MISSION: REVIVAL
Tired and neglected historic buildings get new leases on life thanks to their visionary owners and architects.
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A BRIDGE GOES DIGITAL?
It’s pixels for pedestrians in a competition-winning scheme for the bridge linking the U’s East and West Bank campuses.
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NORTHWOODS RESORTS
Minnesota architects tell us all about their favorite lodges. Our new survey will inspire your next weekend getaway.
PAGE 42

History Renewed

An historic hangar transformed
COVER: AKERMAN HALL, PAGE 34
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Frank Gehry’s Winton Guest House

In 1982, Mike and Penny Winton commissioned the up-and-coming, California-based architect Frank Gehry to design a guest house on their Lake Minnetonka property, adjacent to a 1952 Philip Johnson house. Gehry created a house as sculpture, covering a variety of elemental forms in unexpected materials including Finnish plywood, limestone, brick and metal.

The Wintons sold their property in 2002 to Kerr Woodhouse, who, in order to preserve it and enhance the understanding of architecture as art, donated the guest house to the University of St. Thomas in 2007.

After four years and a physical relocation of its eight pieces to a new site 110 miles away, the Winton Guest House is now an integral part of the university’s Gainey Conference Center in Owatonna, home also to a 1950’s Edwin Lundie-designed main house. The Winton Guest House is the only Gehry-designed single-family residence open to the public. Gehry’s understanding of cities, one-room buildings and the painting of Giorgio Morandi come to life in the house’s unique architectural space, which includes a 35-foot-tall central living room tower.

An exhibit featuring original blueprints, drawings, photographs and letters, along with a video documenting the move and reconstruction, tell the story of how this structure came to redefine architecture in the late 1980s and bolster the career of one of the world’s most important architects.

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- Sunday, Sept. 16, Noon-4 p.m.

Admission: Adults - $7; Students - $5 (with student ID); Children 12 and under – Free
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StThomas.edu/GehryWinton
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The Gainey Conference Center, is the university’s full-service conference and retreat facility located one hour south of St. Paul and Minneapolis in Owatonna, Minn. The Center, nestled in 180 acres of rolling prairie land, offers an atmosphere conducive to planning, development and camaraderie building and is the perfect location for a wedding or special event.

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42 Northwoods Resorts
Architects Love
By James P. Cramer, Hon. AIA
“Minnesotans would be hard-pressed to find a newsstand without a scenic Northwoods getaway on one of the magazine covers,” writes James Cramer. “Which got us thinking: If the design of these lodges is what makes them so attractive and memorable—gives them their quintessence—why don’t more of the publications that assemble these features ask architects to help put the allure of these places into words? And, come to think of it, which Northwoods resorts are most admired by architects? And why?” We asked a number of Minnesota architects these very questions, and the answers came spilling out of them.
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Of all the different kinds of building endeavors, none draws more people into the process than the rehabilitation of a failing historic building. Think about it: When a family works with an architect on a dream home or a growing company builds a new headquarters, a relatively small number of people contribute to the outcome. But when a crumbling landmark faces the prospect of demolition—or is lucky enough to have an owner with redevelopment ideas—community rooms fill to the brim with neighborhood residents and business owners, local officials, and other concerned citizens. The reason for this is that, when a revered building reaches an advanced age, we all begin to feel a sense of ownership. It becomes part of our community identity.

Lately, preservation causes in Minnesota have become so robust that church basements and nonprofit offices can no longer contain them. Last fall, for example, American Express and partner National Trust for Historic Preservation brought their Partners in Preservation (PIP) program to the Twin Cities, distributing $1 million in rehabilitation grants among 25 historic sites in and around the metro area. PIP invited all preservation fans to vote for and post photos and memories of their favorite contenders on its Facebook page: Minneapolis' Basilica of St. Mary won the popular vote and thus $110,000 in funding. Another site awarded a PIP grant, Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, won a Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Award this spring for an onsite benefit concert by local musicians Jeremy Messersmith and Lucy Michelle & The Velvet Lapelles that helped fund the restoration of the cemetery's historic fence. Preservation is alive and well on social-media sites—and even in the graveyard.

Which is fitting, because preservation is a life-or-death proposition for buildings. That’s why efforts to save beloved structures often spark heated civic debate. Architects and preservationists still lament the loss of Minneapolis' Metropolitan Building a half-century ago, Lutheran Brotherhood Building in 1997, and Ralph Rapson–designed Guthrie Theater in 2006. (The Metropolitan demolition, in fact, is often credited with jumpstarting the preservation movement in Minnesota.) At the time of this writing, the spirited campaign to preserve the character-defining features of Minneapolis' Peavey Plaza had failed. We at Architecture Minnesota wish the planners of the replacement plaza great success, but it will be difficult for any new scheme to match Peavey's design significance or inspire supporters the way that Peavey has these past few years.

When a revered building reaches an advanced age, we all begin to feel a sense of ownership. It becomes part of our community identity.

This issue on recently revived historic buildings has a little of that architectural-life-or-death poignancy running through it. Is there a more compelling reminder of our mid-19th-century heritage than the humble Pierre Bottineau House (page 30, pictured here), restored as an interpretive center after sitting on blocks in a city storage yard for a decade? Could Renaissance Box (page 32), a century-old former shoe factory on the edge of downtown St. Paul, have found a better new life than as affordable green housing? These buildings and the others we highlight may lack grandeur, but they’re soaked in history and wonderfully hospitable to new uses. All they need is vision and architectural know-how—two preservation puzzle pieces in abundant supply in Minnesota.

Christopher Hudson
hudson@ata-mn.org

Preservation efforts often have a democratic flavor to them.
ON BEHALF OF OUR MEMBERS, the Midwest Masonry Promotion Council would like to acknowledge AIA Minnesota for the many opportunities provided to promote the benefits of masonry construction to Minnesota architects. The MMPC is an AIA approved provider of continuing education programs, and participates in AIA Minnesota’s Convention & Products Expo. — Craig Hinrichs AIA - MMPC Executive Director, c.hinrichs@comcast.net

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Contributors

Get to know our writers and photographers. They're an interesting bunch.

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Linda Mack writes on architecture and design for local and national publications.

Lucie Marusin is a freelance photographer living in the Twin Cities.
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Guide Extras  Our last issue unveiled the new Architecture Minnesota Guide to Working with an Architect, a primer on the process for homeowners, small businesses, and small organizations. But you needn’t hang on to that edition forever, because architecturemn.com is the guide’s permanent home. The guide itself is available as both a digital edition and a free download, and we’ve also gathered a number of other quality resources on the subject matter, including materials assembled by the American Institute of Architects.

The resources to check out first are the short working-with-an-architect videos AIA produced featuring Minnesota architect Sarah Nettleton, AIA.

VLOG HIGHLIGHTS

Yes, you read that right: Our blog is now a vlog that offers up entertaining architecture- and arts-themed videos. The clips are great diversions—and the perfect inspiration for those who plan to enter Videotect 3 later this year.

No Way Out  (May 15): “MPR arts reporter Marianne Combs sent me this terrific animated documentary…on ‘the energy dilemmas facing the world today’—and basically the end of the world as we’ve known it. Well, no, the prognosis isn’t quite that grim, but the film is titled There’s No Tomorrow.”

