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VOL. 18 NO. 5



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Cover: Zion Lutheran Church. Architects: Armstrong, Torseth, Skold and Rydeen. Photographer: Ralph Berlovitz.

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Architecture Minnesota is published bimonthly by AIA Minnesota. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Board of Directors or the editorial staff of Architecture Minnesota. Editorial offices: International Market Square, 275 Market Street, Suite 54, Minneapolis, MN 55405. (612) 338-6763. FAX: (612) 338-7981. Note to subscribers: When changing address please send address label from FAX: (612) 338-7981. Note to subscribers: When changing address, please send address label from recent issue and your new address. Allow six weeks for change of address. Subscription rate: \$15 for one year, \$2.75 for single issue. Postmaster: Send address change to *Architecture Minnesota*, International Market Square, 275 Market Street, Suite 54, Minneapolis, MN 55405. Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, MN, and additional mailing offices. Advertising and Circulation: *Architecture Minnesota*, International Market Square, 275 Market Street, Suite 54, Minneapolis, MN 55405. (612) 338-6763. Printed by St. Croix Press, Inc. Color separations by Riverside Color. Copyright 1992 by *Architecture Minnesota* (ISSN 0149-9106).

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1992



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AM sketches

A Guthrie makeover

For the birds



Nearly 30 years after making its debut in Minneapolis and revolutionizing regional theater in the Midwest, the Guthrie Theater, designed by Ralph Rapson, will be remodeled by Hammel Green and Abrahamson. The most visible change will be to the front facade. The architects propose extending the north

wall outward by 8 feet to increase the lobby area and replacing the asymmetrical facade with a clear-glass curtain wall of square panels. A dining patio will span the front. Primary lobby remodeling will include replacing carpeting, repainting, and adding a permanent food-and-beverage counter. Within the auditorium, the architects will reduce the 210-degree seating arc that wraps around the thrust stage to 180 degrees, eliminating approximately 100 seats that have been plagued with poor sight lines.

The remodeling is part of the Guthrie's \$25 million fund-raising campaign, which allocates \$5 million to facility improvements. Phase one entails revamping public spaces, with a future phase slated to upgrade backstage spaces. Construction is expected to begin this winter. Completion is scheduled for May 1993.

Renewing the Orpheum

With the renewed State Theatre's marquee now shining bright on Hennepin Avenue, the historic Opheum Theater quickly will follow suit with a major overhaul by Hammel Green and Abrahamson. "Our primary assignment is to enlarge the stage, dressing rooms and orchestra pit to accommodate [first-run, Broadway shows]," Michael Neimeyer of HGA says. New rigging, lighting and sound equipment will be installed for the staging area, as well as seating for the disabled. Other interior refurbishing will proceed according to available funding, says Dick Vic-tor of the Minneapolis Community **Development Agency, which owns** the Orpheum and State theaters. Both houses are managed by Historic Theatre Management Group, which hopes that the combined facilities will complement each other for large- and small-scale shows. Construction is expected to begin in late-October. **Bette Hammel**





Birds heading south for the winter will leave behind some snazzy birdbaths this year. The American Institute of Architects St. Paul Chapter, once again, has proven that bathing is serious business, especially if you're a bird. In the second annual "Fontis Aves" [birdbath] competition, **Stephen Paetzel of Ellerbe** Becket took first place for his stained-glass bath sitting atop a wooden base, which is supported by brass rods (pictured). Second place went to Matt Frisbie of Winsor/Faricy Architects, and third place to Tad Gloeckler of Ralph **Rapson & Associates. The** birdbaths were judged for their use of material, creativity, and function. The distinguished panel of judges, however, did not include a single bird. Something's fowl about that.

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St. Paul heritage



Old Main at Hamline University was restored by BWBR Architects.

St. Paul continues to snatch laurels for preserving its history, as six awards were given at the annual St. **Paul Heritage Preservation ceremo**ny this year. Among the restored buildings honored were the Italianate Stilwell-Hankey house, by Bill O'Connell: the 1880 Old Main Tower and Roof, by BWBR; the 1887 **Czecho-Slovak Protection Society** Hall, by Sokol Minnesota; and the **Mounds Park All-Nations Magnet** School, by Winsor/Faricy of St. Paul. Also highlighted was the Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhood Association for the restoration of a turn-ofthe-century house at 608 Bates. The Preservation committee gave a "vote of confidence" to a group of concerned citizens and preservationists who helped save the Hamline Playground Building near Snelling and LaFond avenues. Finally, Judy McLaughlin was honored for her contribution to preserving St. Paul heritage. She helped write legislation for historic districts in the 1970s and helped push the Minnesota Historical Society to buy the James J. Hill **House on Summit Avenue.**

The second annual preservation awards are sponsored by the St. **Paul Heritage Preservation Commis**sion and the American Institute of Architects St. Paul Chapter.

Hot off the presses

It's not surprising to find a glossy coffee-table book on the work of a major American artist. It is unusual when the artist is Stillwater, Minn., potter Warren MacKenzie. But Warren MacKenzie: An American Potter (Kodansha International) is no ordinary coffee-table production. Sure, you get the history of MacKenzie's life and work, but it's told by architect David Lewis, whose narrative betrays the warmth of his 40-plus-year friendship with MacKenzie, as well as his designerly interest in the aesthetics of his craft. Gleaming full-page shots of MacKenzie's pottery, documented by Twin Cities photographer Peter



Lee, are juxtaposed with photos of a clay-spattered MacKenzie demonstrating the creation of his signature forms. Eschewing museums and galleries that keep his pottery out of the hands and price ranges of ordinary collectors, MacKenzie prefers to sell his work at modest sums from an elegantly simple showroom outside his rural studio. The book is particularly noteworthy for its authentic touches: photographs of the tranquil woodland path that links McKenzie's rural compound of house, showroom and studio, or the closing note-a full-page shot of the curled, hand-lettered directions to new visitors tacked by the showroom entrance.

Adelheid Fischer

Monumental Minnesota: A Guide to **Outdoor Sculpture features 620** pieces in some 150 communities around Minnesota. Author Moira F. Harris describes the state's wellknown sculptors and their nationally recognized art. The works are conceived in bronze and granite, concrete, Cor-Ten steel, Fiberglas, and wood. Included in the survey are such temporary sculptures as ice and snow monuments, as well as one of the



in 1857. Harris details the private and public sponsorship of outdoor art, beginning with the Civil War and continuing through the WPA-Great Depression era and "Celebrate Minnesota 1990." Monumental Minnesota is published by Pogo Press, St. Paul, which emphasizes regional books about art and popular culture.

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Mies's landmark Barcelona Pavilion reconstructed

By Bette Hammel

In a city famous for the swirls, squiggles and flourishes of Antoni Gaudi's early-20thcentury architecture, Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion stands out like a beacon for its stark simplicity. Designed as Germany's entry for the 1929 International Exposition in Barcelona, the sleek, rectangular structure of glass and marble was revolutionary for its time and was soon regarded as a masterpiece of the International Style. After the Expo, the building was dismantled and put in storage. Six decades later, the parts were found, and in 1986 faithfully reconstructed on the original site in honor of the 100th anniversary of the architect's birth.



Located on the lower slopes of Mt. Montjuic (site of the Olympic games), the pavilion clearly illustrates Mies's vision of "less is more" with its interlocking linear planes of green marble, golden onyx and gray-tinted glass. The



flow of space is held within clamplike walls while slender, steel columns support the flat roof. A long, low structure, it sits pristinely on a travertine podium overlooking a reflecting pool lined with black glass and containing perfectly matched stones. Alongside the pool, Mies designed a travertine bench for visitors to enjoy the surroundings. Unfortunately, today an uninspired '70s building blocks the view of the colorful Montjuic mountains, but tourists still can see the huge Palau Nacional, now being restored to its late-'20s grandeur.

The pavilion's interior space also is a work of art, channeling space between separate vertical and horizontal planes.

"It just flows," says Ted Butler, an architect with Hammel Green and Abrahmson, who has been an ardent admirer of the

pavilion since he was an architecture student. Indeed, the interior spaces literally flow from one to another, leading to a small reflecting pool where a bronze sculpture of a nude by Georg Kolbe is perfectly placed. Mies also designed the pavilion's only furniture—two of his leather-and-chrome Barcelona chairs originally meant to serve as modern thrones for the Spanish monarchs of the '20s, King Don Alfonso XIII and Queen Victoria Eugenia.

In comparison with the neighboring complex of large-scale, conventionstyle buildings used for Barcelona's many trade fairs, Mies's pavilion is minuscule yet inspiring. To see an original structure that changed the whole world of architecture is a moving experience. The architect's concept was so far ahead of its time that looking at it today the pavilion seems to be designed for the century yet to come. Amidst all the trappings of the 1992 Olympics, this elegant little building demonstrates the modernist's basic philosophy: A simple statement of form expresses truth and order. Bette Hammel is a Minneapolis-based writer.

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Winning landscapes

A garden at a women's correctional facility and a conservation study received Honor Awards through the Minnesota Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. The Shakopee Women's Correctional Facility's Garden of Time, co-designed by Tom Oslund of Hammel Green and Abrahamson and Gary Dwyer of California, is a metaphorical design that uses a variety of plant and building materials to suggest man's journey through life. The garden was completed last fall and featured in the March/April 1992 issue of AM.

