

May, 1969

The Louisiana Architect

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The Mortuary Chapel



The Village Mall, Cleveland, Tennessee. Architect: Toombs-Amisano and Wells, Atlanta, Ga. Builder: Rea Construction Co., Inc., Charlotte, N.C.

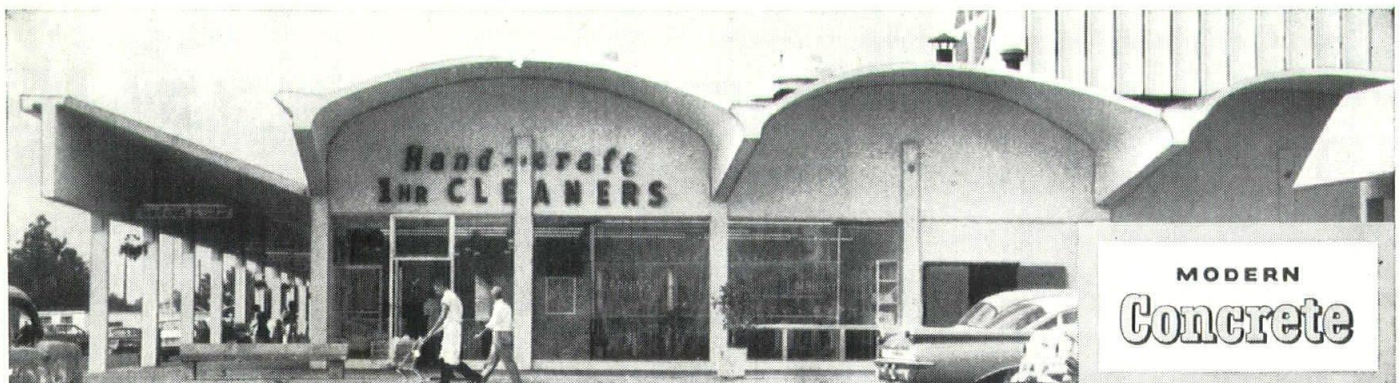
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*A Message
From the Director*



H. D. RUFFIN, Director
Department of Occupational Standards

The Architect's Stake

Another issuance of the architect's roster reminds us so boldly how quickly the past twelve months have flown by. It also impresses upon us the changes we have witnessed since last year.

Of prominent note would be the start of negotiations on the Viet Nam war. Peace may be a long way off, but at least a beginning toward a settlement can be seen.

What does the war have to do with the practice of architecture?—A great deal, I personally think. No one will dispute the fact that a tremendous amount of building (and designing) will have to be executed in this country in the next few years if we are to at least keep pace with the growth in population and economy. A fantastic amount of old building will have to be replaced, too. But, the construction rate surely must be directly affected by our immense expenditures in Southeast Asia. These funds could be put to such good use in "rebuilding" America.

I believe too, that if this incessant drain on our resources could be brought to a trickle, we would experience a return to reasonable mortgage interest rates. "Cheaper" money would be a stimulating shot in the construction industry's arm. It follows then, in my judgment, that the practice of architecture would witness unprecedented activity.

Thus, we can say that all of our "fortunes" are being affected by the people around the much-disputed table in Paris, as well as in the rice paddies of the Mekong Delta.

We pray when this roster is published again next Spring, we can rejoice in the knowledge that our men are either home or on their way back . . . and that we can get down to the task of building a bigger and better America and Louisiana.

Respectfully,

H. D. RUFFIN, Director

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The Louisiana Architect

Volume VIII

Number 5

THE LOUISIANA ARCHITECT, Official Journal of the Louisiana Architects Association of the American Institute of Architects, is owned by the Louisiana Architects Association, not for profit, and is published monthly, Suite 200, Jack Tar Capitol House Hotel, Baton Rouge, La., telephone 348-4331. Editorial contributions are welcome but publication cannot be guaranteed. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Louisiana Architects Association. Editorial material may be freely reprinted by other official AIA publications, provided full credit is given to the author and to the LOUISIANA ARCHITECT for prior use.

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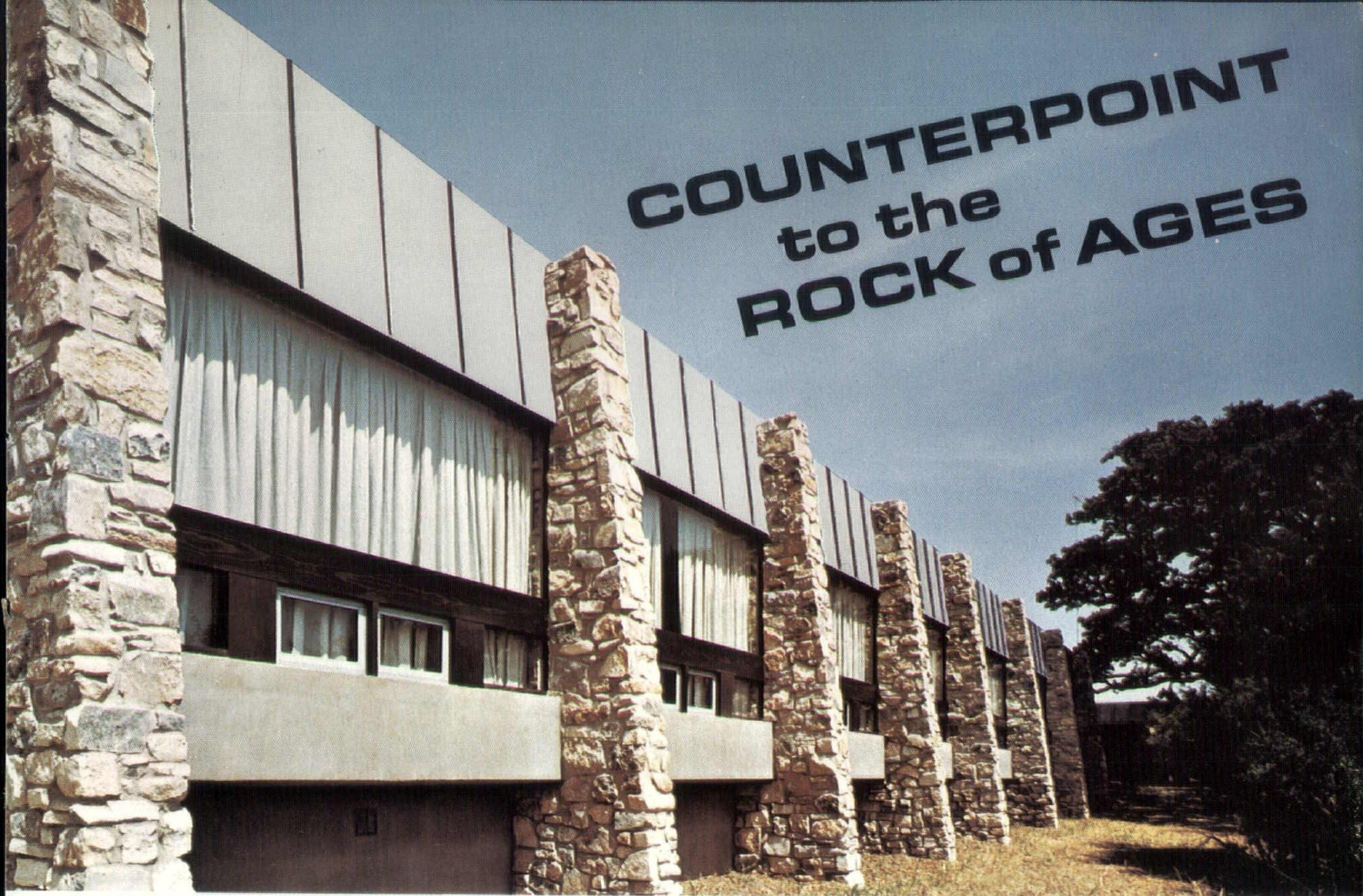
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ARCHITECTURAL *News* NOTES