Run of the Place  (May 3): “Do all of you Twin Citians know about Open Streets Minneapolis? It’s a now annual effort that closes a long stretch of Lyndale Avenue to car traffic for a portion of a weekend day in June so that people can walk, bike, and roller-blade all over the street. Openstreetsmpls.com has this great video of last year’s event.”

Signs of Spring  (Apr 4): “They’ve been all around us, of course, for weeks now—the warm air, the budding trees. But now even the Nice Ride bikes are in bloom. I saw my first stocked rack at the Seward Co-op this morning. In honor of this happy sighting, I present…a Streetfilms piece on Minneapolis’ beloved Midtown Greenway.”

DIGITAL EDITION
Sample Architecture Minnesota with an exceedingly easy-to-navigate digital preview.

Still images don’t tell the whole story of the Boy Scout Base Camp at Fort Snelling (page 36), so we commissioned Ryan Siemers, Assoc. AIA (ryansiemers.com), to film kids scaling the climbing walls, and adults (the owners and the architects) explaining how this inspired adaptive reuse came together.

Ryan Siemers has also produced a highlights reel of the Videotect 2 show that rocked the Walker Art Center Cinema in early March. The short film mixes clips from the program, including those of WCCO reporter Jason DeRusha’s sidesplitting appearance, with after-show interviews with the winners and other attendees.
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Purcell-Cutts House 1913

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Start in Minneapolis, at a home William Gray Purcell and George Grant Elmslie designed—with a hefty dose of input from Chicago architect Louis Sullivan. It’s not the area’s grandest house, and it’s not even on Lake of the Isles, though it does enjoy lake views. But the house has few rivals anywhere for its intricate beauty and sheer ingenuity. Walls of art glass create a magical indoor realm and frame views of the gardens and reflecting pool. The unusual siting, earthy color scheme, stunning use of wood, fantastic furniture, and Arts & Crafts motifs inside and out combine to make this home a work of art. Fittingly, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts now owns the property and oversees tours.

The time is right for an architecture-themed road trip, with three of the finest examples of century-old Prairie School architecture all within a few hours of each other

GRAND PRAIRIE

Historic Park Inn Hotel and City National Bank 1910

MASON CITY, IOWA
wrightonthepark.org

Side by side in Mason City, Iowa, these two Prairie stars don’t just embody “form follows function”—they actually continue to function. The Park Inn, which reopened for business in late 2011 after an attentive restoration by certified Wright craftsmen, is the only surviving Wright hotel. For a shockingly affordable nightly rate (starting at $77), you can immerse yourself in this Prairie masterpiece, rife with distinctively Wrightian embellishments and cusp-of-Jazz Age glamour. Mason City has several notable Prairie buildings, so take a walking tour before you head home.

Taliesin East 1911

SPRING GREEN, WISCONSIN
taliesinpreservation.org

Head east to Spring Green, Wisconsin, to Frank Lloyd Wright’s summer estate and studio. The fluid and organic Taliesin was built, augmented, and adjusted over the course of Wright’s life, yet it retains a cohesive, striking vision and dedication to Prairie concepts. Two fires damaged sections of the home, one set during a horrific mass murder of Wright associates. But tragedy coexists with inspiration here, as Wright rebuilt the home and designed some of his best-known works in the studio. His desire to intertwine the home with its natural surroundings has been made a bit too vivid with time: shifting land and reaching tree roots now threaten the home.

—Amy Goetzman
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Monte Carlo, The Loon

**Employee with the most interesting or unusual extracurricular:**
Daniel Green, AIA, made a solo 5,000-mile bicycle trek from Minnesota to the Pacific Ocean and Southern California, blogging his experiences along the way.

**What activities or events do you host in your space?**
Tours and receptions for architecture students and Preservation Alliance of Minnesota and Preserve Minneapolis meetings. Many staff members also enjoy "Thirsty Thursdays" in the office.

**Which past project taught you the most, and why?**
Minnesota State Capitol renovations—20-plus years of collaborations with multiple stakeholders, all in a public forum

>> continued on page 49

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CONTINUING EDUCATION

University of Minnesota architecture students apply the lessons learned in one energy-efficient building project to the next—and the next  by Christopher Hudson

ICON SOLAR HOUSE (1) In architecture, as in life, one good thing can lead to another. Consider, for example, the progression of green building projects undertaken by University of Minnesota architecture students over the past few years. In the fall of 2009, the U's two-years-in-the-making ICON Solar House (September/October 2009 issue) took fifth place in the U.S. Department of Energy's Solar Decathlon, an annual competition on the National Mall in Washington that challenges 20 collegiate teams to "design, build, and operate solar-powered houses that are cost-effective, energy-efficient, and attractive."

Two professionals who helped guide that student effort—architect and adjunct assistant professor Lucas Alm, AIA, and U Center for Sustainable Building Research fellow Daniel Handeen—say ICON's energy achievements and aesthetic quality far outpaced its affordability. So when Handeen set about assembling a proposal for the 2011 Solar Decathlon, he invited Habitat for Humanity to join the project team. The competition proposal was eventually retracted, but the U's collaboration with the affordable-housing nonprofit went forward in the form of a student-designed, exceedingly energy-efficient home for a Habitat client in Princeton, Minnesota.

HABITAT HOME IN PRINCETON (2) Here’s how it worked: Alm and Handeen led a semester-long seminar and a half-semester graduate studio in early 2011 in which their students painstakingly adapted a Habitat home model to include a more robust thermal envelope and increase airtightness. In late spring, Habitat’s East Central Minnesota affiliate had hundreds of teenagers attending the triennial Episcopal Youth Event at Bethel University in St. Paul build the shell of the home in the school’s parking lot over the course of a week. A house mover then transported the 1,100-square-foot structure to Princeton, where it was laid on a foundation and its interior was completed.

"It was the first real project for many of the students—the first time they detailed something that was going to be built," says Alm. "We had them build full-scale models, detailing elements over and over again to help them understand how important it is to meet a client’s needs. The learning curve was huge, and at the end of the semester they felt really empowered."

Through mostly passive means, including solar orientation, super-insulated walls and roof, and triple-glazed windows, the house turned in an impressive energy performance over its first winter. The ecstatic homeowner paid only $15 a month in utilities. The solar electric system called for in the student design didn’t fit the budget, but the home is "photovoltaic-ready," says Alm, and in fact it does employ a solar-powered water heater installed by Century College students.

NORTHSIDE NET-ZERO PROJECT (3) Of course, when students design an affordable, energy-smart home for an esteemed charitable organization, people take notice. On the heels of the Princeton project, Handeen met with Sue Haigh, CEO of Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, and soon U architecture students were charged with designing a two-story, net-zero-energy Habitat home for North Minneapolis' Hawthorne EcoVillage, a four-block cluster of challenged properties undergoing a green transformation thanks to a constellation

The eye-catching ICON Solar House can now be viewed on the University of Minnesota campus, across the street from the Bell Museum of Natural History.