Also receiving top honors was **Planting for Energy Conservation** in the North, by Peggy Sand, a landscape architect and researcher at the University of Minnesota. Sand's study looked at the unique features of Minnesota's climate and landscape to determine how planting could be used for energy conservation. She determined three primary guidelines that suggested planting shade trees east and west of structures will increase wintersolar gain while retaining summer shade. The study also recommended strategic placement of trees to reduce winter winds, and use of trees to create canopies in neighborhoods to stunt wind and moderate summer temperatures.

Merit Awards went to the Governor's Design Team Community Manual, a guide for communities addressing design issues, edited by Wendy Amundson and designed by Rubin Cordaro Design. Also receiving a Merit Award was the Herman Miller Design Yard in Holland, Mich., by Damon Farber Associates



with Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle. The complex creates a bucolic setting for the office-systems manufacturer, housed in MS&R's agrarianinspired buildings. Finally, the Great Lakes Natural Gas Pipeline Expansion Project: Native Plant Restoration & Visual Screening, by Michelle F. Bissonnette and Braun Intertec Environmental, Inc., won a Merit Award for addressing the landscape issues surrounding the expansion of a pipeline through Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

The competition was judged by a panel comprised of members of the Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.



Landscape Honor Award winners include The Garden of Time (top) and an energy-conservation study (above).

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Aspen gets back to basics

By Eric Kudalis

In its usual eclectic fashion, the Internationl Design Conference in Aspen, held in mid-June, brought together a diverse group of speakers. The 1992 conference, titled "Get Real," was co-chaired by Kenneth Brecher, director of the Children's Museum of Boston; Richard Farson, psychologist, author and educator; Bran Ferren, a designer who works in theater, film, music, product design, architecture and science; and William Stumpf, industrial designer from Minneapolis. "Get Real" followed in the same thematic vein of last year's conference, "Bare Bones," which was a "stripping away of the fat, getting to the heart of the matter," says Nancye Green, vice president of IDCA.

Last year's conference, in fact, stripped away the fat by trimming the budget 60 percent from the previous year. The 1992 conference continued in that lean fashion. Perhaps as a reflection of the country's stagnant economy and increasing concern with social, political and environmental issues, this year's speakers were more "issue" oriented than design oriented. The sense was that designers must address racial and environmental problems because design can help solve them, as much as science and technology can.



"We must see cities as centers of commerce and culture, as the heart and soul of America. If our cities die, then America is doomed." —Rev. Charles R. Stith

One of the week's more inspirational speeches was given by Rev. Charles R. Stith of Boston, who discussed the aftermath of the Los Angeles riots and the disintegration of American cities. For Stith, the plight of our inner cities is linked to "a problem of values that we hold to the 'human family,' not to the 'nuclear family.'" Stith says we need to change the negative image of cities because negativity perpetuates more negativity. "We must see cities as centers of commerce and culture, as the heart and soul of America. If our cities die, then America is doomed." Stith's solution to reviving American cities is as much spiritual as it is pragmatic. "We need to begin to reorient ourselves," he says. "We need to see one another as sacred. We must do this to transform our cities as places of hope, opportunity and dignity. We need to rebuild the public infrastructure in our cities. We need to clean up the environment, and we need investment from the private side. You have to be willing to put something on the line to help change it."

Dalee Sambo, a political activist advocating indigenous human rights, argued that the modern world is threatening to homogenize civilization by failing to recognize the natural rights of the world's diverse cultures. As an Inuit from Anchorage, Alaska, Sambo says designers must try to understand different cultures so that their products reflect the needs and history of the world's vast differences.

Taking the theme "Get Real" quite literally, many speakers analyzed the question of reality itself. Their answers, often, were that we've done a pretty good job of disguising reality, merely distorting the facts to satisfy our own skewed perceptions.

In Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films, Donald Bogle demonstrated that the history of African Americans in cinema is the history of racism and stereotypes.

Continued on page 54



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AM previews

Picturing Hennepin Hennepin History Museum Through September 1992

Hennepin County's diverse urban and cultural environment is the subject of this exhibit, which features approximately 300 photos by local residents who submitted work for the museum's recent photography competition. The images, accompanied by photographers' comments, reflect personal views and perceptions of Hennepin County, illustrating local stories and issues. The museum will include objects from its permanent collection to augment the presentation.

For further information, call (612) 870-1329.

Shared Visions Minnesota Museum of Art Landmark Center Galleries Oct. 4, 1992 to Jan. 3, 1993

The diversity and depth of Native American art and artists is reflected in this exhibition featuring painting and sculpture by prominent contemporary Native American artists, including Minnesotan George Morrison. The exhibition reflects the changing world of the American Indian artist in the 20th century, and is a touring exhibit organized by the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Ariz.

Call (612) 292-4392 for more information.

Gregory Green: New Paintings Anderson & Anderson Gallery Through Oct. 17

This exhibition of new work by St. Paul artist Gregory Green is his first solo show since receiving the Bush Fellowship in 1990. Green used the fellowship money to study and travel throughout Europe. His new work reflects the inspirations

Ninth Annual Antiques Show & Sale International Market Square Minneapolis Sept. 24—27

"Classics of Design" is the theme of this year's antiques show, sponsored by the Decorative Arts Council to benefit the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. The threeday show will feature 36 national dealers highlighting authentic American and European antiques.

Robert Roscoe, a partner with Roark Kramer Roscoe Design and a commissioner with the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, is the featured



This 1850 goblet will be on display at the antiques show.

speaker, who will present a slide lecture on the question, "Is there a Classic Minneapolis House?" Roscoe has worked extensively in restoring homes in Minneapolis's Whittier neighborhood, his most recent project being the Cupola House. Other speakers include Pat Manning-Hanson, an interior designer with Dayton's, and several antiques dealers, who will offer "minilectures" on their specific expertise.

A Bohemian covered glass goblet, circa 1850, which was purchased with portions of funds raised from last year's show, will be on display. The goblet, made of clear glass overlaid with cobalt blue, features an engraved portrait of George Washington.

Admission is \$5. For more information, call the Decorative Arts Council at (612) 870-3039.

he found during his six months abroad. The show is open to the public beginning Saturday, Sept. 12, at 6 p.m. Regular gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 4 p.m.

For more information, call (612) 332-4889.

Minneapolis Walking Tours Various sites Sundays 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Through Oct. 25

The Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission will continue to offer walking tours of historic Minneapolis sites on the fourth Sunday of each month through the fall. On Aug. 23, the tour will lead along the South Ninth Street district, an area noted for its role in Minneapolis's development as an urban center. Sept. 27 will focus on the warehouse district, and Oct. 25 will usher in the winter with a walk through Lakewood Cemetery. Reservations are required.

For more information, contact the Minneapolis Planning Department at (612) 673-2597.

Continued on page 56



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up close

Frank Kacmarcik: The liturgical hand

By Camille LeFevre

In 1947, Frank Kacmarcik designed his first church-Visitation in Minneapolis-thus founding a profession in which he remains an indis-

putable visionary, that of liturgicaldesign consultant. Since then, he has left an imprint on churches throughout Minnesota and the United States. While he won't divulge the number of churches he's designed, preferring to talk "quality rather than quantity," he has, nonetheless, garnered more than 60 honors, including six national AIA awards.

Kacmarcik's role, says Craig Rafferty of Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects of St. Paul, is as "a mediary between the church building committee and the architects. The consultant's responsibility is to take the intangible liturgy-the spirit

of the place, the ritual, and the meanings behind the symbols, all of which must be contained in the architecture-and help the architect interpret them. And he helps the church-building committee understand the ramifications."

Whether he's considering doorknobs and hinges, spaces and materials, vesture or candle thicknesses, Kacmarcik, 72, devotes himself to all aspects of liturgical design and stands firm on his decisions. "When I feel I'm correct, you can move mountains easier than you can move me," he says.

Catholic-church architecture was predicated on basilica or old-cross plans. But after Pope John Paul XXIII convened the first session of Vatican II, the internal character of churches was altered to reflect communal aspects of worship and parishioners' greater participation.

In other words, Rafferty contin-

ues, worship be-

came less passive and "churches

needed to convey that change,

which meant en-

tirely new forms and a new under-

standing of spaces." Many

churches and ar-

chitects went-

and still go-over-

board with this ex-

pressive freedom.

Rafferty adds.

But Kacmarcik,

by consistently es-

chewing what he

calls "churchy

forms" and

"frivolity," never

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aesthetic.



As a liturgical design consultant, Frank Kacmarcik has helped shape church architecture since 1947. St. John's Abbey and church (background), designed by Marcel Breuer, was one of language of the Kacmarcik's earlier projects as a consultant.

According to George Rafferty, with whom Kacmarcik has consulted on more than 15 churches since 1961, Kacmarcik is "a pioneer in the new architectural adventure we have in churches today." Prior to the 1960s, Rafferty explains,

dimension in church design is important, as is conveying a sense of the transcendental and eternal. But, he adds, "the goal for Christians is to communicate [with] God.