VOL. 1, NO. 1

MAY, 1969

Jesse O. Morgan, an LAA architect from Shreveport has been elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects for his notable contribution to the advancement of the profession of architecture. He is a partner in the firm of Weiner, Morgan and O'Neal Architects and has practiced in Shreveport for the past 19 years.

Originally from Crowley, Louisiana, Jesse is a graduate of Architecture from Tulane University. He has held every office in the Shreveport Chapter AIA and has been active in many Shreveport civic and cultural affairs. His major architectural projects are: Woodlawn High School, Northwood High School, L.S.U. Science Bldg., Shreve City Shopping Center and Home Savings and Loan Association in Lufkin, Texas. He numbers among his honors the AIA Medal at Tulane and election to the Tau Sigma Delta Honorary Architectural Fraternity.

Convention Peek

Watch for two unusual news breaks at the big 1969 AIA/RAIC Convention in Chicago, June 22-26. Students will discuss what's bugging them about AIA, the design of cities and buildings and other relevant issues Sunday, June 22 at the special "dialogue." Meeting will place top AIA officials and student leaders in a rare public exchange of views.

Trends

The Washington watch to determine Nixon Administration stands and poli-

cies on housing, Model Cities, New Towns, real estate taxes, and urban transit continues. Bureaucrats say they don't know yet the future of Kennedy-Johnson policies or what Nixon substitutes will be. **HUD Secretary George Romney** said the Johnson's Administration goal of six million units for low and middle-income families in the next 10 years is "unrealistic." Later the former auto man altered his tune somewhat and said he wants housing pushed by attracting the giants of American industry. Nixon budget includes \$675 million for **Model Cities** and no money for new cities to enter program plus \$1 billion for urban renewal, \$100 million for rent supplements.

Transportation Secretary John Volpe has cheered rapid transit fans by stating he supports a separate trust fund for transit and realizes fares cannot support it. How much money Nixon can provide for transit is, however, questionable in view of inflation and Vietnam.

AIA backed Model Cities, Urban Renewal, Rent Supplements, and a trust fund for transit.

Housing Outlook Cloudy: March housing starts showed a decline as did building permits, the Census Bureau reported. Yearly adjusted rate is now running 1,539,000 units compared to January's rate of 1,878.00. And the decline will continue, says the National Association of Home Builders, because of higher costs of mortgages.

Meanwhile, **construction costs con-**

tinue to climb faster than general price increases.

Associated General Contractors president Carl M. Halvorsen warns of "runaway inflation." Average wage increase of 13.4 per cent was noted in 50 settlements so far this year, he said.

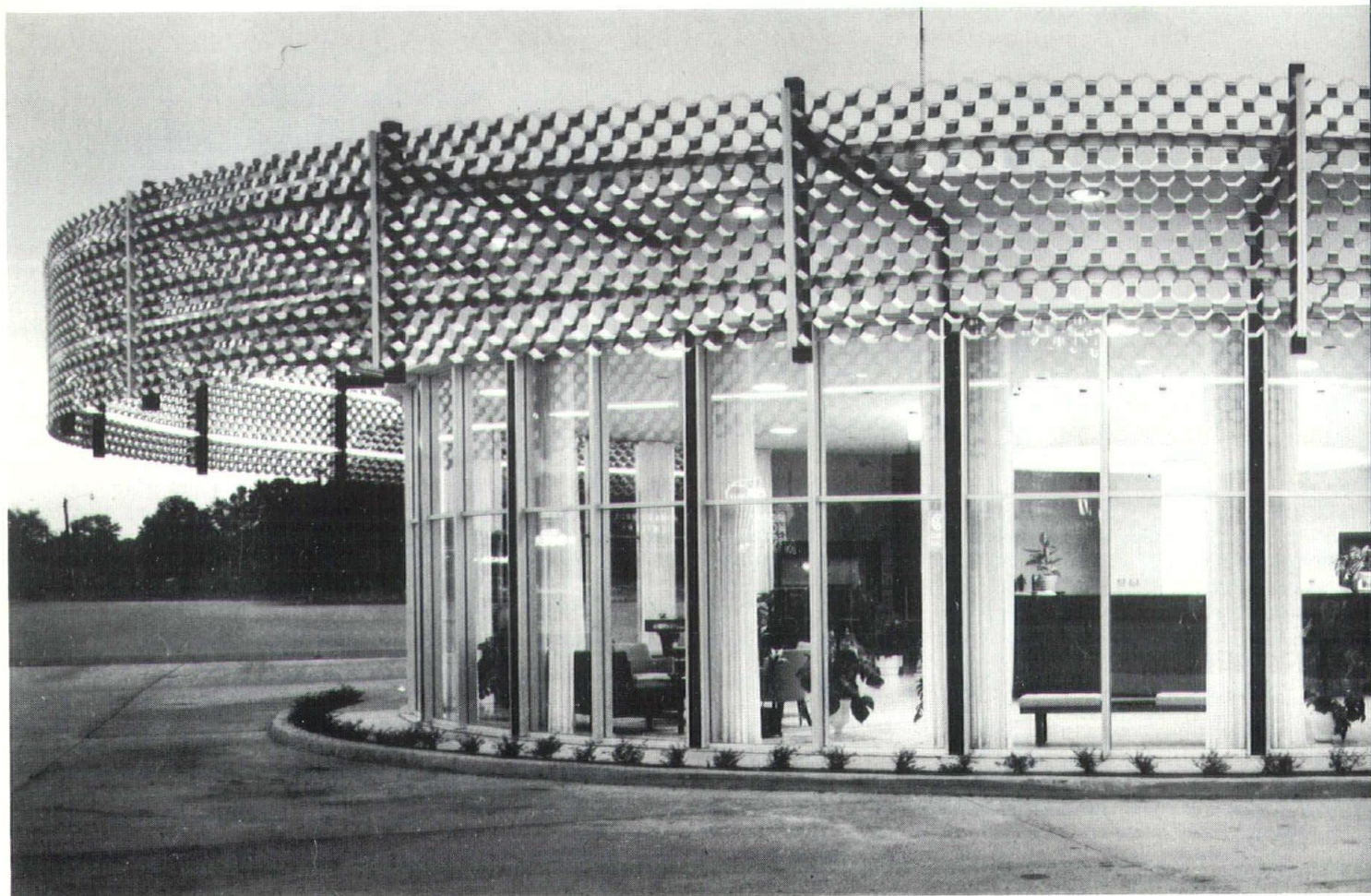
AGC backs use of unskilled workers for some construction jobs, arbitration of wage disputes in government jobs. Nixon economists warn Model Cities cost could run to \$27 billion just for first 150 cities that got planning money. **Only nine cities** so far have received money to start building.