1) 2009 ICON Solar House
2) 2011 Habitat for Humanity home in Princeton
3) 2012 NorthSide Net-Zero project (two houses, PPL's shown here)

Follow the progress of the NorthSide Net-Zero project this summer and fall at www.energyandarchitecture.org/NSNZ/
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In Prague, a sweep of historic buildings fills the space between two towering landmarks.

The Castle from the Clock Tower

On the south side of Prague's old Town Hall (1364) is the third-oldest astronomical clock (1410) in the world and the oldest one still in use. The popular tourist attraction marks each hour with a clockwork show involving a skeleton figure (Death) with an hourglass in his hand, walking apostles, and the crow of a cock. Below the apostle figures are two large dials, the top one an astronomical dial depicting a stationary earth in the middle of the universe orbited by a rotating sun and moon. The lower dial shows the days of the year together with medallion images representing the months.

Every time I return to Prague I visit the old Town Hall—but it's not the clock I come to see. I climb to the top of the clock tower to take in the unparalleled views of the city. The magnificent buildings and churches of the old town square below date back to the 12th century, and the horizon offers an endless sea of red roofs and steeples. My favorite view is to the west. Across the Vltava River, on one of the highest elevations in the city, stands the majestic Prague Castle.

-Lucie Marusin

Top: Prague's medieval astronomical clock celebrated its 600th anniversary in 2010.
Above: The castle is even older; part of it dates back to the ninth century.
HONEYCOMB CANOPY: This structure extends the roof of the bridge's existing enclosure, providing a sense of shelter for those gathering on the grass berm below.

Bridge to the

By Thomas Fisher, Assoc. AIA

CENTER STAGE

Casting a spotlight on compelling ideas by innovation-minded architects and designers

A competition yields a 21st-century design for the bridge linking the U's East and West Bank campuses. Will the school boldly seize the opportunity?
The Washington Avenue Bridge joining the East and West Bank campuses of the University of Minnesota may become one of the most multimodal bridges in the region with the addition of the Central Corridor light-rail line to the span's already extensive bus, car, bike, and pedestrian traffic. But it could also become one of the most multimedia bridges in the world if the competition-winning scheme for the plaza on the east end of the bridge gets carried out as its designers—a multidisciplinary team led by architects VJAA—envision along the entire length of the structure.

It's an opportunity too good to miss. The university is the only institution of its kind to straddle the Mississippi River, and the Washington Avenue Bridge has some 20,000 students, faculty, staff, and visitors walking or biking along it every day during the school year, making it one of the densest concentrations of pedestrians in the city. Turning that trek into a rich intellectual, social, and educational experience seems like something a top research university should want to do.

For students, the pedestrian deck of the bridge offers a kind of condensation of university life where they can see the diversity of their classmates as well as the range of student organizations that have traditionally painted promotional banners on the spandrel panels of the bridge's enclosure. Those banners represent a good idea, but in an information age, in which most students have extraordinary digital capacity on the mobile devices in their pocket or backpack, hand-painted signs seem like a quaint holdover from the last century.

You could say the same thing about the bridge deck itself. While the university's last master plan...
The winning design reflects the fluid, hybrid, interdisciplinary, and multimedia character of the design team while also capturing “the flows and movements of people and bikes along the bridge,” says VJAA’s Jennifer Yoos, AIA.

called for removing the pedestrian deck altogether and mixing 20,000 students with the cars and trains on the roadbed below—an act of sheer folly—something does need to happen to the bridge’s upper level. The enclosure has rusting glass-and-steel panels that need constant maintenance and a dank and unheated interior that never seems to dry out or keep the cold out.

Generations of Minnesota architecture students have envisioned alternative uses for the bridge’s upper deck, ranging from coffee shops and bookstores to the entire student union, but the weight of such functions has almost always doomed these proposals for a bridge not designed for so much additional loading. While well intended, such ideas again seem misaligned with the digital age, in which lightweight mobility has become the defining feature.

Which brings us to the opportunity of building the world’s first multimedia bridge. The idea began with the announcement of a Mississippi River Bridge Plaza Design Competition, sponsored by the Target Studio for Creative Collaboration at the university’s Weisman Art Museum (WAM). Intended as an “opportunity to create a model for the next generation of campus public spaces . . . [and] a marketplace of a wide variety of ideas,” the competition encouraged “innovative use
The scheme takes advantage of digital media's lightweight and transitory nature to keep up with the pace of students' lives and to make the trip along the bridge an educational and inspirational experience.

The Target Studio's space in the new Frank Gehry-designed Weisman addition overlooks the competition site: the plaza that links the museum to the new Science Teaching and Student Service (STSS) building designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox. (Local firm HGA was the associate architect for both projects.)

The competition jury selected the entry of VJAA—the American Institute of Architects' national Firm of the Year (March/April 2012 issue)—working with design collaborative HouMinn Practice and "multimodal" artist and University of Minnesota associate professor Diane Willow. The winning design reflects the fluid, hybrid, interdisciplinary, and multimedia character of the design team while also capturing "the flows and movements of people and bikes along the bridge," says VJAA's Jennifer...
Mission: REVIVAL

As a state, we’re always being ranked with other states on a variety of quality-of-life indicators: best schools, most livable cities, lowest unemployment rate, and so on. If a national magazine like Newsweek decided to create a quality-of-the-built-environment index for the 50 U.S. states, there’s at least one architectural category in which we’d vie for the top spot: Renovation, Restoration, and Adaptive Reuse. Our preservation community—architects, historians, and other concerned citizens—is thriving, and adaptive-reuse projects such as the Grain Belt Brewery and the Mill City Museum in Minneapolis are national models for preserving and interpreting architectural heritage.

Reimagining and renewing failing historic buildings is no easy task; it requires a great deal of vision and experience on the part of owners, architects, engineers, local officials, and community stakeholders. But in a time when “reduce, reuse, recycle” is not just a goal but a necessity, renovating and retrofitting buildings for new uses and significantly improved energy performance is a trend we should all be cheering. Especially when the architects in our region are so adept at rehabilitating older buildings in a way that simultaneously reveals their rich history.

—Christopher Hudson
WORKS PROGRESS

An unsightly, partly historic public-works facility in Minneapolis is overhauled into an attractive and exceedingly green maintenance complex.

Above: The anchor building of the complex was built in 1914 and originally served as a horse infirmary. Below: The addition along 26th Street is girded with concrete and corrugated Corten steel—materials that can take what public works dishes out.
"Reduce, reuse, recycle" has long been the mantra of the environmental movement—a zippy mnemonic for making our lives more sustainable. For the Minneapolis-based RSP Architects, it could also serve as the motto for its Hiawatha Maintenance Facility, an award-winning public-works complex on the city's south side.

So could “Wow, what a difference.” Now an attractive, state-of-the-art home for construction and maintenance crews, the compound was recently a ragtag assembly of garages, sheds, and smoke-belching equipment long fingered by neighbors as a source of urban blight. The clamor for a cleanup of the highly visible complex—situated on East 26th Street just west of Hiawatha Avenue—had only grown with the arrival of the city’s first light-rail line in 2004 and the instantly iconic Martin Olav Sabo bicycle and pedestrian bridge in 2007, both just steps away. In 2007, the city commissioned RSP to lead the much-needed transformation.

