Broussard met these requirements in a circular floor plan, giving each room easy access to the library and central service area as well as outside exits. Folding wall curtains, movable furniture and blackboards gave flexibility, while carpeting and acoustical tile ceiling cut down on noise at its source.



The Louisiana Architect



Library - Sherwood Forest Elementary School

lay people is that schools traditionally operate on a basis which is, by business standards, extremely inefficient. School buildings, which frequently are among the most expensive investments in a community, are used only about seven hours a day, then stand idle for three solid months every summer. Conjecture about lengthening the school day and the school year is past the talking stage and into the advanced stages of planning. A couple of systems have already added a period to the school day. Year-round operation may not be too far off.

Architects, builders, and equipment suppliers are correct in deducing that any move toward more efficient utilization of school structures insiuates a proportionate reduction in expenditures for new construction and additions. The State Department of Education is wholly in favor of such moves, since they afford the tax-payer a better buy for his money. But that does not mean that we are in any way opposed to the interests of architects and contractors. The trend toward greater utilization of existing facilities is actually but a small part of the total outlook, and nearly every other factor points to an increase in school construction in coming years.

One force at work today, as it has been for a good many years, is the consolidation of smaller, poorly equipped schools into larger, more adequate ones. Admittedly, there are instances in which consolidation consists simply of shutting

down a school and trundling its student body into another existing school. More often, however, consolidation means the construction of new, improved, and expanded schools, superior in every respect to the sum totals of the component schools. The full impact of consolidation has yet to be felt statewide, but within five years it will make itself known in virtually every parish as directives of the State Board of Education concerning the consolidation and phasing out of small schools become effective. Already we can point to effective consolidation programs in Ascension, Caddo, Caldwell, Lafourche, Terrebonne. and Rapides Parishes. among others. The day is in sight when every child in the state will have the opportunity to attend a

(Continued on Page 14)

The Enforcement of AIA Ethics

Architect A was offered the design of a building at a fee much below the chapter's recommended minimum on a "take it or leave it" basis. In order to produce the work he provided less than normal services including sketchy engineering services. He was declared guilty of a violation of the Mandatory Standards.

2.6 An architect shall base his compensation on the values of the services he agrees to render. He shall neither offer nor agree to perform his services for a compensation that will tend to jeopardize the adequacy or professional quality of those services, or the judgment, care and diligence necessary properly to discharge his responsibilities to his client and the public.

An architect performed work in a state in which he did not have a license. He justified his action by saying that in his area, it was customary to do preliminaries and not worry about a license until the working drawings were completed. The license requirements of the state in point specifically defined "the practice of architecture as including consultation, preliminaries, etc." The National Judicial Board ruled the member guilty of ignoring the obligation of a member to conform to the registration laws of the states in which he practices.

1.6 An architect shall conform to the registration laws governing the practice of architecture in any state in which he practices, and shall observe the customs and standards established by the local professional body of architects.

The pastor of a church wrote a letter stating that at an interview Architect C said, "The firm of A & B does more work for our denomination than the other firms you have considered, but their work is so similar that you can spot an A & B job just by driving by." Architect C was judged guilty of a violation of mandatory Standard 3.3 for falsely or maliciously injuring or attempting to injure the professional reputation, prospects or practice of another architect.

3.3 An architect shall not knowingly injure or attempt to injure falsely or maliciously the professional reputation, prospects, or practice of another architect.

Architect A called on a school superintendent in the interest of his firm. Seeing sketches of a proposed school on the wall of the superintendent's office, he prepared perspective sketches and delivered them to the school board. The chapter filed charges against the architects involved, who were found guilty by the National Judicial Board.

2.1 (In part) An architect's relation to his client is based upon the concept of agency. Before undertaking any commission he shall determine with his client the scope of the project, the nature and extent of the services he will perform and his compensation for them, and shall provide confirmation thereof in writing.

3.6 An architect shall not offer his services in a competition except as provided in the Competition Code of The American Institute of Architects. The following judicial cases are published to show how the American Institute of Architects works to maintain a high ethical standard that protects the public interest and the image of the profession.

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Case No. 2

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PROFESSIONALS . . . (Continued from Page 8)

each be recognized as a professional. Perhaps, then, the most important contributing factor to the program will be the recognition of professional status accorded to both the school and faculty by certain members of the construction industry and the general public.

SCHOOL DESIGN . . . (Continued from Page 11)

completely adequate, educationally up-to-date school—but many of the buildings are yet to be built.