Lumber Prices

Alarming lumber price increases are under scrutiny by Congress, lumber industry, home builders, AIA, and others. Prices increased as much as 90 per cent in one year in some parts of the nation, witnesses told the Senate Banking Committee. Sen. John Sparkman (D. ALA) has introduced National Timber Supply Act of 1968 which could give the National Forest Service up to \$300 million more a year to better manage the huge Federal timber holdings. Arthur W. Greeley, associate Forest Service chief, estimated better roads alone could save half the 10 billion board feet lost each year because of dying trees and lack of thinning.

Already, however, as result of public spotlight Japan has agreed to reduce its lumber production and imports from U. S. and the price of plywood has taken a sharp plunge.

BRANCH BANK FOR FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF WEST MONROE, LA.



The program for this project called for the design of a branch bank to be located on a leased site 125' square located somewhere in the parking area of the expanding Twin City Shopping Center. The design of the building was restricted by the shopping center: "Do not obscure existing shops from main Street or interfere with traffic and parking."

The client required an impressive building because they were expanding their banking facilities from one city to another and wanted more than just another service branch.

In selling banking services, customer convenience is of prime importance. We wanted to encourage customers

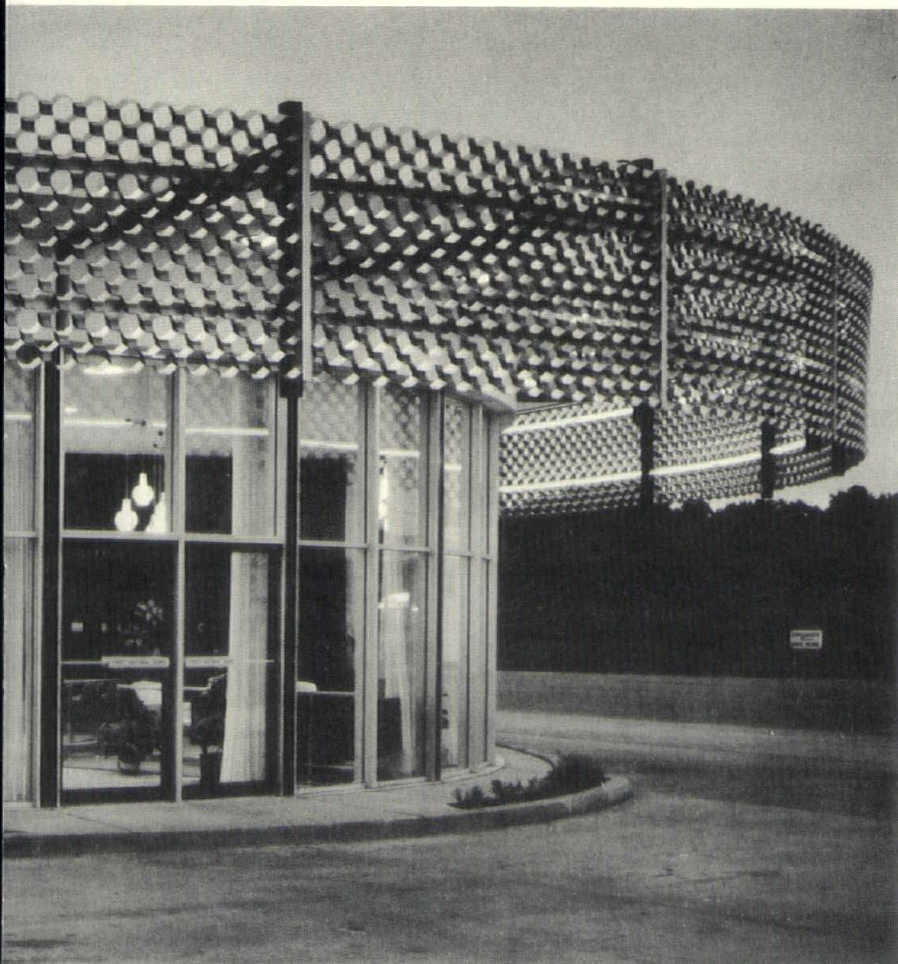
from the street fronting the shopping center as well as those who were in the center itself. To do this and to create a building of distinctive character the design evolved as a simple open floor plan with a service core in the middle of a hub.

The site selected was close to the main street and an entrance to the shopping center for convenience to drive-in customers, yet still close to other buildings in the center. The round plan with the maximum use of glass provided two equally important entrances and a light see-thru effect which met with approval of the shopping center but posed a problem of sun control. This problem was solved

by the ten foot overhang with a sun screen, which also provided cover for the drive-in windows.