But rather than scrape the site clean and start over, architect Marc Partridge, AIA, and his RSP team opted to play the hand history had dealt the property. “We were deeply aware of the history of the site relative to the residential neighborhood,” explains Partridge. “We saw the project as an opportunity to provide a street presence that respected the scale and cadence of the adjacent houses.”

The 18 structures that had sprung up on the nine-acre compound over the past century were largely built for bygone uses, so RSP created a plan to deconstruct, repurpose, and rehabilitate the existing building stock. The anchor piece of the scheme, a 1914 red-brick box originally used as a horse hospital, was hollowed out and its two stories refitted for use as open office space. The building’s 26th Street frontage and humanely scaled window openings set the tone for a renewed, more welcoming street presence.

In an effort to consolidate uses, the two-story brick structure was expanded to the east with an adjoining building for road-crew lockers and lounge facilities, and to the south with drive-through maintenance bays. Clerestory windows are used in various guises—ribbon windows on the maintenance bays, a shed-roof prow on the office building—to ensure that
ample daylight reaches workspaces. On the exterior, the additions play by the rough-and-tumble rules of road repair and sewer work with precast concrete, corrugated Corten steel, and metal-mesh screening, while careful proportioning and crisp detailing bring the complex firmly into the 21st century. At the perimeter of the property, hardy perennial grasses and poplar trees soften the transition to the neighboring houses.

Even with the heavy demolition, very little material left the site. A prefabricated steel warehouse structure, for example, was cut up and reassembled as a canopy for a fueling station. Existing metal roofing was repurposed to enclose a salt-storage shed. Concrete and masonry rubble was buried on-site to create a large French drain—a traditional civil-engineering solution that allows stormwater to percolate slowly down into the aquifer rather than overload a sewer system.

The architects used salvaged materials on the interior, too, often as finishes and decorations. Historic wood beams and columns were re-milled for use as wainscoting and a built-in reception desk. Antiquated control panels were hung on walls as found art. And in open office areas, walls were peeled back to the original structural red brick.

In mild contrast, the locker rooms and new maintenance bays employ utilitarian concrete block. “We quickly saw that public works was rough on its facilities,” Partridge recalls. “So we used a palette that was equally tough and would minimize maintenance.”

That palette also includes materials salvaged from another notable demolition in the city—that of the Lowry Avenue Bridge over the Mississippi. The crisscrossing pattern of the steel bridge deck, it turned out, was just the right size to serve as

“We quickly saw that public works was rough on its facilities. So we used a [material] palette that was equally tough and would minimize maintenance.”

—Architect Marc Partridge, AIA
Above: More durable materials in the open maintenance bays. Bottom right: Rather than attach the locker-room addition directly to the 1914 building, the RSP team inserted a glassy, light-filled link in between.

fencing around Hiawatha’s work yard and parking area. Shipped across town, the 8-by-10-foot sections drew the interest of the project’s two public artists, Brad Kaspari and Carolyn Braaksma, who used the metal grating as frames for their playful sculptures inspired by the work done at the facility. The industrial trellis also screens a long, concrete barrier wall built when Hiawatha Avenue was reconstructed a decade ago.

Upon completion, the project was certified LEED-Platinum for its “all of the above” approach to sustainability, and in 2011 it garnered an AIA Minneapolis Merit Award, which recognizes building excellence beyond design. But the real winners are the area residents. Public-works facilities are tough and hardworking places. With the Hiawatha Maintenance Facility, we now have proof they can be a good neighbor as well. AMN
LITTLE HOUSE

on the prairie

PIERRE BOTTINEAU HOUSE

New location:
East Creek Park
Reserve, Maple Grove
Minnesota

Clients:
Minneapolis and Three
Rivers Home District

Architect:
McGowan & Mill
Architects, Ltd.
mcgowanarchitects.com

Principal-in-charge:
Scott MacFarlane, AIA

Project lead designer:
Amy Miller, AIA

General contractor:
American Liberty
Construction Inc.

Size:
1,301-square-foot

Completion date:
Spring 2002
One of the oldest houses in Minnesota becomes a cultural venue, thanks to a painstaking restoration
BY LINDA MACK

Pierre Bottineau (1817–1895) was a half-French, half-Native American fur trader, horseman, real estate speculator, treaty negotiator, guide and interpreter for the American Fur Company, Hudson Bay Company, and more than 16 government and private expeditions through the Northwest Territory, devout Catholic, and father of 24 children. As the National Register of Historic Places nomination for his house notes, "He was one of the last of the voyageurs to roam the Northwest and one of the first settlers to make Minnesota his home."

In 1854, as St. Anthony and St. Paul were getting crowded, Bottineau went up the Mississippi and built a Greek Revival house on the prairie in what would soon become Osseo. Moved twice and retooled as a granary, the little wood structure nonetheless survived to stand in the path of the Highway 610 expansion through the northern suburbs in the 1990s. Its link to Bottineau and early balloon-frame construction made it eligible for federal protection, and in 1998 MnDOT moved it out of the way to a storage yard in Maple Grove, where it sat up on blocks like a car.

"It was in desperate condition," says Stuart MacDonald, AIA, cofounder of the historic preservation firm MacDonald & Mack Architects, which was hired in 2007 to study and restore

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"We documented nail holes, saw marks, adze marks, plaster stains. We measured it within an inch of its life—at risk of our lives." —ARCHITECT STUART MACDONALD, AIA
A nearly century-old factory on the brink of foreclosure is transformed into multi-family housing that's both affordable and green

By Camille LeFevre

URBAN RENAISSANCE

Wacouta Commons, the area in downtown St. Paul formerly known as the North Quadrant, is gaining recognition as one of the capital city's fast-growing neighborhoods. Anchored by the historic First Baptist Church, which in 1875 the St. Paul Pioneer Press cited as “the finest piece of architecture west of Chicago,” the area is also home to produce warehouses and footwear factories recently converted into multi-family housing.

The latest of these conversions is Renaissance Box. Originally the O’Donnell Shoe Factory, the six-story 1914 building got its current name from its last owner, who leased it out as commercial and retail space. Aeon, a nonprofit developer of affordable housing, rescued the building from foreclosure in 2006 and began collaborating with LHB to revamp Renaissance Box into a LEED-Gold-certified structure with 70 affordable apartments for individuals and households with low to moderate incomes.

“Renaissance Box is a solid building with a great history, and it deserved to be preserved,” says Aeon president and CEO Alan Arthur. “Old buildings always present challenges. This one is robustly built, with thick walls and floors.” Indeed, the building was constructed with cast-in-place concrete using the Turner concrete-column structural system.

Patented by Minneapolis structural engineer C.A.P. Turner in 1908, the system is composed of slabs supported solely by concrete columns with a uniquely formed capital (the element that caps and widens a column to help it bear its load). Because Aeon is no stranger to historic preservation and adaptive reuse—the company has won numerous awards for both types of projects—“the system wasn’t anything we couldn’t surmount,” says Arthur.

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Patented by Minneapolis structural engineer C.A.P. Turner in 1908, the building’s concrete-column structural system is composed of slabs supported solely by concrete columns with a uniquely formed capital.