Continued on page 56

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AM *insight*

The power of democracy: Through grass-roots efforts, the Minnesota Design Team seeks cures for ailing communities

By Janet Whitmore

"Our community needed someone to draw the pictures so that people could get an image in their minds of what we could look like. We couldn't get past that first step of imagining how things might change."

> Wade Vitalis President Chamber of Commerce Taylors Falls

Drawing pictures and showing people that change is possible are the hallmarks of the 10-year-old Minnesota Design Team (MDT). The MDT is a loosely organized group of design professionals who volunteer at least one weekend a year to help communities plan their future. To date, the MDT has visited 47 Minnesota communities, ranging from Embarrass to the West Broadway neighborhood of Minneapolis. Underlying the MDT effort is a basic assumption that residents have a right to help shape the future of their community-a responsibility to work together to define that future.

The Design Team members are volunteers from all aspects of the profession—architects, landscape architects, interior designers, planners, graphic designers, architectural historians, park-and-recreation specialists, and even anthropologists. Each team is developed in response to the needs of the specific community, whether it's a resort town on the North Shore or a thriving agricultural community in southern Minnesota.

The actual visit begins on a Thursday evening when the **MDT** arrives in town to meet the host families. Friday is spent listening to residents describe their community, both through "official" presentations and at a town meeting that evening. On Saturday, the Design Team synthesizes the information in day-long a charette and creates a series of graphic images that are presented to the community at another town meeting that evening. This is the high

PARK AND TRAIL SYSTEM

Hallock's long-range objectives include tree planting and environmental beautification. Walking trails and river clean-up efforts also were addressed during the design-team visit.

point of the visit. As Sonja Peterson, a resident of Battle Lake puts it, "The Saturday-night presentation provided a turn around, which was a delight to behold. The Design Team members inspired excitement, enthusiasm—and better yet, a commitment by everyone attending."

Commitment is clearly the crucial factor in planning a community's future. The Design Team always offers an implementation strategy, but the community itself must choose to pursue the vision that the team creates. When that happens, the results are remarkable.

South St. Paul is a classic example of the effect that the Design Team can have on a community. Historically, this city has been one of the world's largest stockyards. When Swift and Armour had meatpacking plants along the Mississippi River, jobs were plentiful. But by the late-1970s, that prosperity had disappeared. The plants had closed, the jobs had gone, and the federal government officially designated South St. Paul as "economically depressed." In 1987, the Centennial Celebration began to restore the community's sense of pride. When the Design Team arrived that fall the residents were ready for fresh ideas.

Courtesy Minnesota Design Tea

During the Saturday design charette, the MDT proposed a hypothetical organization called the River Environmental Action Project (R.E.A.P.). As resident and city-council member Lois Glewwe says, "When I think of what that one suggestion has led to in less than two years, I am once again astonished at the amazing dedication and community spirit of South St. Paul. R.E.A.P. was not only established, it has had several major accomplishments."

Together with the city council, R.E.A.P. developed River Walkway along the Mississippi, a boat launch below the Highway-494 bridge, and an extended fishing pier that is in constant use. They've sponsored annual river clean-up efforts and are actively involved in the proposed development of a new marina and housing complex. In short, once South St. Paul realized it had a community vision, the energy to implement that vision was forthcoming.

In a completely different context, the small northwestern community of Hallock offers an equally resounding success story. An international Design Team (seven Canadians and 11 Minnesotans) visited Hallock in April 1989 and developed a series of short- and long-term projects for the community.

Central to Hallock's long-range objective was the need for beautification and environmental develop-



Among Becker's designteam proposals are a civic hub (above) that will help the city maintain a community identity within this fast-growth area near St. Cloud. Plans for reviving South St. Paul (below) envision walking trails with activity-and-exercise areas.



ment. On the basis of information from the town meeting, the Design Team identified tree planting as a priority. The effect was immediate. Within a month of the visit, the Dipple Park Committee prepared a plan and hired a landscape contractor to implement it. Within six months, the community collected funding for the additional planting of "heritage trees" as part of the Celebrate Hallock 1990 activities. Within a year, they began work on their goals for a walking-trail system and a river clean-up project.

One of the most remarkable efforts in Hallock is the collaboration between the city, the Vikingland Trailer Park and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. After the Design Team visit, the owner of the trailer park offered to prepare the ground for tree planting if the city would agree to take care of the trees. At the same time, the Department of Transportation was removing trees from their right-of-way in another part of town. Hallock residents, newly aware of just how important the trees were to their sense of community, approached the agency and asked them to donate the unwanted trees to the city. In turn, the city gave them to the trailer park to continue its beautification efforts.

It is exactly this kind of shared vision that the Design Team strives to encourage. Communities *can* take charge of their own environment. They *can* approach a large state agency such as the Department of Transportation. And they *can* succeed.

The most recent Design Team visit was last spring to Becker, Minn. Unlike most communities visited by the Design Team, Becker enjoys the luxury of having adequate funding for almost any type of project. They have the lowest tax rate in the state

Continued on page 58



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Face value Several years ago as demolition cranes went to work on the old J.C. Penney Building in downtown Minneapolis, the public got a glimpse into the city's architectural past. Beneath that modern facade was the stone and brick of yesteryear. The J.C. Penney store was, much to the public's surprise, actually a composite of several older buildings that had been unified with a bland new face.

Refacing buildings is common, but not always right. The award-winning American Hardware Mutual Insurance Company Building, designed by Thorshov and Cerny in 1956, was stripped of its stainless-steel, marble and glass façade and replaced with an undistinguished, reflective-glass exterior (*Lost Minnesota*, January/February 1991). The building's modernist styling, modeled after such landmarks as Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's 1952 Lever House in New York, was forever lost in the mediocrity of late-'80s, speculative-office development. Thorshov's and Cerny's signature vanished. Other buildings from the '50s and '60s stand to meet a similar fate.

Buildings evolve over time. Clients' needs change. Ownership switches hands. Renovation is inevitable. In this *AM* issue featuring architecture in the public realm, several buildings have been renewed in various ways. They are highlighted because the architects recognize the merit of the original work, while updating for current needs.

Too frequently, however, remodelings can compromise a building's integrity, especially a building of historic or regional significance. Architects should be wary of renovating with a heavy hand. The original architect's voice must remain clear, not supplanted, or we lose the value of our architectural past.

Eric Kudalis Editor



Special delivery

The Minneapolis Post Office addition reclaims a civic landmark

By Sharon Ross

It takes a discerning eye to find the seams where the 1991 addition to the Minneapolis Post Office joins the original building. Designed by Magney and Tusler in 1929, the post office's simple, streamlined architectural forms, graceful proportions and art-deco motifs have been articulated on the new portion with such care that it is difficult to imagine that the building hasn't always been this size and shape.

"We looked back and we realized the existing building embodied the art-deco aspirations to merge art and technology, an aspiration that spoke to the post office's importance to the community in 1929," says Loren Ahles of Hammel Green



and Abrahamson, which designed the addition. "Since it is no less important to the community today, it made sense to focus our design efforts on making the building whole."

Some might describe what HGA did as imitation, but Ahles disagrees. "This was not a submissive act, and we are not doing a cartoon. I would argue we performed a higher act in recognizing the building needed to be one expression, and then using '90s technology to adapt a '30s design, without losing its detail or softening its imagery."

There is an important point to understand. If the post office were being built tody, it wouldn't be where it is. It would be in a suburb, at the in-



Hammel Green and Abrahamson designed a mirror-image addition to the original art-deco Minneapolis Post Office using the same limestone and vertical, streamlined detailing. The original public spaces (left) remain treasures of the deco period.

Shin Koyama



tersection of two freeways to accommodate trucks. But it isn't being built today. It was built in 1929 when mail was moved by rail, so it was put by the rail tracks on the northern edge of downtown. Today, mail moves by truck, the railroad depot has been razed, the tracks have been ripped up, the riverfront has become a park, and the post office is an industrial building trapped in a nonindustrial area-an industrial building, in fact, that needed more room for mail-processing equipment, offices, staff facilities, and a covered loading dock and truck depot.

When the question of expansion arose, it wasn't just a question of whether or not there was space for an addition, but also whether or not such an expansion would contribute to downtown aesthetics. Many public agencies—the Minneapolis Community Development Agency, the city council, the mayor's office, the park board, the U.S. Postal Service, even the Minnesota Historical Society—had a vested interest in the

The carved detailing (top) is actually precast molding, rather than hand-chiseled limestone used originally. The addition nearly doubles the floor plate (right), allowing for more mailprocessing equipment (above right), offices, staff facilities and covered loading dock. A streetlevel loggia (opposite) spans the back, creating a pedestrian walkway facing the Mississippi River and park. HGA had to find.

The solution was a 3story addition above a parking ramp on the river side. Planning the addition involved such major structural issues as creating freespan space for

answers. which

a loading dock and truck depot and providing adequate structural supports for upper floors that would house vibration-sensitive machinery.

Once the functional aspects were solved, the design team focused on what the building should be and say. The addition presented the opportunity to restore the building's civic presence, something that had disappeared in the late-'50s when the front park was lost to new development. With the park's demise, the building's heroic scale had been subdued and the art-deco facade obscured by new construction. This remodeling created the opportunity to reclaim both by turning to the river.