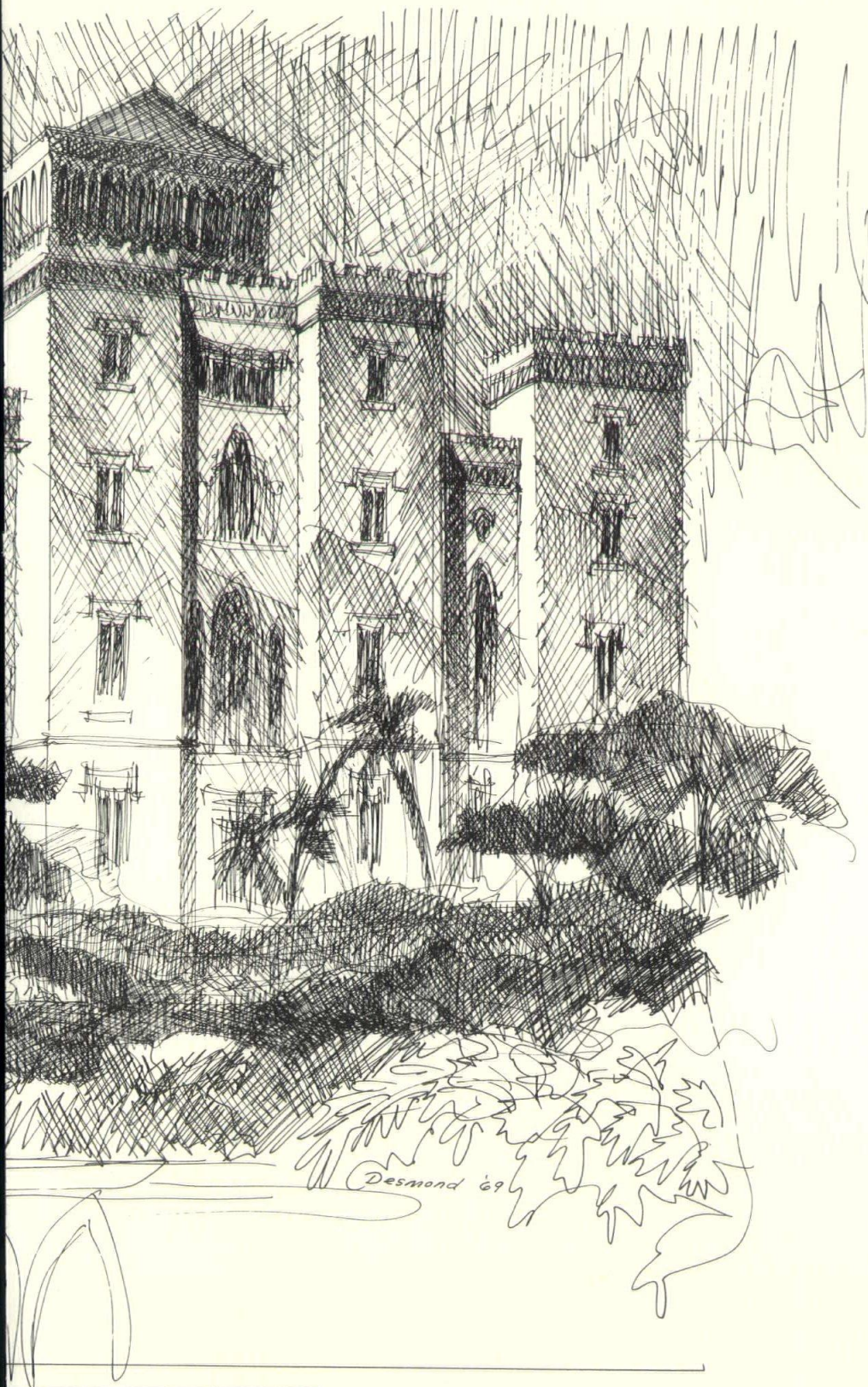
James C. Portman, Vice President and Branch Manager has this to say about the new bank: "The proof of good architecture is whether or not it accomplishes the task for which it was intended.

"I must say that we're more than pleased with the success we've had with this branch. We've had twice the expected flow of traffic and deposits, and many people from throughout Louisiana and other states have complimented us on the beautiful design."



Photos by G. Screpetis





Old State Capitol

BATON ROUGE, LA.

The Old State Capitol, located on the high bluffs of the Mississippi, which justified the origin of Baton Rouge, is one of Louisiana's most unique buildings.

It is first of all perhaps the most important monument of the Roman Gothic Revival period in the state. While this period is characterized by romanticism, sham in construction, and in architectural expression, it sometimes reached architectural peaks which more rational ages would not have sought. This building with its spectacular vertical shaft of light and space in the center space — a grand stairway culminated by a glass dome under the central glazed section seen here — achieves a type of interior unity unusual in a multi-story building.

The building was constructed in 1859 with Dakin as architect. It was largely destroyed by Union troops. Its restoration was criticized by the young Mark Twain whose biting remarks satirized the building and the logic behind it.

It has just recently been restored by the State of Louisiana under the excellent direction of Mr. George Leake, Architect.