The 1914 building was originally the O’Donnell Shoe Factory, which provided jobs for many immigrants.

The first-floor addition, generously glazed for visual connection to the street and courtyard, houses a lobby and two art-filled common spaces.

The green roof, planted with hardy sedum, provides a visual amenity to residents on the top floor.
The first time architect Greg Fenton, AIA, walked into the University of Minnesota’s Akerman Hall, he was both amazed and dismayed. The airplane hangar for the school’s Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics (AEM) department was astounding, its wide and deep two-story clear-span space bounded by a suspended U-shaped mezzanine. Who knew the 1949 building, designed by C.H. Johnston Architects and Engineers (the firm succeeding Clarence H. Johnston, who designed many of the buildings along nearby Northrop Mall), housed such a spectacular space, where aeronautics research was conducted with actual World War II aircraft?

But the hangar’s condition was disconcerting. “It was completely underutilized,” says Fenton, who led BWBR’s renovation of the historic building. “Multiple modifications of the space over the last three
or four decades—including an ad-hoc exit corridor—hadn't retained the spirit of the hangar. Plus, the hangar was a mess with non-original, out-of-date labs and a woodshop."

Still, Fenton adds, "We quickly grasped that we could take the hangar back to its essence and transform it into a modern student workspace with light-industrial labs, grad-student study rooms, and collaboration space for the department and the university at large." One look at the "before" and "after" pictures confirms Fenton's contention that "the transformation both recalls the hangar's history and looks forward with new purpose."

Today, the hangar is a light-filled study lounge lined on three sides and two levels with collaborative spaces, workstations, and labs. In the light-industrial and state-of-the-art computer and model-building laboratories, students conduct research on the guidance, navigation, and control of indoor micro-air vehicles, as well as on smart materials and wind turbines. "It was important to us that the renovation focus on improving our students' educational experiences," says AEM department head Gary Balas.

"BWBR embraced our vision and helped us meet and exceed our expectations," Balas continues. "The main-floor collaborative space in the hangar is brilliant. It's constantly full of students working, interacting, studying, and hanging out, and the students are not all aerospace engineers, since Akerman Hall is home to 10 general purpose classrooms." The glass-and-steel mezzanine wall accentuates

AKERMAN HALL HANGAR RENOVATION

Location: Minneapolis, Minnesota
Client: University of Minnesota
Architect: BWBR
bwbr.com
Preservation consultant: Hess Roise and Company
Principal-in-charge: Katherine Leonidas, AIA
Energy design assistance: The Weidt Group twgl.com
Project lead designer: Stephen Berg, AIA
Mechanical engineer: Sebesta Blomberg
Construction manager: M.A. Mortenson Company
Size: 66,000 square feet (16,000 in the hangar)
Cost: $9.8 million ($4.6 for the hangar)
Completion date: October 2010

The renovation transformed the hangar from a crowded, underperforming space to an open learning environment.
In 1980, Bruce Cornwall, AIA, flew to Minneapolis for the first time. “I got off the plane and the very first building that caught my eye was this old Fort Snelling building,” he says. “I was on my way to architecture school, and I remember telling myself, ‘Man, would I love to work on that building.’”

The 1907 structure, known simply as Building 201, holds memories from some of the most defining moments in U.S. history. It served as a cavalry drill hall, troop processing center, and arena for horse events, boxing matches, and ice skaters. But the Army decommissioned Fort Snelling’s Upper Post in 1946, and freeway expansion cut off Building 201 from the rest of the fort. By the time Cornwall spotted it, it was used mainly for storage, and the grounds had gone to prairie. In 2000, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board boarded it up.
"You think of the Boy Scouts as being very traditional, and they are, but this effort to make a base for an urban community that hasn’t been reached very well is forward-thinking."

—ARCHITECT BRUCE CORNWALL, AIA

THE BUILDING’S FABRICATED-STONE CLIMBING WALL WAS CONSTRUCTED VIA A PROCESS SIMILAR TO PAPIER-MÂCHE AND HAND-PAINTED TO LOOK LIKE LIMESTONE BLUFFS IN THE NEARBY RIVER VALLEY.
In-floor heating and a modest fan cooling system make the huge space comfortable, and polished colored concrete replaces the sand floor. A sunken amphitheater gives the scouts a gathering place and serves as a backdrop for an indoor climbing wall.

A decade later, Cornwall, now working at architecture and engineering firm LHB, caught wind of some news. The Northern Star Council of the Boy Scouts of America wanted to turn Building 201 into a base camp. "Our senior vice president, Rick Carter, was active in scouting because of his son, and we made a bid," says Cornwall. LHB won the job. Almost 30 years after the building first caught his imagination, Cornwall would help bring it back to life.

Despite years of neglect, the well-constructed building was in pretty good shape. Many of the windows could be restored; those that couldn't were replaced with new ones that match the old. The building needed tuck-pointing and some new bricks. The old chimney was rebuilt, and bricked-in windows were reopened.

"We wanted to use as light a touch as possible," says Cornwall. The design team added just a few 21st-century details. In-floor heating and a modest fan cooling system, for example, make the huge space comfortable, and polished colored concrete replaces the sand floor. A sunken amphitheater gives the scouts a gathering place and serves as a backdrop for an indoor climbing wall. These light-handed but high-impact enhancements earned the project a prestigious Minnesota Preservation Award in 2011.

"One of our goals with this project was to introduce scouting to more and more urban kids," says Northern Star Council assistant scout executive Jeff Sulzbach. "The landmark building and location have been very significant to us in that regard. We had more than 28,000 people through the building in the first year of operation, and we're excited about what the future holds."
The award-winning adaptive reuse of Building 201 is also notable for being the first Upper Post building to be redeveloped. The other 27—a headquarters, a hospital, a gymnasium, barracks, officers’ quarters, and more—remain in a state of significant disrepair, but now they have the Boy Scout Base Camp to underscore their immense potential. See “Saving the Upper Post” in our July/August 2009 issue for the full story on the Upper Post’s redevelopment challenges and opportunities.

Interestingly, an historic-structures report prepared by LHB and Landscape Research, Inc., revealed that copies of Building 201 exist elsewhere in the U.S., and these sibling buildings offered insight into the unknown military architect’s intentions. “Part of the building’s charm is its Spanish flair,” says Cornwall. “Regional context was not even considered, so we have this ‘Remember the Alamo’ building in Minnesota, maybe because the first building was designed for the Southwest.”

Another part of the building’s history charmed Cornwall and the client team: graffiti left by war vets. “As stewards of an historic property, we wanted to preserve what we could in the building,” says Sulzbach. “I think we did that through and through.” AMN

VIDEO FEATURE: View the Boy Scout Base Camp in action at architecturemn.com
Butler Square

The crown jewel in Minneapolis' Warehouse District is revered for both its original design and its pioneering adaptive reuse in the 1970s as office and retail spaces  By Bill Beyer, FAIA

WHEN I WAS A SECOND-YEAR ARCHITECTURE STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA IN 1959, my first studio assignment for fall quarter was to visit an existing Minneapolis building, evaluate its architecture, and report back. I was still seriously unfamiliar with the city, so I randomly selected the Butler Brothers Warehouse from our instructors' list.