The facade consists of pillars of smooth-faced golden stone soaring upward between vertical bands of windows, both arising from a rusticated, black-granite base. The bands of black-trimmed windows are set back from the pillars, and their decorative mullions and headers flourish with art-deco motifs.

Combined, these elements make the building, which is double its



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

original size, an elegant monolith, its face now turned toward the river

and its north bank. This new view created an awareness that the building needed to do more than just infringe on the river-front park. "It needed to interface with it," Ahles says. However, a no-man's land (once the railroad right-of-way) lay between the building and river, creating a physical and psychological barrier. HGA bridged this "barrier" with a street-level loggia.

Constructed of precast concrete and faced with black granite incised with pronounced horizontal banding, the loggia spans the building's length, providing a harmonious, horizontal base for the verticality of the building's top two-thirds. Visually, the loggia anchors the building to the site. Physically, it energizes the park by inviting people to the building. Its broad arches open to a



spacious arcade that the park board can use for shops, museums and other civic functions, and its pedestrian promenade provides the opportunity for a future pedestrian link between the bridgeheads at Hennepin and Third avenues.

Impressive in scale, clearly visible to the public once again, standing with great assurance on its site, the post office does more than add to the city's aesthetic quality. It embodies it in a human way. Essentially, this building may be a machine inside a decorative box, but oh, what a box it is.

Sharon Ross is a frequent contributor to Architecture Minnesota.

Project: Minneapolis Post Office Addition Architect: Hammel Green and Abrahamson Client: United States Postal Service Contractor: PCL



Banking on tradition

A new bank makes a deposit on familiar German architecture

By Eric Kudalis

Located at a crossroads leading into a small Minnesota town near St. Cloud, the St. Augusta Bank is a singular image on the prairie, and one of the first images that greets visitors entering town. The bank's owners, Robert and Suzanne Meyerson, wanted a structure that would reflect the German-Catholic heritage and traditional ar-

chitecture of St. Augusta when they decided to open a branch facility of their family-owned Bank of Kimball.

To help Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects of St. Paul develop a design for the new bank, the Meyersons presented the architects with photographs of different German-influenced buildings around the state that appealed to them, in particular an old stone church in St. Augusta. Craig Rafferty says that the completed facility borrows "bits and pieces" of

these buildings. The influence of German-style architecture is evident in the brick construction, stout massing and small windows.

At 1,800 square feet, the bank is no larger than an average house. And that, perhaps, is what makes the building remarkable. In the tradition of much of Minnesota's rural architecture, St. Augusta Bank presents strong ar-

chitectural forms and detailing based on a simple program that called for a row of teller windows, offices, a conference room and drive-up window. The architects applied the same care and detailing one would expect for a larger, big-budget building.

Foremost on the architects' minds was the site, a large lot on the edge of town that threatened to swallow the small building in its landscape. To give the bank visual prominence, the architects anchored the building with an octagonal, 2-story-high turret that serves as the conference room. This becomes a visual marker on the highway that welcomes people to town.



Phillip M. James

Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects gave the petite St. Augusta Bank visual prominence on the prairie by anchoring it with a octagonal turret (opposite). The stout massing and careful brick detailing (below) reflect the community's German architectural heritage. Beams create a sturdy interior look (above), while a central skylight lightens the effect. The turret houses the conference room (plan opposite), and offices and teller stations are along opposite walls.



The architects then chose a red, sand-coated brick and green roof to build on the rural tradition, and punctuated the facade with narrow, vertical windows and articulated brick detailing around the front door and dentils.

The interior is as straightforward as the exterior. To increase a sense of spaciousness, the lobby rises to an Ashaped, skylit ceiling that ushers in plenty of sun. Heavy oak beams, posts and trim around windows lend a sturdy, age-old feel established by the brick facade. Exterior

design motifs are repeated inside, particularly in wooden dentils along the teller and check-writing counters.

In almost any small community, a handful of buildings takes center stage as a point of civic pride: the courthouse, church, library, and bank. These are the places every community member uses, where people gather and share experiences. The St. Augusta Bank will remain a point of community pride for decades.

Project: St. Augusta Bank Architect: Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Client: State Bank of Kimball Contractor: W. Gohman Construction Company





Renewing History

Two historic structures break into a new era

By Jeanne Aamodt

Stearns County Courthouse

he heart of law and order in Stearns County, Minn., is the historic county courthouse, built in downtown St. Cloud in 1921. The massive brickand-granite structure stands on a raised public square, visually dominating the city. With steady population growth, bureaucracy eventually burst from the courthouse into several scattered locations.

To consolidate services, the county envisioned a new campuslike government center that saw the addition of several buildings surrounding the old courthouse. But the centerpiece of the campus is the renewed courthouse itself.

Designed by Tolz, King and Day of St. Paul, the Stearns County Courthouse is one of Minnesota's last examples of Beaux-Arts architecture. Its symmetrical form, immense columns and terra-cotta festoons, and dairy-cow heads contradict the moderne and art-deco styles fashionable in the 1920s.

Korsunsky Krank Erickson of Minneapolis was enlisted to update the courthouse while restoring its classic features. "Our task was to bring the past into the present," says Ron Erickson of KKE.

To begin, the architects kept the civil courtrooms and court administration in the original building and moved the high-security criminal courtrooms into a new building across the street. They then began exterior restoration, which included removing roof-top penthouses and installing air-handling equipment in the interior. Steel-sash, multipane windows, once replaced by aluminum windows and metal panels, were reproduced to match original windows. The building's heavygranite base, brick walls and yellow-tile dome were in good shape, but the terra-cotta and stone details needed tuck-pointing and, in some cases, replacement.

Dominating the interior are the rotunda and marble staircase, which rise to a mezzanine and open to a skylit dome. Pink-marble floors, veined black-marble columns, and red-brick ceiling vaults and arches define the space. At the landing hangs an Elsa Jemne oil painting of American Indians on horseback.

Restoring the rotunda included cleaning floors, repairing doors and woodwork, and removing, rewiring and restoring antique light fixtures. To meet building codes, the architects increased the height of the cast-iron railing along the stairs and mezzanine by several inches. KKE added a brass top to the stair railing



The Stearns County Courthouse in downtown St. Cloud is one of the last Beaux-Arts structures built in Minnesota in the early 1920s. KKE's restoration work entailed patching the exterior (above) and restoring splendor to the central rotunda (opposite).



that matches the existing brass on the balconies. They then removed the mezzanine railing, added a concrete base and repositioned it.

KKE's restoration skills moved into high gear in the ceremonial courtroom. Earlier renovations added dropped ceilings and carpeted walls. Preservation specialist Gordon Olschlager of KKE says that they rerouted duct work behind the original plaster ceiling, removed the dropped-ceiling tile and reopened the glass skylight. New painted-acoustical panels resemble plaster-wall molding, and new carpeting is compatible with the original color scheme. Restoration also included cleaning the black-marble wainscoting, and stripping and refinishing the oak furniture. The result is the archetypal American courtroom.

Today, the courthouse is a marriage of old and new. Courtrooms including one that is fully accessible to judges, jurors and lawyers with disabilities—were added. In addition, judges chambers, administration areas, a law library and an office/elevator/rest-room core were built.

The original single-building site has become a multiplex of countygovernment offices—but the courthouse maintains a leading role. The surrounding facilities are background buildings, intentionally modest. This architectural deference has allowed Stearns County to preserve its pedestal of justice and part of its cultural heritage.

Project: Stearns County Courthouse Architect: KKE Associate architect: Grooters Leapaldt Tideman Client: County of Stearns Construction manager: M.A. Mortenson



Detailing was a hallmark of Beaux-Arts design, as seen in the rotunda ceiling (top) and rich marble wainscoting (bottom). KKE rolled back history with the archetypal American courtroom (above) by refinishing the woodwork, cleaning the marble wainscoting and removing a dropped acoustical-tile ceiling.



Renewing History

Earle Brown Heritage Center

Just southwest of the I-694 and I-94 interchange in north-surburban Minneapolis is a piece of Minnesota history that commands a double take. The old Earle Brown farmstead visually defies the standard glass-block buildings of its commercial location. Today the farm functions as a conference-and-banquet center, owned and operated by the city of Brooklyn Center.

The site was used as a farm as early as 1860. The original buildings, including two farmhouses, the foreman's house, hippodrome, water tower and several barns and outbuildings, were constructed between 1875 and 1932. When Earle Brown inherited the farm from his grandfather, Capt. John Martin in 1901, he expanded the cattle- and sheep-raising operations to include one of the finest and largest collections of Belgian and Morgan horses in the nation. The main farm crops were corn, rye, soybeans and oats.

Brown was not only a gentleman farmer, he also was sheriff of Hennepin County, a founder of the Minnesota Highway Patrol and a candidate for governor. In the 1940s Brown donated his land holding to the University of Minnesota, but continued to live on the farm until his death in 1963.

The University soon sold the 560acre farm to developers, and the landscape was divided by roads and highways and conquered by office buildings, hotels and high-rise apartments. The old farmstead complex was purchased by the city of Brooklyn Center in the mid-1980s.