New schools and additions to existing ones are indicated, not just by increases in the population, but by the fact that a greater proportion of that population will be in school. For one thing, the dropout rate has been decreasing, and it will continue to decrease as the schools become better equipped to meet the needs of all their students. Youngsters are going to be in school longer. The Hundred-Man Committee recommended that kindergarten be made a regular part of the curriculum, and a number of local boards have taken steps toward implementing the recommendation. At the other end of the curriculum, the Committee recommended the addition of Grades 13 and 14, which could be developed as the equivalent of junior college or vocational education within the existing public school framework. Bossier Parish is already undertaking a pilot program in the 13th and 14th grades. Clearly, if kindergarten becomes compulsory, the number of children in school will increase by at least 10 per cent, and if even half the high school graduates continue through grades 13 and 14, the school population would go up almost another 10 per cent. And it would take that many more classrooms, lunchrooms, and libraries to take care of them.

The future also promises to bring new types of educational buildings. For instance, there is the coming appearance of area vocational and technical high schools, which were recommended by the Hundred-Man Committee. Caddo Parish is ready to construct such a facility if it can find a means of financing, and there is also one under development in Lake Charles. Much of the planning for vocational high schools presumes the use of existing structures, but even then there will be the need for extensive renovations. Other types of structures to serve a multitude of educational purposes can also be expected. As an example, there is a Supplementary Special Education Resource Center which the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board is developing, a structure for exceptional children which in its design and concept is unique in all the nation. Other educational resource centers of similar and natures will be varying seen shortly.

East Baton Rouge is financing its innovational resource center with a Federal grant. The facility is typical of the educational structure made possible under the relatively recent Federal legislation for aid to education. By and large, it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to secure Federal grants for construction of the usual types of school facilities, but there are ample opportunities for developing special-purpose buildings to assure that at least some part of the Federal monies will go into construction.

The schools that architects will design in the coming years will reflect the fast-paced technological advances and permeate every facet of life. It is already standard practice for architects to make consideration for the use of audio-visual aids; in years ahead, however, they will have to allow for computerized, electronic learning devices. From both human and mechanical standpoints, architects will have to participate in the creation of environments that can focus attention to the needs and development of the individual child. The pioneering schools of this decade are pointing toward schools which in their policies, scheduling, and physical plants provide every opportunity for individual study, group study, and self-enrichment that the child needs.

As technology advances, as educational emphases shift, architecture will produce school designs that will not only accommodate, but will enhance the educational and technological developments. Which is to assume that architects will continue to respond so well to every challenge the educators have hurled at them, but this is an easy assumption to make. Just as there is no doubt that scientific development will continue and that education will make every effort to keep pace, there is no doubt that architecture will continue to give bold, graphic evidence of the dynamism and imagination that all of us want maintained in our schools.



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The Louisiana Architects Association pays memorial tribute to: Milton H. Finger, AIA

It was a blessing when Milton Finger came our way. He was not only a good architect, but a leader in his profession. Certainly his absence will be a loss to all who knew him, for seldom is dedication to an art so well tempered with intelligence, high ideals and a warm and friendly personality.

Milton Finger, born in Nashville, Tennessee, came to New Orleans from Youngstown, Ohio in 1939. He attended Fortier High School and Tulane University from which he received a Bachelor of Architecture Degree. After service to his country in the army during World War II he worked for the following firms: Arsene Rousseau, Architect; Sal Rosenthal, Architect; Charles R. Colbert, Architect; Orleans Parish School Board; Favrot, Reed, Mathes & Bergman, Architects; as a principle in the firm of Finger & Schouest, Architects and a principle finally in the firm of Stoffle & Finger, Architects

Milton Finger was active in the New Orleans Chapter of the AIA, an immediate past board member of the Louisiana Architects Association and cochairman of the LAA's important Fee Schedule Committee.

News Notes

Architects Check Your Contracts Closely Attention of LAA Architects is called to the provisory clause in certain state contracts which says that the conditions of the Architect-Owner agreement are contingent upon funds being made available for the project. In terms of today's market conditions, this means that even though legislative authority for sale of bonds has been granted, architectural fees cannot be paid when the bonds cannot be sold. Several instances of this nature have occurred in which plans and specifications were prepared and bids within the budgeted amount received, but bonds could not be sold within the statutory limits and the governing state agencies have ruled that no money can be made available for fees.

LAA Joins New Orleans Expressway Suit The Louisiana Architects Association has joined with Baron H. dePontalba and others, in a suit against the City of New Orleans, the Mayor and Council of New Orleans, Planning Commission of the City of New Orleans, Louisiana Department of Highways and the Federal Bureau of Construction of the elevated expressway through the Vieux Carre section of New Orleans is unconstitutional. Baron H. dePontalba is a direct descendent of the original owner of the Pontalba buildings in New Orleans, the first apartment complex in the Western hemisphere.

The petition is quite elaborate and is very convincing from a factual viewpoint. A copy may be borrowed from the attorney for the LAA, Mr. Ben R. Miller, Jr., Post Office Box 1588, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821.



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