A classmate and I found our way inside the half-block hulk of sooty brick to the scruffy front office of the warehouse. A sympathetic custodian gave us the run of the place and taught us how to operate the original Otis passenger elevator, a fully manual machine with a touchy throttle. We bounced up and down through nine levels, starting at the bottom. Neither of us had studied or experienced early-20th-century, urban, multi-story warehouses as a type, so we had no expectations.

Exiting the elevator, we were stunned by massive timber columns a jaw-dropping 21 inches square. Above us, cast-iron column capitals supported layers of enormous solid wood beams and secondary purlins, topped by thick wood floor decking. As we moved up through the levels, we became aware that the columns steadily reduced, topping out at eight inches square. The thick perimeter brick bearing walls and interior firewall thinned accordingly. Even to green students, the dramatic diagram of additive 300-pound-per-square-foot floor loads was evident.

Two years after our student visit, the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places, and in 1972 developer Charles Coyer teamed with architect Arvid Elness of Miller Hanson Westerbeck Bell Architects to transform the robust cube of obsolete storage into a lively geode of restaurant, retail, and office space. Thinning the forest of timber columns and delivering building air and power on top of rather than beneath the original wood floors, Elness created an atrium featuring the heavy timber structure as a visible icon.

Until 1974, when the work was completed, nobody had reason to venture west of Hennepin Avenue; the Minneapolis Warehouse District was still a functioning distribution center butting up to the city's meat-processing area, with multiple active rail lines running directly behind and into the building itself. But when Butler opened with a saloon and retail on its two lowest levels,
Thinning the forest of timber columns, architect Arvid Elness created an atrium featuring the heavy timber structure as a visible icon.

young urban professionals flocked to the spectacle. As Pracna-on-Main had one year earlier, Butler Square used festive food and drink to plant a seed of historic preservation.

Originally designed by Harry Wild Jones for lumber baron T.B. Walker in 1906, the half-

Dubbed "the Gateway to the Warehouse District" by its owners, Butler Square also became one of the district's most sustainable historic buildings in 2009, when it earned LEED-EB: O&M certification.

1905
Construction begins on a 500,000-square-foot warehouse for Boston-based wholesaler Butler Brothers.

1974
The first phase of renovation creates a stunning atrium lined with a restaurant and retail shops.

2001
Butler Square wins the American Institute of Architects Minnesota's prestigious 25-Year Award.

2009
The USGBC certifies the building LEED-EB: O&M (Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance).

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NORTHWOODS RESORTS ARCHITECTS LOVE

Minneapolis architects weigh in on a fun question: Which Northwoods lodges offer the most memorable experiences?

By James P. Cramer, Hon. AIA

The Northwoods resort experience is unlike any other. Happily, we in the Upper Midwest have hundreds of these retreats in easy driving distance, and no two are the same. Some are understated, even humble, while others are elaborate and luxurious. A few of the older properties are on the National Register of Historic Places. Some lodges boast formal gardens in addition to their natural landscape. But all have one thing in common: popularity.

They’re so popular, in fact, that Minnesotans would be hard-pressed to find a newsstand without a scenic Northwoods getaway on one of the magazine covers. Which got us thinking: If the design of these lodges is what makes them so attractive and memorable—gives them their quintessence—why don’t more of the publications that assemble these features ask architects to help put the allure of these places into words? And, come to think of it, which Northwoods resorts are most admired by architects? And why?

We were curious to know the answer to these questions, so we drew up a detailed survey, sent it out to a number of Minnesota architects, and sifted through the many illuminating responses we received, all to assemble our own “Top Lodges” feature. The five getaways that garnered the most acclaim are profiled in the following pages, while those that just missed the cut are highlighted in the sidebar on page 47. We also highlight general comments from the respondents about the qualities they look for in a resort—and the need to conserve the Northwoods environment for future generations.
Preserving the Experience

As we had anticipated, the architects we surveyed were eager to share their thoughts on the whole range of Northwoods experiences: family activities, golf, fishing, canoeing, food, wine, and design. Especially design. “Who are the authentic historic preservation exemplars among these resorts?” a St. Paul architect asked, echoing a criterion for many of the respondents. “I think it’s Lutsen for its Scandinavian recall style and Burntside Lodge outside Ely for its rustic lodge and cabins crafted of logs cut from the surrounding forests, each one selected carefully as to size and durability.”

Indeed, architects are attuned to the way that the built and natural environments—form and place—come together in these properties. And, because preservation is difficult even in a strong economy, they’re concerned about the fragile future of these resorts. A Duluth architect says that the best of the lodges are architectural treasures that, if lost, could never be replaced. A St. Paul architect suggests that the newer interior designs should be more contextual—more sensitive to the integrity of the buildings. (Several respondents noted that, as resorts have grown in popularity, some have retained their original character while others have allowed commercial growth to spoil their former unique value.) How, another asks, does the landscape architecture of the golf courses respect and protect the natural environment?

Architects worry more generally about the continued development of the Northwoods. One sore spot is the highway standards that dictate huge rights-of-way through the woods and spoil both nature and our enjoyment of it. “Silver Cliff tunnel took away the most spectacular roadside views of Lake Superior for the sake of speed,” notes architect Ken Johnson, AIA. What we need to do, he says, “is preserve the heritage and the environment. Restore and rehabilitate rather than build new whenever possible.”

The experience of these resorts, say architects, can be hard to describe—especially those offered by the five following lodges, each of which combines distinctive architecture and landscape to achieve an intangible mystique. Nonetheless, we discovered in this survey new insight into how these places stir emotions and buoy the human spirit.

Favorite Five

The first of the top vote-getters is LUTSEN RESORT on Lake Superior’s North Shore. Reminiscent of Scandinavian architecture with its hand-hewn timber and ornate details, the lodge was designed by the late Edwin Lundie, the renowned Minnesota architect of the Snyder Education and Research Building at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chanhassen and many picturesque houses. Lutsen has grown to add villas, cabins, condominiums, and townhomes, but the 1952 main lodge (the first Lundie-designed lodge, built in 1949, burned down in 1951) is the reason architects keep coming back to the resort, according to our survey.

Inside the main entrance, guests find a welcoming fireplace in the lobby, and a pub and gathering place to the right of the registration desk; from there it’s only a few short steps to the large dining room. The lodge also houses a small conference facility for business retreats with a balcony with an exhilarating view. Great food, thoughtful design, and a great Lake Superior location—the nightly bonfire on the beach is not to be missed—all combine to create what may be Minnesota’s most iconic lodge. “One can imagine the unique Lundie style of Scandinavian architecture being adopted

Burntside offers quiet oneness with nature. Its rustic architecture, built with local materials by local craftsmen, never overpowers, settling instead for understated elegance.
as a standard vernacular of sorts for sensitive development in the Northwoods,” a Minneapolis architect told us.