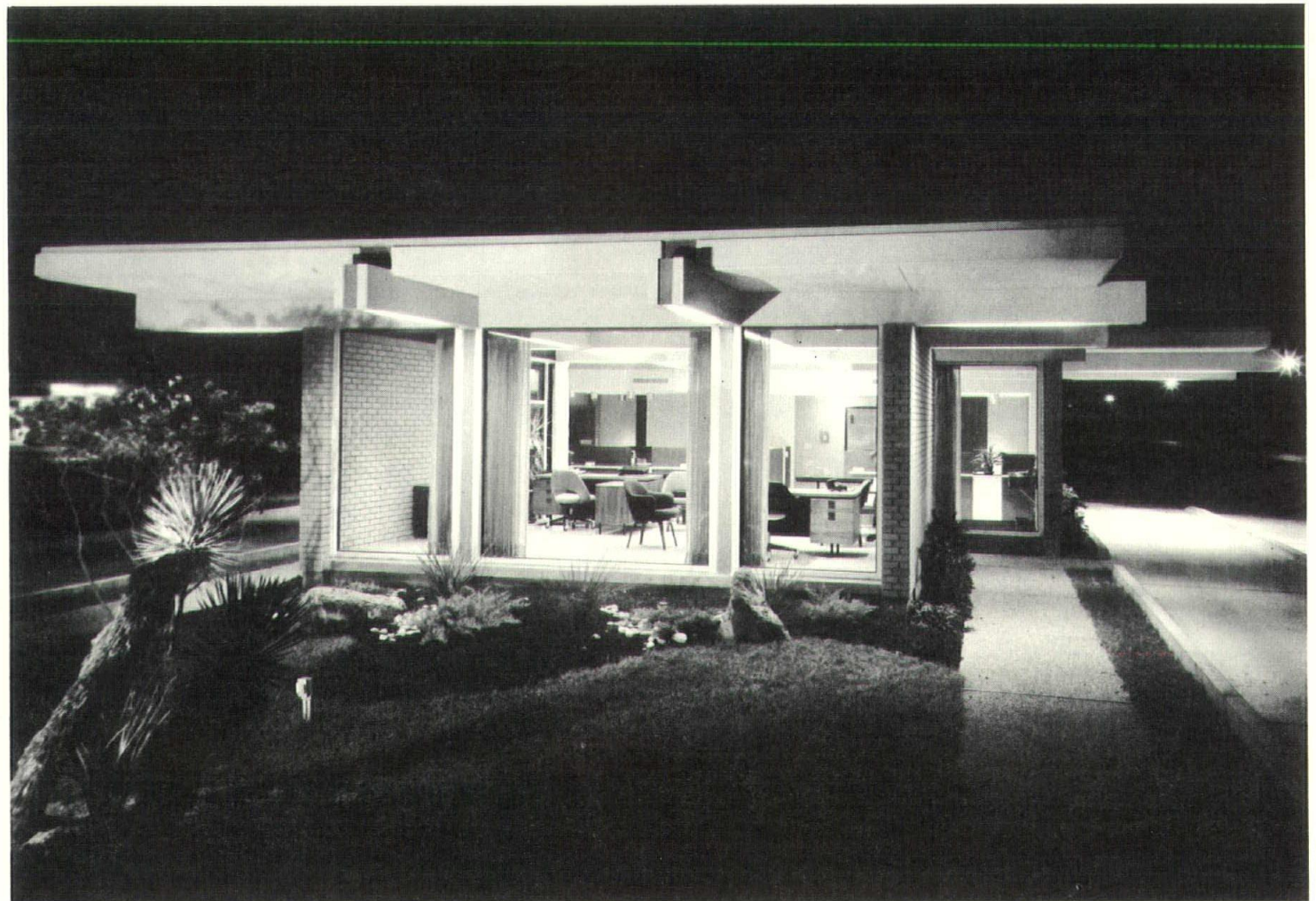
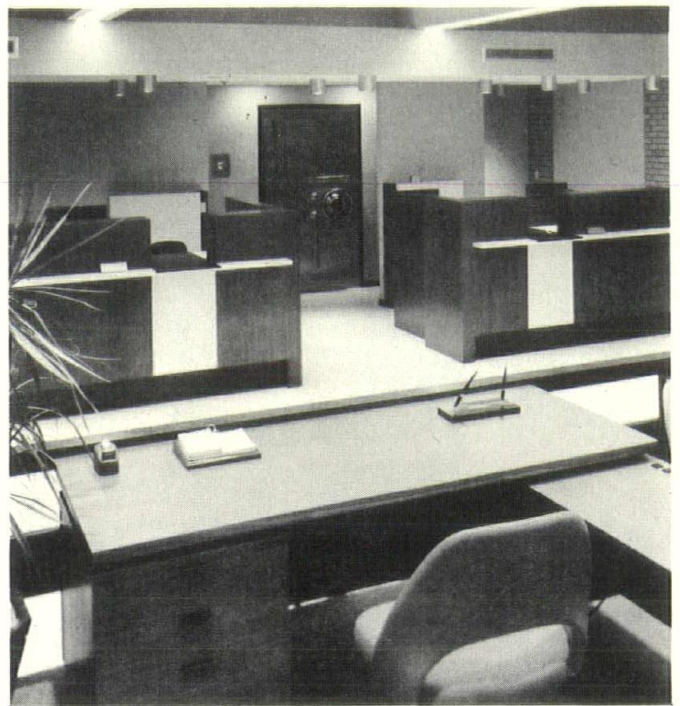
JOHN DESMOND, FAIA

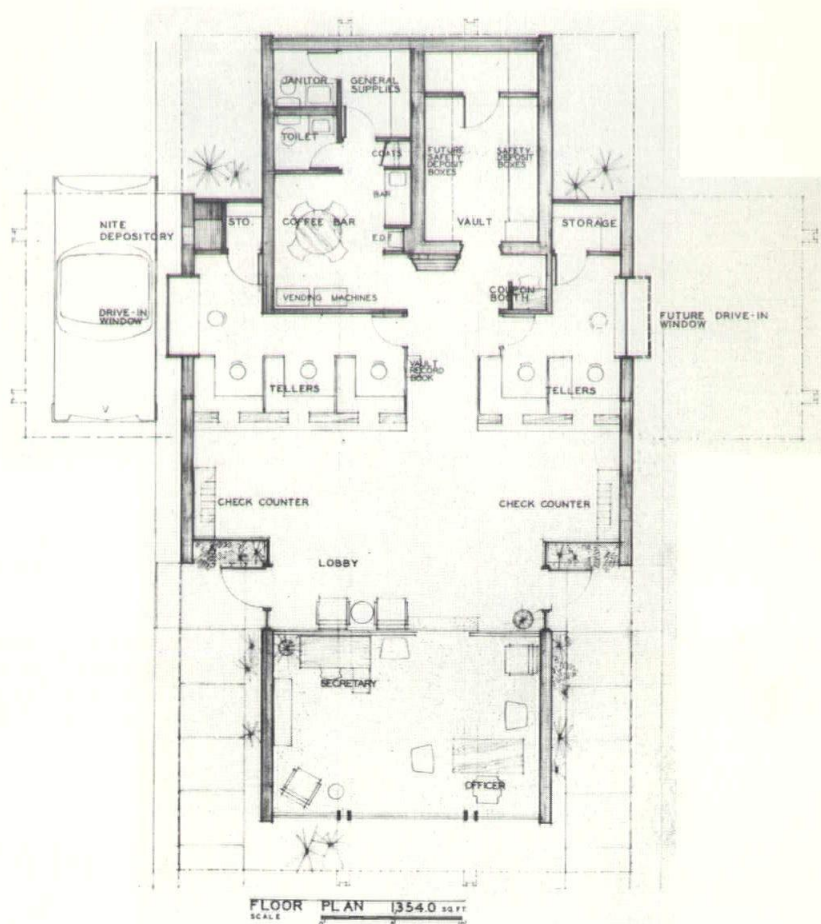
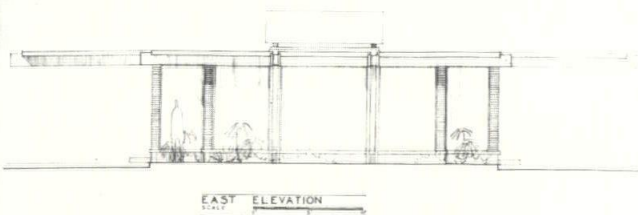
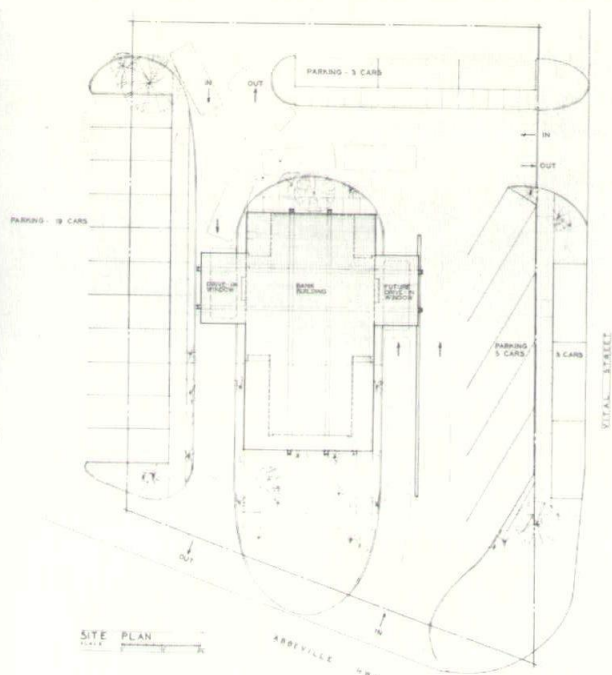
Johnston Street Branch