Winsor/Faricy Architects of St. Paul was commissioned to develop a concept that would maintain the rural character of the Brown farm-



stead and enable it to successfully compete with small- and mediumsize convention facilities throughout the Twin Cities.

"The people of Brooklyn Center were very emotional about the Earle Brown farm and there was controversy when we began the project," says John Barbour of Winsor/Faricy. "Some people wanted the place preserved as a living-history museum. But that wasn't a feasible approach for the city; the plan was to help make the farm pay for itself."

Barbour restored the original houses and barn facades and relocated additional outbuildings to face the central farmyard, which is now a green mall with gravel walkways, ponds and perennials. The houses were converted to an 11-suite, bedand-breakfast inn and the barns serve as meeting-and-office spaces. A main public entry/prefunction addition and parking lots were built along the perimeters of the farm.

The main farmhouse. Earle Brown's private residence, retains most of its original architecture, including double-hung windows and interior walls and woodwork. Modernization was limited to the kitchen and baths. The other inn buildings essentially were gutted and rebuilt. However, they are sympathetic to the character of the place, with wood windows, redwood lap siding and trim details. The guest suites are furnished and decorated with Victorian reproductions. The original grape arbor between the houses was enclosed in glass to create a functional, all-season connection for the inn buildings, and an intimate gazebo lounge was added.

Brown lettered his barns "A" through "H." Barns C, D, E and H still exist and have been converted



Bergerson Photograph



The Earle Brown Heritage Center in north-suburban Brooklyn Center was once a 19th-century working farm. Today it hosts small- and medium-size conventions and conferences. Winsor/Faricy Architects maintained the rural character of the multibuilding complex. Original barns (preceding) serve as meeting-and-office space, and the Earle Brown house and several auxiliary houses were converted to bed-and-breakfast lodging (top and above). A new entrance has been added to the original stables (opposite), which are now used as meeting rooms. The building connects with the hippodrome, converted to an exhibition-and-banquet hall. The complex surounds a central farmyard (site plan).



to administrative areas for the conference center and office space for private use. In keeping with the past, Winsor/Faricy left original wood timbers and structure exposed wherever possible. Old outbuildings, including the pump house, also were renovated. What was once known as "Barn G" eventually will be rebuilt to enclose the north end of the green and provide additional office or storage space.

The center's major commercial attraction, the 13,000-square-foot masonry hippodrome, was once a riding hall. Winsor/Faricy has turned the building into a flexible, column-free convention-and-exhibition space with a banquet capacity of 1.000. A full-service kitchen. meeting rooms and storage space were built as a basement under the original structure.

A vaulted glass-and-steel octagon entry with perpendicular glass halls has been added to the hippodrome to provide prefunction and reception space. This modern appendage contrasts with the original wood buildings, but traditional architectural forms have been used to minimize its impact.

"The addition acts as a passageway, or transition, between new and old architecture," Barbour says. "Visitors pass through this space to the original stable and hippodrome buildings and outside onto the green space where they see the restored farm buildings. The noise of the surrounding city all but disappears."

The Earle Brown Heritage Center does not necessarily meet National Historic Landmark regulations for preservation, but Brooklyn Center and Winsor/Faricy have managed to help save the farm. According to the center's sales manager, Mary Jo Browne, reservations for weddings and company meetings are brisk and Christmas parties are being booked two and three years in advance.

Jeanne Aamodt is a St. Paul writer.

Project: Earle Brown Heritage Center Architect: Winsor/Faricy Architects, Inc. Associate architect: Blumentals/ Architecture, Inc. Client: Brooklyn Center EDA Construction manager: Heskin Resource, Inc


Volume II

The expanded Washburn Library offers a cultural center to a Minneapolis neighborhood

By Sharon Ross

The scene is the children's reading room in the new Washburn Community Library. A young mother sits cross-legged on the floor, her son standing behind her, his arms wrapped around her neck while he listens attentively as she reads aloud to him. Another boy has abandoned his picturebook and lies on his back, his attention captured by the colorful mural painted on the ceiling. Still another mother sits on the circular banquette, where she reads aloud to her daughter. who wiggles and squirms along the back of the bench even as she listens to her mother. Architects Francis Bulbulian and Brian Larson of The Leonard Parker Associates smile with satisfaction.

Architects are fond of referring to the details of their designs as a language that speaks to the people who use a building. That being the case, it behooves them to return to their projects from time to time, as Bulbulian and Larson have done, to see what the people hear. "If the



The Leonard Parker Associates added window bays (top), or "gills," to bring in more light. The bays also serve as reading nooks. The original building had aggressive overhangs, which now form a colonnade (below) leading to the entrance. The coppertopped witch's cap (opposite) marks the children's reading area.



building is being used the way you envisioned, then the language of your design is heard," Bulbulian says.

That is why he and Larson take such pleasure in seeing how the children use the library. It is as they envisioned it. The same is true for the new adult wing, where both the reading room and the personal reading bays are in constant use.

Washburn is the busiest of Minneapolis's 14 neighborhood libraries. Since it opened in 1969, the library has become the community's cultural center. By 1990, with 50,000 volumes packed on the shelves, the library clearly had outgrown its home. The expansion was intended to provide seating and space to make people feel welcome and encourage them to linger.

In one sense, the addition grew out of the building's unique site as much as it grew out of the client's needs. Located on Lyndale Avenue between 53rd and 54th streets south, the library overlooks Minnehaha Parkway. "This is a jewel of a setting on one of the most important and attractive corners in the neighborhood," Bulbulian says. "We realized we could make maximum use of it to enhance the library."

The Leonard Parker Associates had a good core building with which to work. The low-slung building was dominated by a massive cantilevered roof set atop clerestory windows. "We decided to incorporate the strong lines of the roof and the strip windows into our design, not only to save money, but also out of respect for the original design and the creative tension produced by that heavy cap floating on glass," Bulbulian says.

This strong roof gave the original building dignity and presence, but its huge overhang also was a drawback. It created such a deep setback for the building, whose walls had no windows at street level, that the library seemed hidden. "By today's standards it seemed withdrawn," Larson says. "We wanted a far different feeling, one of openness, accessibility and welcome."

A copper-roofed, corner rotunda, placed on the building's domi-





Artist Virginia Bradley designed a colorful mural in the children's reading room (right). The original library (shaded area, plan below), around which the architects built the addition (white area, plan below). The children's reading wing is in one corner (upper left of plan), with the adult rotunda in the diagonal opposite (lower right of plan). The circulation desk (opposite top) is at the center, flooded with natural light from the skylight. The copper-roofed adult reading rotunda (opposite center) offers large windows, a gesture of openness to the community. A sunburst ceiling pattern highlights the adult reading room (opposite bottom).



LYNDALE AVENUE

nant northeast corner overlooking the parkway, is the genesis of that openness. In proportion, scale and shape, this round room (its walls composed of tall windows and brick columns) adds visual importance to the building and opens it to the community. This is the new adult reading room. At night, when the building is lit, it is a lantern in the community. Even in the day the classical tower speaks to the community, its shape recalling the old water tower. It brings the building and its neighborhood into direct contact with one another. Those inside can see out. those outside can see in.

This open quality is repeated throughout the new building, particularly in the round bays along the parkway facade and in the glass gills along the front, which create individual reading bays overlooking busy Lyndale Avenue. Also quite airy and open is the new children's wing, where windows flow into and around a smaller round tower—the children's picture-book reading room—topped by a copper witch's cap.

The two copper-roofed towers flank the building like bookends. Inside, both vaulted ceilings are painted with designs that accent their importance-a fairy-tale mural in the children's room, a celestial sunburst in the adult reading room. The rectangular building between them links the children's and adult spaces with a logical sequence of steps. The eve flows unobstructed between intimate, low-ceilinged areas such as the teen lounge and periodical room, and celebratory, highceilinged spaces such as the reading rooms and circulation desk. A skylight in the center floods the circulation area with light.

As much as the architects sought a contextual design that would merge the old and new, they also sought to orchestrate a design of rich detailing, something the original building lacked. That decorative vocabulary is seen in the materials and detailing of the reading rooms. It also is seen throughout the building, in such design elements as the wrought-iron fretwork on the exterior, the brickwork design embedded in the walkway, the open-bookmotif tiles that cap pillars, the patterns in the interior brickwork, the stained-glass insets inside, and vertical incising that accents the interior columns and bookshelves.

Most striking is the harmony be-





tween old and new. The lines of the original roof and clerestory windows are extended around the building so smoothly and effortlessly that it's impossible to tell where new and old meet. In the same spirit, the building's functional aspects are given such humanistic expression that the library seems more like a living room than a public building. That is the feeling that was sought from the beginning, and it has been achieved.

Sharon Ross is a frequent contributor to Architecture Minnesota.

Project: Washburn Community Library Architect: The Leonard Parker Associates Client: Minneapolis Public Library Contractor: Sheehy Construction Co.