Smaller but every bit as memorable, say architects, is the oldest resort in Minnesota: the 1914 **BURRENTSIDE LODGE** on Burntside Lake near Ely. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the property includes a main lodge and 23 orange-red-painted log cabins with sweeping views of nature and the lake with its storybook islands. The buildings here are humble yet beautifully proportioned. The lodge and cabins are closed for the winter and early spring, and guests often make reservations months in advance in summer and fall. The survey respondents cited Burntside's Finnish sauna nearly as often as they did its award-winning restaurant.

Pioneering Minnesota conservationist Sigurd Olson built a small but celebrated cabin not far from the resort on Burntside Lake. "I named this place Listening Point because only when one comes to listen, only when one sharpens one's awareness, can one see and hear in the sense in which I use these words,” he wrote. Burntside Lodge offers this quiet oneness with nature, architects confirm. Its rustic architecture, built with local materials by local craftsmen, never overpowers, settling instead for understated elegance.

The modestly priced **NANIBOUJOU LODGE**, located 125 miles northeast of Duluth on the windswept shore of Lake Superior, was built in the late 1920s and has a fascinating history. Slugger Babe Ruth and heavyweight champ Jack Dempsey stayed here in its early days, when it was a private club (before the stock-market crash). By far the most colorful of the Northwoods resorts, Naniboujou makes no attempt to blend in with its natural surroundings. The gambrel-roofed, weathered cedar-shake exterior features deep-red trim, and the interior is even more vibrant. The dining room also boasts the state’s largest native-stone fireplace, estimated to weigh 200 tons. There are cozy fireplace rooms in both wings of the lodge, but there’s no doubt that the dining room makes the strongest design impression, say architects. The colors provide warmth on a scale that enhances the grandeur of the 12-foot-high fireplace. Like Burntside and other favorites in our survey, Naniboujou is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The 90-year-old **GRAND VIEW LODGE**, on popular Gull Lake in central Minnesota, is the largest and most robust property topping our survey. The historically designated main lodge and surrounding cabins, restaurants, meeting facilities, fitness center, and spa host virtually every resort activity you can think of. If you’re angling for world-class walleye fishing, Grand View knows where the fish are. Want a great...
The library in the A-frame lodge is the perfect spot for relaxation or mental stimulation, its shelves stocked with everything from good fiction for vacationers to volumes on weightier subjects for scholars and architectural historians. AMN

The Dobrowolskis developed the resort as a secluded romantic getaway on a spring-fed lake, but Canoe Bay's tranquility also makes it a great destination for meetings that invite participants to reflect on organizational endeavors. Fine dining is offered in the inn, which sits directly on the water.

The late Taliesin architect John Rattenbury, AIA, designed the property's most luxurious offering: a 2,000-square-foot Prairie-style villa with a 1,500-square-foot wraparound deck. Minnesota's SALA Architects executed the project after Rattenbury's passing; in fact, the firm has had a hand in the design or remodeling of nearly all of the Canoe Bay buildings, which also include an inn and several cottages.

But perhaps the most elegant and organic Northwoods resort, say Minnesota architects, can be found in Wisconsin. The various lodgings at CANOE BAY, a two-hour drive east-northeast from the Twin Cities, are clearly in harmony with nature, thanks to the vision of owners Dan and Lisa Dobrowolski and the skill of their architects.

If you're imagining this resort to be well suited for both vacationing families and professionals on retreat, then you're getting the picture. The two clienteles mix easily in the lodge's vaulted dining room, where peeled and polished logs, plank floors, and a fieldstone fireplace achieve a rare rustic elegance. A number of the architects we surveyed raved about the fragrant and picturesque gardens between the lodge and the lake.

golf experience, too? The Pines course offers championship-grade greens and well-manicured landscape architecture. Something for the kids? There are water sports of all kinds.

Peeled and polished logs, plank floors, and a fieldstone fireplace achieve a rare rustic elegance in the dining room. A number of the architects we surveyed raved about the fragrant and picturesque gardens between the lodge and the lake.
More Resorts Architects Love

Five resorts rose to the top in our survey, but many others had passionate advocates. For instance, LOST LAKE LODGE was cited for its quiet seclusion and small-scale buildings that are almost invisible within the small compound. BEARSKIN LODGE on the Gunflint Trail was nominated for its varied accommodations (townhouses to log cabins) and its 70-plus miles of matchless cross-country ski trails. Architect Charles Liddy, FAIA, and family have gone to Bearskin for the week after Christmas since the early 1980s for skiing, sauna-ing, hot-tubbing, snowshoeing, dog sledding, sleeping, reading, and general relaxing. GRAND SUPERIOR LODGE on Lake Superior has lakeside suites located just 50 feet from the Lake Superior shoreline. RUTGERS'S BAY LAKE LODGE combines historic buildings and newer additions, and guests who wake early to see the sunrise over Bay Lake are served coffee at the historic stone fireplace in the original lodge.

A national park and a state park lodge also received hearty recommendations. ROCK HARBOR LODGE in Isle Royale National Park offers rooms so close to the water that waves sometimes splash the windows. Architects admire the craftsmanship of the 1920s lodge, warmly noting the squeak and groan of its antique door hinges and window latches. The rustic two-story DOUGLAS LODGE at Itasca State Park—the first state park in Minnesota—was praised for its impressive fieldstone fireplace. Its location, at the historic headwaters of the Mississippi River, on a bluff overlooking Lake Itasca, also helps explain its popularity with architects.

Of course, some resorts attract as many professionals on retreat as they do vacationers. If rustic isn’t on your wish list but top-flight meeting amenities and golf courses are, then three resorts near Brainerd, Minnesota—MADSEN’S ON GULL LAKE, CRAGUN’S RESORT AND HOTEL on Gull Lake, and BREEZY POINT—may be just what you’re looking for, according to our architect respondents.
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Little House on the Prairie
<< continued from page 31

the house. The firm’s report confirmed that it was Bottineau’s house and that enough of it survived to make it worth restoring. It was a process of forensic architecture that would make a reality-TV producer salivate. “We documented nail holes, saw marks, adze marks, plaster stains,” says MacDonald. “We measured it within an inch of its life—at risk of our lives.”

Most of the framing for the roof, walls, and floors survived, as did flooring, and there was a bit of cornice. With that meagre evidence, one grainy photo that showed a pilaster corner, and a wealth of research on the conventions of Greek Revival architecture, the team was able to rebuild the house as it almost certainly was in 1854: a rectangular, side-gable, one-and-a-half-story wood-frame home with yellow siding, white trim, well-proportioned windows, and a beautiful two-panel door with sidelights.

Even the stone foundation is true to the building’s past. The first sample of the new foundation had the stones set far apart—a common practice today with the availability of strong cement-based mortars. But the lime-based mortar used in 1854 was weaker and thus required that the stones be interlocked for strength. So the architects requested and approved a second sample with the rocks placed closer together.

As the decades of detritus were stripped away, it became clear that the house was an early example of balloon-frame construction—a revolutionary way of building with lighter lumber and nails instead of heavy timber and time-tested mortise-and-tenon joints. But the builders clearly didn’t trust the nails completely, says MacDonald. The old-style hand-hewn joints were still used at sills and are visible throughout the second floor, where the structure remains exposed.