GUARANTY BANK & TRUST CO. LAFAYETTE, LA.

DAVID L. PERKINS, AIA, *Architect*

LYLE BERGEROR, AIA, *Project Architect*





The congenial, relaxed style of life, for which south Louisiana is famous, dictates a style of banking quite different from the cool, reserved relationships between Eastern bankers and their customers.

The Guaranty Bank and Trust Company wanted a branch bank to serve the Johnson Street area, which would look modern and progressive, and would be congenial and friendly. They wanted the branch to become an accepted addition to the neighborhood. Plans were to emphasize hospitality and lending services.

Fortunately our staff has an intimate knowledge of the life style of the area. They approached the project with confidence and enthusiasm.

The clients requested dual off-street parking to be shared by neighboring shops and easy access to drive-in facili-

ties. This, along with local building restrictions and a limited site made the project a real challenge.

Our solution not only met these requirements, but in addition we were able to provide a plan for expanding the drive-in service, to give architectural emphasis to the loan department and make the coffee bar and restroom facilities available for the public as well as the employees.

Client Comments

Bank Senior Vice President Calvin Guidry who worked closely with the architect and contractor on the project says of the bank, "This branch was exceptionally well designed for the location we selected. It relates well to the other businesses in the immediate area and to the traffic situation.

"Soon after we began operations, we saw that we would have to take advantage of the plan to expand services and open the second drive-in window." He said, that the community acceptance of the services offered by the branch has far exceeded expectations.

Construction and Materials

Beams are constructed of steel channels, separated by steel spacers with ends closed, forming light troffers. Steel channels also form the roof fascia. Other materials include: tubular steel framing around glass; brick; white stucco; concrete slab and grade beams and a roof top mechanical system with a white stucco enclosure.

Through the use of steel channels a crisp honest expression of the roof structure was achieved with a unique application of lighting integrated completely with the system.

The Mortuary Chapel

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

At the corner of Rampart and St. Louis street, within sight of St. Louis Cemetery No. 1, stands the oldest church building in New Orleans. Now known as the Church of Our Lady of Guadeloupe, it was built originally as a funeral chapel in which burial services were held, followed by interment in the old cemetery nearby. During the nineteenth century when New Orleans was frequently visited by devastating epidemics of yellow fever, it was believed that the dread disease could be spread by contact with the body of a victim. It is not surprising, then, that the City Council should have wished to prohibit the bringing of the bodies of yellow fever victims to the much frequented St. Louis Cathedral for funeral rites.

Before passing a resolution forbidding these services at the Cathedral, the City Council sold the Rampart St. lot to the Churchwardens who on April 12, 1826 inserted the following announcement in the Louisiana Courier:

Notice

Whereas it is the desire of the Trustees of the Church of St. Louis at New Orleans, to have an obituary church or chapel constructed on a lot situated at the corner of Conti, Rampart and Basin Street, it has been ordered that an advertisement be inserted in the Courier, newspaper, to invite architects and builders to come forth and present their plans, devices and estimates of the cost of said edifice, sealed up, and addressed to Mr. P. Marin Argote, President of the Trustees.

By order of the Trustees
H. Castor, Secretary

As a result of this announcement several proposals were submitted to the churchwardens by local architects and builders most of them still preserved in the archives of the Cathedral. On May 26, 1826 a M. Lissuete submitted "a plan and specification for the construction of an obituary chapel

according to the notice that was published, adding that "my address is the house of Mr. Valié, book seller, No. 170 Royal Street." Francois Correjolles, the architect who at almost the same time was designing his most notable work, the Le Carpentier-Beauregard House (now 1113 Chartres St.), also submitted a proposal for the chapel. His plan included an adjacent two story, galleried rectory, the whole to cost \$15,000.

Another proposal was made by William Brand, noted architect-builder in 1831, of the Hermann-Grima House (1820 St. Louis St.) who in 1819 had designed the First Presbyterian Church in the Gothic Style, a church that stood on St. Charles between Gravier and Union. Another American builder, James Moony, also competed for the project. The building committee was apparently impressed by the efforts of these Americans, and on September 9, 1826 informed the Churchwardens that

Your committee is of the opinion that by reason of the pains taken by Mr. Brand and Mr. James Moony, architects and competitors in making and remaking church and chapel plans, that it would be just to indemnify them for their pains the sum of \$50.

The design selected by the committee was the one submitted by two well-known French architect-builders, Gurlie and Guillot, a partnership since 1796, composed of Claude Gurlie and Joseph Guillot, both natives of Savoy, each married to one of the daughters of Juan Paillet. They had done work for the Church wardens before, having completed the Presbytère by the addition of its second story in 1813. They had in 1826 just completed the new convent of the Ursuline nuns on the site of the present Industrial Canal and, in 1829, built the convent chapel. Their specifications for the Mortuary Chapel is a brief and simple document, reading as follows:

CHAPEL

Specifications of Messrs Gurlie and Guillot.

Specifications of a building in bricks intended to serve as a Chapel, proposed by the Wardens of the Church of St. Louis To wit

The building shall be eighty feet in length by forty feet in width. It will be divided into a peristyle of ten feet in width facing Rampart street, a room of sixty feet, and in the back, of two rooms of ten feet in width by twenty feet long conforming to the plan.

The foundations for the exterior walls ought to have around two feet of depth, established at twenty eight inches in thickness, reduced to twenty four inches at the door-step height which will be set at two feet above the banquette.