Prairie Gothic

A new church invigorates the suburban landscape

By Bruce N. Wright

The Wooddale Church, a nondenominational, nonliturgical, suburban congregation in Eden Prairie, Minn., believes that the physical setting for worship is not called a church but a worship center. In the congregation's thinking, it is the people that make the church; the building is merely the space where worship takes place. With this in mind, Bentz/Thompson/Rietow Architects designed a new worship center that shifts emphasis from the religious setting to the people and the ceremony-the service and its music-and expresses a sense of frugality in a stark, chaste design of white plaster walls and clear-finished. light-wood trim.

"We wanted to relate the new worship center to traditional church architecture in its verticality without literally quoting Gothic architecture," says Milo Thompson, principal-in-charge of design. "The congregation wanted a space that was the very opposite of Gothic—often characterized by dark, mysterious interiors—and therefore we have created a bright, white interior to reflect the spirit of this particular church."

The sanctuary is a marvel of engineering that seats 2,000 (more than Minneapolis's Orchestra Hall), yet remains an intimate place. The central chancel, a column-free space with clear sight lines of more than 85 feet, evolved from the geometry of an original church building constructed between 1984 and '85. The interior height is 70 feet from the floor to the base of a central triangular skylight. Thompson started with the skewed grid from the existing building, then generated a simple yet elegant spatial arrangement around a large triangle with rectangles on each side. Trapezoids fill the spaces at the corners to create a hexagon-shaped building of unequal sides.

Material choices also were dictated by the earlier building. Brick is a sandy red, metal trim is dark brown and architectural details such as string courses to mark levels, corbeled arch windows and metal-framed windows—are repeated from the 1985 wing.

The first phase of building, completed in 1984, contained a multipurpose worship center (since remodeled for large-group activities), offices, classrooms and nursery facilities. A second phase in 1985 added more classrooms and offices. a gymnasium, a shower-and-locker area, and additional parking. Phase III (the Bentz/Thompson/Rietow-designed worship center) was completed in 1990 and several additional phases will see the finishing of the lower level of Phase III. the expansion of educational spaces, a new chapel, and still more parking.

As the client had a major commitment to fine acoustics (a consequence of the nonliturgical emphasis), the main worship space is designed for a variety of processional movements, and multiple entries were provided especially for the 125-member choir. Not surprisingly, more than any other single element, the pipe organ is the focal point of the chancel, and special care was given to the interior surfaces and volumetric configuration to create the ideal acoustic space for organ and singing voice.

The pipe organ, designed by Visser-Rowland Associates of Houston, Texas, is a spectacular construction of 6,294 flamed copper, wood and tin pipes designed on classical 18thcentury Dutch principles of balance and symmetry, and incorporates a number of subtle Christian symbols in its arrangement. The pipes are grouped in bundles of three principal stops to represent the Trinity (a symbol repeated throughout the building and most notably represented by the triangle of the space itself). The center tower of pipes and the horizontal copper trumpet pipes serve to form a huge cross.

Besides the obvious cross at the peak of the roof-top spire, Thompson also alludes to traditional Gothic churches in his design of the supports for the spire. A central triangular cage of painted standard-steel shapes, is buttressed by more steel channels at the three corners, and a lighter two-part assembly of steel shapes brings the spire to a height of just under 200 feet. The steel is painted a minty green in anticipation of the color of the copper roof when its patina is fully mature.

Thompson's use of classical church forms-the stepped-basilica form with clerestory windows on the three arms of the triangle; the narrow, vertical Gothic windows; and the strong, pyramidal massing of the building-makes for a powerful symbolic presence that asserts itself on the landscape much as the churches of medieval France marked the land. Likewise, the blank brick-end walls inset with Gothic-arched niches and the blocky copper-clad triangular main volume pierced with narrow windows make for an elemental composition with lasting impact.

Bruce N. Wright is editor of IN-FORM Design Journal and a contributing editor of Architecture Minnesota.

Project: Wooddale Church Worship Center Architect: Frederick Bentz/

Milo Thompson/Robert Rietow, Inc. Client: Wooddale Church Contractor: Adolfson & Peterson



Architect Milo Thompson alludes to Gothic architectural forms in the steeple topping the Wooddale Church Worship Center (preceding), in which a triangular cage of steel tubes is buttressed by additional steel channels. The main sanctuary (opposite and above) is a column-free, 70-foothigh space that seats 2,000. The pipe organ is made of 6,294 flamed copper, wood and tin pipes, and is based on traditional 18th-century Dutch principles of organ design.







The fortified hill

A small-town church reinterprets the vernacular with expressive forms

By Eric Kudalis

The Zion Lutheran Church outside Buffalo, Minn., is a striking combination of architectural forms and patterns. Designed by Chris Monson of Armstrong, Torseth, Skold and Rydeen, the structure reinterprets ancient Christian tradition on a midwestern prairie.

Biblically, Zion was the "fortified hill" in ancient Jerusalem, the site of Solomon's temple. The church's design reflects the concept of fortification, most evident in a 38-foot-



Ralph Berlovitz

high wooden cross emblazoned on a metal, shieldlike panel on the building's front facade. Capping the church is a galvanized-metal pyramid, the "hill" of Zion.

Biblical references aside, the Zion Lutheran Church is an important addition to Buffalo's architectural roster, where a more conservative approach might have dictated a traditional steeple church. The architects credit the congregation with being open to fresh ideas, allowing them to create a structure that does, indeed, reflect the landscape. "The thought of the 15-person, design-review com-

mittee was modern, and it liked what Chris [Monson] brought out here," says Craig Hinrichs of ATS&R.

Zion Lutheran Church was pressed for space when it enlisted



The Zion Lutheran Church, designed by Armstrong, Torseth, Skold & Rydeen, is a striking play of forms, materials and textures (above and left), in which brick, stucco, heavy timber and galvanized steel, common materials in rural construction, are used in highly stylized ways.



A shieldlike cross-and-bell tower marks the front facade (above). A smaller cross and shield are repeated along the main entrance at the side (right). A checkerboard ceiling in the sanctuary (opposite top) of contrasting red oak and ash reflects the checkerboard exterior-brick detailing. The sanctuary seats 520 (opposite bottom). The new facility includes 19 classrooms, as well as a library, public gathering space, youth room, and offices.



ATS&R to design a new building. The congregation especially needed more classrooms for Sunday-school classes, which were spilling into a rented elementary school. Parking in the downtown-Buffalo location also was a problem.

The new building has provided the congregation plenty of elbow room, with 29 classrooms, a reception area, kitchen, library, offices, youth room, and sanctuary for approximately 520. The architects designed the building to accommodate future expansion, a wise decision because the church reports adding 120 members a year since moving in several years ago.

Though the emblematic front cross may pick up on biblical references-and the cluster of geometric forms defining different functions is a bit Gehry-esque—the church is firmly rooted on its midwestern site. The exterior is sheathed in brick and stucco, its palette tied to the tones of the earth and clay. Patterns along the different structural components recall plow furrows, field bands, and checkerboard crop land. The cross and shield also carry a checkerboard pattern with contrasting galvanized-metal panels. The architects note that all the materials-brick, corrugated metal, timber-are common rural-construction items.

ATS&R continued the land imagery inside with a dropped ceiling of red-oak and ash plywood, forming a checkerboard pattern from the lobby through the sanctuary. The sanctuary itself is clean and light, almost Scandinavian in feel. The room angles toward the altar and choir. Light filters in through clerestory windows and a pyramidal skylight above the altar.

The church, which won an AIA Minnesota Paper Architecture award in 1989, has an expressive, sculptural quality. At first glance, the building may seem too eclectic for its setting, but close inspection reveals a respect for the location and users. This is not design for design's sake. Rather, this is a fresh interpretation of familiar vernacular and religious ideas about liturgical architecture.

Project: Zion Lutheran Church Architect: Armstrong, Torseth, Skold & Rydeen Client: Zion Lutheran Church Contractor: Winkelman Building Corp.







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Concrete facsimile The stone carver's art may not be lost. but it is beyond the reach of most modern construction budgets. In designing a matching addition to the downtown-Minneapolis post office, Hammel Green and Abrahamson needed an economical way of duplicating the ornately detailed stone panels that crown the building's window slots. They called on the precast-concrete fabricators at Spancrete, Inc. to devise a method of making field impressions of the existing carvings. The process involved applying a release agent and then up to 30 coats of latex rubber to six existing panels. These forms were made rigid by a 4-inch, handpacked layer of plaster and straw.

When dried, the forms were sent to Spancrete's Osseo, Minn., plant, where the 64 panels required for the addition were cast. Steel weld plates for attaching to the building's frame were easily cast into each panel.

The limestone used for the post office's carvings is originally a softgray that gradually turns golden after exposure to the air. Spancrete's concrete-mix design incorporated colored cement and crushed limestone to approximate the stone's fully weathered look. HGA explored the option of hand carving, but found that 64 castings could be made for the price of only two authentically carved panels.

Bill Beyer



The architects matched the artistry of the original stone carving on the downtown post office by creating cast moldings for precast panels (above). Except for the slight difference found only with the patina of age and weathering, the precast duplicates are identical (top).

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The historic Stillwater Bridge provides a scenic view of the St. Croix River and valley area.