The foundations of the interior walls shall have the same depth, established at twenty inches in thickness, reduced to sixteen inches at the door-step height.

In the bottom of the foundations there will be placed cypress boards three inches in thickness set on good cross-members placed five feet apart. The ground floor will be elevated to twenty four feet in height, the exterior walls shall have twenty inches of thickness and the interior walls shall have twelve inches of thickness.

The roof framing shall be done in the French manner in good cypress wood of the strong sort.

The roofing shall be done in slates of good quality, patterned to seven inches and solidly nailed.

Four columns will be built for the peristyle with their entablature and cornice conforming to the plan.

The paving of the interior of the chapel will be done in good northern bricks laid on the flat in rows or in squares likewise set in rows.

Wood work

Three entrance doors six feet in width and ten feet in height, under the imposts, with two leaves and framed with impost and glazed fanlight.

Ten glazed sliding windows four feet in width by ten feet in height including the arch with their frame for receiving the counterweights.

Two exterior doors, doubled, and framed for the two rooms facing Basin street, four feet in width by nine feet in height with glazed sash inside and casings.

Two pannelled doors four feet in width by nine feet in height with double casings and veneered for communicating from the choir to the two rooms.

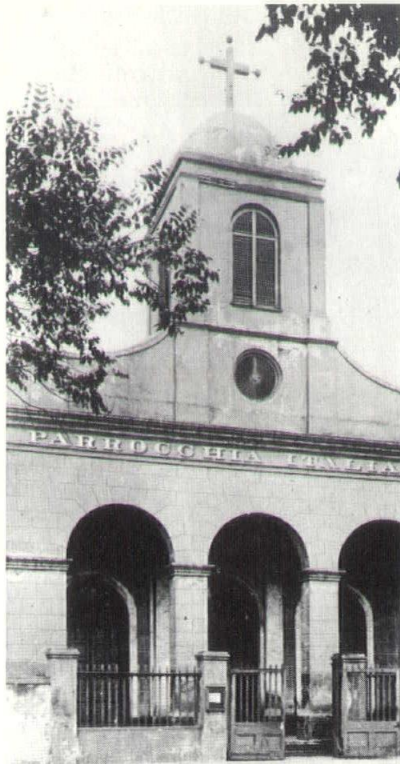
Ceil the interior of the chapel with thin boards or in plaster, arched in the form of a vault.

The two rooms and peristyle shall be coated in stucco with plaster cornice.

Paint with oil paint in three coats all the wood work and the ceiling if it is in planks.

For all the work mentioned in the present specification, the whole done

(Continued on page 14)



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THE MORTUARY CHAPEL

(Continued from page 13)

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G. & G.

According to an entry made at the time in one of the Cathedral's marriage registers, on October 10, 1826, the cross that was to be used on the altar of the new chapel was blessed and dedicated in the name of St. Anthony of Padua, one of the patrons of the Franciscan-Capuchin order and patron saint of Pere Antoine, the pastor of the Cathedral. The following afternoon "at half past five they proceeded in procession to the blessing and laying of the first memorial stone in the said Chapel with all solemn ceremonies . . . conducted by the very Reverend Father, friar Antonio de Sedella, parish priest of the said Church of St. Louis, accompanied besides by its priests and ministers, as well as by the Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council, together with the President and Wardens of the said Church."

In less than a year the chapel was completed and on August 26, 1827 the wardens wrote to the City Council informing them that, "in accordance with the desire that the City Council has often expressed, that the bodies of the deceased might be transported directly from their lodgings to the

cemetery instead of bringing them from all sides of the city to the center where the Church of St. Louis is situated, in order to perform for them the funeral office, and from there to bear them to the cemetery, thus increasing the danger of infection that some of these corpses might communicate. The Wardens of the said church, wishing to contribute as far as possible to the salubrity of our city, have had an obituary chapel built near the cemetery, on the lot that your Corporation expressly sold at a modest price, where the funeral service can henceforth be given to the dead with the same decency as in the Parochial church.

It is my duty to announce to you that this Chapel is nearly completed and that there must be a police regulation on the part of the City Council in order that it might completely fulfill its objective . . ."

As a result, the Council at its session of September 25, 1827, adopted a resolution that, from the first of November next "it is forbidden to transport and to expose at the Parochial Church of St. Louis, any dead body, under pain of a fine of fifty dollars". On October 1, 1827 the contractors, Gurlie and Guillot informed the Churchwardens that "the building intended to serve as a Chapel is entirely completed," and requested the balance

due them, requesting that it be paid in three notes, at six, twelve and eighteen months.

The new chapel was immediately put to its intended use, being dedicated by Père Antoine on December 27, 1827. It was described in 1835 by Joseph Holt Ingraham as "as large white stuccoed building, burdened by a clumsy hunch-backed kind of tower, surmounted by a huge wooden cross . . . I gained the portico where I had a full view of the interior, (in) which there was neither pew nor seat . . ." The domed tower and cross still existed when the chapel was photographed by George F. Mugnier in the 1880's, after it had become an Italian Parish Church in 1875. The Philippine Dominicans administered its affairs from 1903 until 1915 and probably removed the old dome and cross and replaced them with the present spire shown in William Woodward's engraving of 1912. When the new church of St. Anthony of Padua was built in the 1920's, the name of this oldest church building in New Orleans was changed to "Our Lady of Guadalupe". It has been in charge of the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate since 1918, who enlarged and remodelled it in 1952, Diboll and Kessels being the architects.

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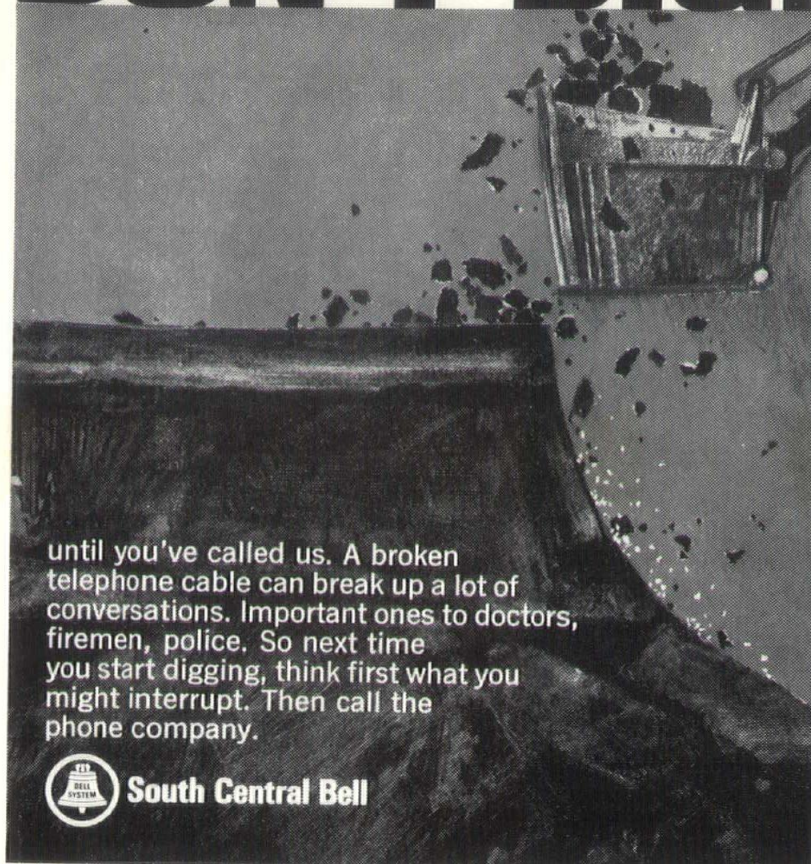
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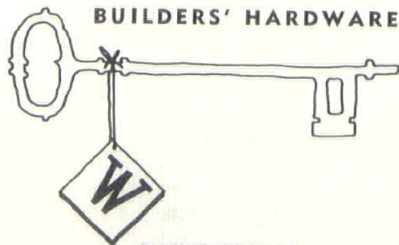


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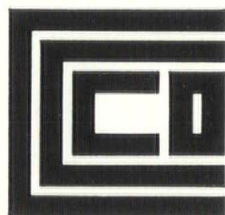
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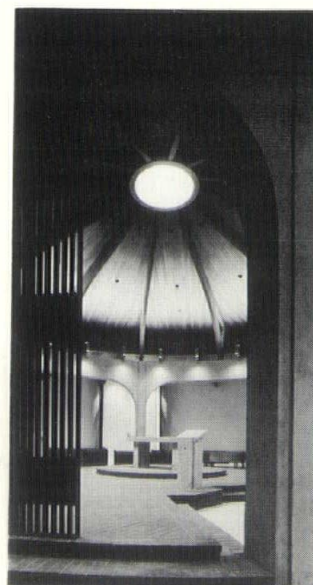


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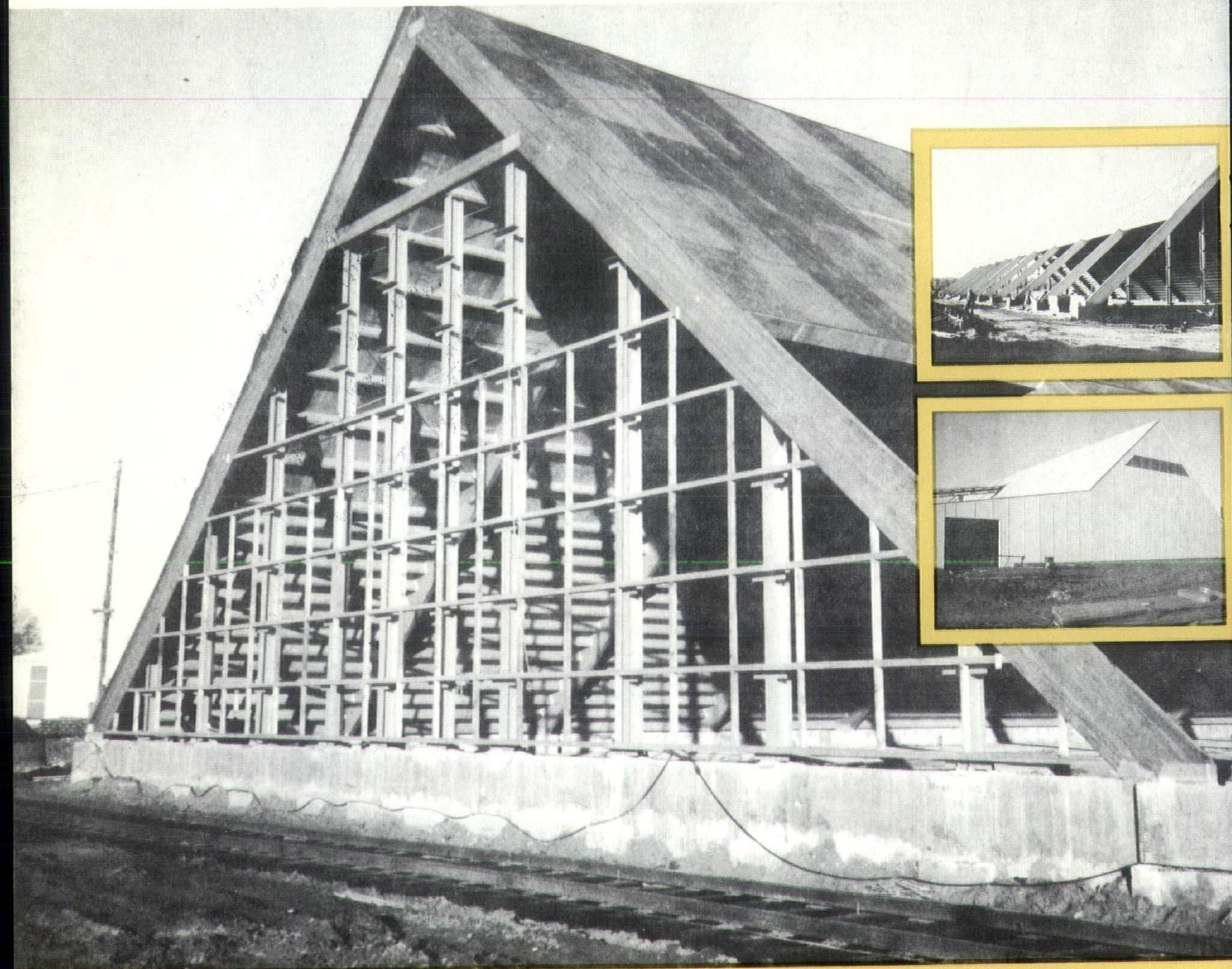
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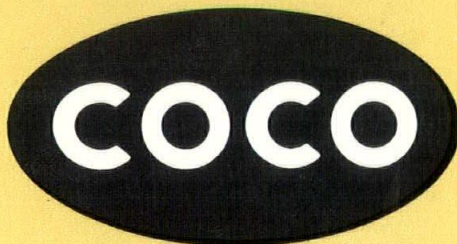
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