The picturesque and historic city of Stillwater, Minn., long has been a crossing point over the St. Croix River into Wisconsin. The current bridge built in 1931 still gives motorists the feeling for the drama and difficulty of crossing the wide expanse of a western river. Driving through the trusses creates a pleasant rhythm and allows a close and sparkling view of the scenic St. Croix. It is the vertical lift span, however, that gives this bridge such an important place in history-it is one of only two remaining vertical lift roadway bridges in Minnesota and few others remain in regions beyond.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is known as a "Waddell and Harrington vertical lift" bridge after the engineers that designed it. Two towers carry a 140foot span to a height of 50 feet above the roadway. The bridge is in good condition and could continue to serve for decades if the river and road traffic weren't combining to create unusual congestion at the bridge.

The Stillwater Bridge may become a victim of competing historic, economic and environmental interests. The traffic waiting to cross the bridge to Wisconsin can back up for hours on summer weekends so that attendant fumes, vibration and congestion are compromising the structural integrity of historic buildings and the pedestrian quality of a small river town. The Minnesota Department of Transportation, the city of Stillwater, and a coalition of other affected communities all support a new bridge. A number of environmental groups, however, have taken strong stands against the construction of a new bridge across a waterway within the Wild and Scenic **Rivers Act.**

Little attention has been given to the fate of the old bridge if a new one is built. The D.O.T doesn't want to own two bridges. Stillwater owns parkland on the other side of the river, but operating a lift bridge could be an expensive, long-term proposition for a small community. Any use of federal funds would bring the old bridge before the National Parks Service for review by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. If a new bridge is built, environmentalists want the old bridge torn down so only one structure will compromise the view.

The Stillwater Bridge will not be torn down soon, but decisions now may seal the fate of this historic structure and leave no alternatives in the future. Care must be taken to ensure that the bureaucratic "burning of bridges" doesn't destroy a rare and real bridge.

Steven Buetow

Award Winning Designs That Fit Your Life-style



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Continued from page 13

Such distorted views generate further racism and misinformation. Bogle says. Cynthia Fuchs Epstein. a professor of sociology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. referred to "selective perception" in her speach Deceptive Distinctions: Getting Real About Gender Differences. She says that "by focusing on the differences between men and women rather than similarities, we further polarize the gender gap." Like Rev. Stith, she stresses that we must focus on our bonds as a human race if we are to survive. Journalist Christopher Hitchens told about the lack of information and honesty in the press. "The system of deception is a world of illusions that has been designed by ourselves." He condemns the press for failing to dig deeply into the issues, allowing the official statement to suffice. For instance. he says "the press has given the Reagan-Bush era the 'presumption of innocence."" He says we often find out about things too late. and even though truth and reality always will break in, "we will continue to build defenses against them."

If anyone knows what reality is, then it's surely Bill McKibben, who contributed to the "Talk of the Town" column for The New Yorker and recently published The Age of Missing Information. McKibben taped approximately 2,000 hours of programming on 93 cable-television stations to ascertain reality through the TV screen. With a barrage of advertising proclaiming new-andimproved this or that, television distorts reality by telling people what they think they need and want rather than what they really need or want. McKibben asks, "When is enough enough?" When do I have enough potato peelers, juicers, smokeless ashtrays, and new-andimproved detergent? A thorough review of 93 stations reveals a numbing monotony.

For Mary Catherine Bateson, a professor of anthropology and English at George Mason University and president of the Institute for Intercultural Studies in New York City, reality is a matter of perception. "Reality is constructed individually and socially," Bateson says. "The way people organize their experiences varies from place to place—experiences are based on personal interpretations."

Turning more directly to design and reality, Katherine Dillon, director of broadcast graphics for ABC News, traced the history of television graphics. With Desert Storm. Dillon says television graphics "reached a milestone. The graphics really were dynamic. We were able to follow the scenario of the war using graphics, using maps, trying to go where the cameras couldn't go." In many ways, Dillon's presentation was the most disturbing, and certainly drew the most response from the crowd. Dillon seemed to be unaware of the dispiriting fact that Desert Storm was also a milestone because it was the first "prime-time" war. The slick graphics may have helped elucidate certain facts, but they also helped popularize and commercialize the war by showing spiffy charts and dazzling special-effects video, rather than showing us the blood and death that is the reality of war.

The success of the Aspen Design Conference depends every year on the quality of speakers and their presentations. This year's group proved provocative, challenging us to consider issues of race, environment and politics. Workshops and small-group discussions at Cafe Réal allowed speakers and conference attendees to explore topics further. If there was any grumbling about the success or failure of the conference, it was that speakers often focused too heavily on the political and social agenda. Designers. surely, cannot design in isolation; they must be aware of the world around them. Perhaps next year's conference can demonstrate a stronger tie between politics and design. AM

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AIA Minnesota Centennial Exhibit Various sites Through 1992

The art of architectural drawings continues in this traveling exhibit sponsored by AIA Minnesota. Organized as part of the society's yearlong, 100th-birthday celebration, the exhibit includes drawings by some of the state's most influential architects, representing a variety of building types, styles and techniques. Among the hidden treasures are buildings never realized—pure fantasy on paper-and still others long ago razed.

For further information about the exhibition schedule and locations, call the AIA Minnesota offices at (612) 338-6763. AM

up close Continued from page 17

We're pilgrims on earth. And that should be expressed, without propaganda, but with form and light."

As examples of this aesthetic, Kacmarcik refers to Shaker objects, which, with their compelling purity of form, "look like they could contain holy water or consecrated oils." And he finds inspiration in the humble character of barns and the utilitarian aspects of warehouses. Similarly, because a church houses a community of God's people within a given region, Kacmarcik says, "the church should be the first house among houses. Within should be this poetry of light, this simplicity. The architecture should not call attention to itself. And all the furnishings should look like they've been blessed, or annointed."

As a liturgical-design consultant, Kacmarcik is well-studied in religious art, architecture and theology. He has compiled one of the world's foremost libraries on liturgical art and architectural history. A native of St. Paul, Kacmarcik studied art at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and continued at the Academie de la Grand Chaumiere and the Centre d'Art Sacre in Paris. In 1950, he was appointed professor of art at St. John's University at Collegeville, Minn., where he assisted Marcel Breuer in building St. John's Abbey. In 1954, Kacmarcik left St. John's to pursue a career as a full-time consultant in church design, printing and graphic arts. In 1988, he returned to St. John'swith his library-to enter monastic life. Recent design projects include collaborations with Rafferty, as well as with Ted Butler and Curt Green of Hammel Green and Abrahamson.

Because he's engaged by the client prior to the selection of the architect and the building committee, Kacmarcik has a hand in choosing his "collaborators." The architect, the "form giver," must demonstrate a sensitivity to environments, light and such materials as unpolished granite, wood, cement block and brick, which convey a permanence and durability Kacmarcik intends the overall design to impart. Kacmarcik guides the design by critique and discussion.

He challenges church-building committees to steer clear of "visual noise," which he says occurs when committees want to "warm it up" with motel patterns, and browns and greens and blues. . . I like architecture to have spaces, even single walls that are silent. The human mind is just cluttered with garbage. We need places in nature, in buildings, that allow us to unwind."

More than 40 years of knowledge. expertise and conviction accompany Kacmarcik to a church-design project, Craig Rafferty says. "Frank gives the committees his recommendation, he will explain it and argue for it, and he will create such a logical picture that it's very difficult to refute. Short of that, he'll insist on it. He will not compromise or sacrifice anything related to art, which is what has brought him tremendous success and respect."

Camille LeFevre is a contributing editor to Architecture Minnesota. AM

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insight

Continued from page 21

and a generous corporate neighbor in NSP. For the design professionals accustomed to restricted budgets, this seemed like a rare opportunity.

The reality, of course, was that the availability of funding made little difference to the process. Becker is caught in a strong development corridor between St. Cloud and Minneapolis. Change is inevitable, whether or not the community chooses to participate. The Design Team's goal was to provide a process that would empower the community to shape that development to meet its own needs. The biggest challenge was to encourage residents to work collaboratively and to think about their future as a community. Although it's still too early to evaluate the effect of the MDT visit on Becker, it appears the town is beginning to utilize a communitybased process that reflects the needs and hopes of all its residents. There is much discussion about the decision-making process, much controversy about the original "downtown" of Becker, and clearly a sense of excitement about the future of the community.

In many ways, this communitybased, grass-roots process embodies some of the basic principles of democracy: Everyone has a right to speak and be heard, and everyone has a responsibility to participate in the life of the community. The power of creating a shared community vision has far more impact on individual lives than anyone ever expects.

Janet Whitmore is a Minneapolisbased writer. AM

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Credits (We encourage you to support the following architects, consultants and suppliers.) **Project: Earle Brown Heritage Center** Location: Brooklyn Center, Minn. Client: Brooklyn Center EDA Architects: Winsor/Faricy Architects, Inc. Associate architects: Blumentals/Architecture, Inc. Principal-in-charge: Richard Faricy Project manager: James Cox Project architect: John Barbour, Janis Blumentals Project designer: John Barbour Project team: (Winsor/Faricy) Will Gerstner, Mark Haugen, Bill Madden; (Blumentals) Ted Arneson, Glen Eckstrom Structural engineers: Mattson/MacDonald, Inc. Mechanical engineers: Nelson Rudie & Associates Electrical engineers: Nelson Rudie & Associates Construction manager: Heskin Resources, Inc. Interior design: Eisenman Anderson Design Landscape architect: Westwood Professional Services Photographer: Steven Bergerson Photography Windows: Marvin Lighting: Manville Holophane, St. Louis Antique Lighting Exterior lighting: Sternberg Whirlpool baths: Pearl Baths Fixtures and fittings: Broadway Collection (Kohler)

Project: Minneapolis Post Office Addition

Location: Minneapolis, Minn. Client: United States Postal Service Architects: Hammel Green and Abrahamson, Inc. Principal-in-charge: Roger Santelman Principal-in-charge of design: Loren Ahles Project architect: Duane Johnson Project manager: Al Wenzel, Mike Pederson Project designer: Steven Miller Project team: Mark Hansen, Tom Oliphant, Kurt Liebenow, Bill Kokotovich, Gail Manning, Nick Marcucci, Bob Rothman, Larry Johnson, Rob Skow, Becky Greco, Ron Syverson Structural engineers: HGA, Inc. Mechanical engineers: HGA, Inc. Electrical engineers: HGA, Inc. Contractor: PCL Interior design: HGA, Inc. Landscape architect: Melchert Block Associates Automative process engineer: Conky Simons Associates Photographer: Shin Koyama Windows: Waysau Metals Stone: Mankato Kasota Stone, Cold Spring Granite Precast Concrete: Spancrete Structure: Steel Frame

Project: St. Augusta State Bank Location: St. Augusta, Minn. Client: State Bank of Kimball Architects: Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects

Principal-in-charge: Craig Rafferty Project manager: Thomas Lillyman Project architect: Thomas Lillyman Project designer: Craig Rafferty and Thomas Lillyman

Project team: Frank Mikutowski, Mike Huber, Tom Cassidy, Lee Tollefson, Kelly Rohmhild, Chip Lindeke, Richard Rafferty, George Rafferty, Rob Rafferty Structural engineers: Van Sicle Engineers Mechanical engineers: Gausman & Moore Engineers Electrical engineers: Gausman & Moore Engineers Contractor: W. Gohman Construction Company Interior design: Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects Landscape architect: Sanders Wacker Wehrman Bergley Photographer: Phillip M. James Windows manufacturer: Caradco Windows supplier: Thompson Lumber Co. Lighting manufacturer: Kalmar Lighting supplier: Bradford & Associates Roofing: Certainteed Corp. Brick manufacturer: Tri-State Brick and Tile Co., Inc. Brick supplier: Olson Brick Sales Flooring: Meadow Brook Carpets, BRE Enterprises, Crossville Ceramics, Kate-Lo, Inc. Casework/Woodwork: Ron's Cabinets, Inc. Crafsman: Hilary Skaja Masonry Banking equipment: Security Products Co. Skylight: Kalwall, W.L. Hall Signage: Metal Arts, Construction Supply, Inc.

Project: Steams County Courthouse

Location: St. Cloud, Minn. Client: County of Stearns Architects: KKE Architects Associate architects: Grooters Leapaldt Tideman Architects Principal-in-charge: Ronald C. Erickson, AIA Project manager: John A. Sagat, AlA Project architect: Gordon A. Olschlager, AlA Project designer: Randall M. Lindemann, AIA Project team: Mark Schwartbauer, Julie Sandler, Todd Young, Peter Sussman Structural engineers: Larson Engineering of Minnesota Mechanical engineers: Nelson-Rudie & Associates, Inc. Electrical engineers: Nelson-Rudie & Associates, Inc. Construction manager: M.A. Mortenson Interior design: Spaces Interior Design (a division of KKE Architects) Judicial/administrative consultant: Walter H. Sobel, FAIA & Associates Photographer: Shin and Joel Koyama Windows: Custom Window Lighting: SPI Lighting, Inc. Roofing: Carlisle Skylight: Fisher Skylights, Inc. Terra cotta: Gladding, McBean & Co. Marble: Grazzini Bros. Ceiling systems/materials: Armstong Casework/woodwork: K.M. Building Co.

Project: Washburn Community Library Location: Minneapolis, Minn.

Client: Minneapolis Public Library Architects: The Leonard Parker Associates Principal-in-charge: Leonard Parker, FAIA Project manager: Francis Bulbulian, AIA Project team: Brian Larson, AIA, Stephan Huh, AIA/CSI, Julie Maple Structural engineers: Meyer Borgman Johnson, Inc. Mechanical engineers: Ericksen, Ellison Associates

Contractor: Sheehy Construction Co.

Interior design: Mark Vosbeek Limited Landscape architect: Damon Farber Associates Photographer: George Heinrich Lighting: American Glass Light, Elliptar Roofing: Hickman Roofing System Brick: Endicott Clay Products Precast: Spancrete Ceiling systems/materials: Celotex, Cashmere Tile Artist: Virginia Bradley, "Laughing Water" mural Stone counter top: Cold Spring Granite **Project: Wooddale Church** Worship Center Location: Eden Prairie, Minn. Client: Wooddale Church Architects: Frederick Bentz/Milo Architects: Frederick Benizi Milo Thompson/Robert Rietow, Inc. Principal-in-charge: Robert G. Rietow, AIA Project manager: Jeffery R. Sweitzer, AIA Project architect: Jeffery R. Sweitzer, AIA Project designer: Milo H. Thompson, FAIA Project team: Milo H. Thompson, Chris Renier, Dan Polasck, Mike Segal, Robert Zimmerman and Karl Lehrke Structural engineers: Meyer, Borgman & Johnson, Inc. Mechanical engineers: Michaud, Cooley, Erickson & Associates, Inc. Electrical engineers: Michaud, Cooley, Erickson & Associates, Inc. Contractor: Adolfson & Peterson, Inc. Interior design: Frederick Bentz/Milo Thompson/Robert Rietow, Inc. Landscape architect: Dahlgren, Shardlow &

Uban, Inc. Acoustical consultant: Schuler & Shook, Inc.

Photographer: Gallop Studios, Minneapolis

Windows: Brin-Northwestern Glass Co.

Lighting: Peterson Electric Co.

Roofing: Curren Nielson

Stone/brick: Minnesota Brick

Concrete: Cemstone

Flooring systems/materials: St. Paul Linoleum & Carpet Co.,

Anderson-Ladd Co.

Ceiling systems/materials: Oak Construction Casework/woodwork: Shaw Lumber Co.,

Steffes Church Furniture Manufacturer, St. Paul Fabricating & Decorating,

Chancel Furnishings

Craftsman/artist: Visser-Rowland

Sound system: M.T.S. Northwest Sound, Inc.

Projection screen: Design Stages

Project: Zion Evangelical **Lutheran Church** Location: Buffalo, Minn.

Client: Zion Lutheran Church Architects: Armstrong, Torseth, Skold & Rydeen Architects & Engineers Principal-in-charge: Ken Grabow Project manager: Ken Grabow Project architect: Ken Grabow Project designer: Chris Monson Project team: Church building committee and ATS&R Structural engineers: Clark Engineering Company Mechanical engineers: ATS&R Electrical engineers: ATS&R Contractor: Winkleman Building Corp. Interior design: ATS&R Landscape architect: Sue Wright, Dundee Landscape Acoustical consultant: Kvernstoen Kehl Associates

Lighting consultant: ATS&R Photographer: Ralph Belovitz

lost minnesota



The Exposition Building (as seen through the Stone Arch Bridge), 1886-1940.

It began as Minneapolis's answer to the Minnesota State Fair and ended 54 years later as a lonely, tall tower that bore neon images of pop bottles.

In 1885, a group of Minneapolis business leaders met to counter the state legislature's decision to permanently hold the State Fair in St. Paul. An exposition building seemed a good idea: one that could house an annual display of the best examples of industry, business and art. Committee members raised \$500,000 for the building through a stock offering. The building's planners accepted the proposal of residents of the Mississippi's east bank, who offered the bluff land occupied by the Winslow House, a building that had served as a hotel, college and hospital during the previous 30 years.

Minnesota architect Isaac Hudson, Sr., designed the original plans, but a building committee altered them after examining similar structures in other cities. (A 1972 letter writer to the Minneapolis Star identified the architect as J. Hodgson.) Construction began on April 29, 1886 and ended 90 days later. Occupying about 240,000 square feet of land, the exposition building had eight acres of floor space, a stone-and-brick exterior, and a 275-foot-high tower-topped by a metal weather vane from the Winslow house-that commanded a view of young Minneapolis.

Almost one-half million people passed through the building during the first Minneapolis Exposition of 1886. Revivals of the annual event, lasting until 1894, proved less successful. The building enjoyed a moment of glory in 1892, when it hosted the Republican National Convention (which nominated for president a losing candidate, Benjamin Harrison). Later, the Exposition Building headquartered a food company that went bankrupt.

The First Federal Savings and Loan Association bought the building in 1939 and razed it, leaving only the tower. Eventually a pop bottler named Tom Moore purchased the site and installed neon Coca-Cola billboards on the tower before leveling it to build a bottling plant. The weather vane, a representation of the angel Gabriel, survives in the collection of the Hennepin County Historical Museum. Jack El-Hai