Solid but not quite perfect, the charming house now stands on a knoll near the main entrance to the Elm Creek Park Reserve in Maple Grove. Three Rivers Park District, which serves the Twin Cities suburbs, agreed to provide a permanent home for the house if MnDOT restored it. MnDOT’s Office of Environmental Services made determinations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act on

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Little House on the Prairie
<< continued from page 48

behalf of the Federal Highway Administration that approved the prairie setting, and Susan Roth and Dennis Gimmesdal of the State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the findings. “We met here in the dead of winter,” says MacDonald. “What they didn’t want was for it to end up in a pioneer park.”

Instead, the Bottineau house sits on the edge of the prairie, where red-winged blackbirds and phoebes call in the morning sun, just as they must have 150 years ago. Now walkers, runners, and cross-country skiers pass by it and, once interpretive exhibits have been installed inside, will be able to stop in and learn all about Pierre Bottineau. AMN

Miller Dunwiddie Architecture, Inc.
<< continued from page 15

Why the bowtie, Chuck? Principal Chuck Liddy, FAIA, wore neckties back in the days when architects drew with graphite—until he showed up at a meeting with his tie tucked in his shirt. He’s been a bowtie-only guy ever since.

Least favorite buzzword or phrase:
“Think outside the box.”

Recent brush with celebrity: Recently, a few of us were warmly greeted at the governor’s residence by celebrity dogs Mesabi, Mingo, and Itasca and their dad, Mark Dayton.

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Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Fellowship.

Congratulations to Andrew Weyenberg, AIA, the recipient of the 2012 Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Fellowship.

Out of 38 submissions, five finalists were selected: Tim Bicknell, AIA; Daniel Green, AIA; James Howarth, AIA; James Nutt, AIA; and Andrew Weyenberg, AIA.

Andrew plans to use the $10,000 prize to travel to Scandinavia and study modernist refinement with a sense of space.

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Continuing Education

of community partnerships and a $500,000 grant from the Home Depot Foundation.

But that wasn’t all. Project for Pride in Living (PPL), a Twin Cities nonprofit that worked with landscape architecture firm Coen + Partners to develop the master plan for EcoVillage, also engaged Handeen and Alm for a student-designed home. The two-house spring-semester effort, dubbed the NorthSide Net-Zero project, had the same class structure as the Princeton effort, but the design challenges were greater. The urban houses had to meet far more code requirements, and the properties’ north-south orientations and tree canopies limited opportunities for active and passive solar.

Not surprisingly, the students were once again up to the task, delivering the two sets of construction documents in May. Habitat plans to build its home with volunteer labor this summer, while PPL, which instead uses licensed contractors, first needs to put the design drawings out for bid. Alm and Handeen know that the affordable-housing community is watching closely, but they’re no doubt already asking themselves: What’s next? AMN

Urban Renaissance

In fact, LHB incorporated the columns as decorative features in the efficiency, one-, and two-bedroom units and the hallways. Because the slab has a corrugated texture, the areas where new walls met existing slab required sealing, explains LHB Housing Studio leader Kim Bretheim, AIA.

Units on the top floor enjoy views of the green roof planted with sedum. The project also earned LEED points for adapting an historic building for a new use, adding a high-efficiency heating and ventilation system connected to district heat, creating an outdoor courtyard with storm-water management features, and being within walking distance of public transportation and other important amenities.

LHB also designed a first-floor addition with an ADA-accessible entrance that opens to two common spaces: an art studio (currently used by a painter and a sculptor, both residents) and an art gallery. Now on the National Register of Historic Places and fully occupied, Renaissance Box exemplifies the ways in which conscientious development can support sustainable design, historic preservation, art, and the common good. AMN
Bridge to the Digital Future
<< continued from page 23

Yoos, AIA, who is also an adjunct faculty member in the U's School of Architecture.

The scheme keeps the steel-framed structure and roof of the existing enclosure but removes the rusting steel-and-glass panels and replaces them with glass walls capable of displaying digital images and information. It takes advantage of digital media's lightweight and transitory nature to keep up with the pace of students' lives and to make the trip along the bridge an educational and inspirational experience. At the east end of the bridge, at the site of the competition, the design extends the roof of the enclosure with a lightweight lattice structure that terminates in a series of video screens that people can watch from a grassy knoll.

The winning scheme brings nature to the bridge deck in other ways as well. It calls for a ramp to connect the deck to a new tree-shaded plaza at the base of the STSS building; it envisions wavy planters of native grasses along the length of the bridge; and it replaces the existing steel railings with glass panels and less-obtrusive light fixtures to open up the views to the river, the campus, and the city from a series of undulating benches and chaises along the edge of the deck. All of these moves help make the bridge both a gathering place and a pedestrian passage—one where the university brings the energy and explorations of its students, faculty, and staff out from behind closed doors and into the public realm for all to see.

In that sense, the design complements and extends what the university has begun with the Weisman’s new Target Studio and the interactive classrooms in the STSS building. These facilities were created to increase connections among disciplines and enhance the educational experience of students. What VJAA, HouMinn, and Diane Willow have done is take that a step further, using the bridge to increase the connections among passersby and to enhance the experience of crossing the bridge on bike or foot. Digital technology has made it possible to bring education out into the street, and this multimedia vision for the Washington Avenue Bridge could be the first example of what that might mean on a university campus. It’s an opportunity we shouldn’t waste.

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the hangar’s spaciousness, he adds. “Yet students whose offices are on the second floor have a quiet workspace with the best views on campus.”

The architects also brought the building up to code. The team replaced aging fenestration with new high-performance, operable windows in an approved historical style (approval was necessary because the building is located in a National Historic Preservation District). BWBR also replaced a driveway and original folding hangar door with broad, welcoming steps below panelized windows that lead from the Scholars Walk into the building.

The renovation also added a highly efficient mechanical system with heat recovery and displacement ventilation, as well as daylighting controls and occupancy sensors. Akerman Hall now operates 30 percent more efficiently than Minnesota energy code mandates. “We needed to modernize the building in a way that maintained its historic character while creating the best value for the hangar space in terms of use and functionality,” says Fenton.

Mission accomplished. “I’m so pleased we could return an historic engineering education building back to its full glory,” says Balas, “and at the same time offer students new, efficient ways of utilizing our amazing hangar space.” AMN

Butler Square

million-square-foot behemoth was best described by critic Larry Millett as “a sternly poetic mass of wine-colored brick that conveys the commercial might of Minneapolis at the dawn of the twentieth century.” Jones had spent his first year after graduating from MIT in the drafting rooms of H.H. Richardson, clearly acquiring a taste for massive masonry. His colleagues would come to revere him as not only a versatile architect but also a master of structural engineering in an era before those professions diverged.

The building’s own website claims that the timber for Butler’s structural frame was Douglas fir supplied by Walker’s own Minnesota sawmills. If the material was Minnesota-grown, it could not be Douglas fir, a species not native to the state. That glorious riot of columns, beams, purlins, and deckings visible in the building’s atria is almost certainly old-growth white pine, the bountiful commodity that drove Minnesota’s logging economy to its zenith in 1905. On daily display, the soaring, sawn pine timber remains a double slice of Minnesota history. AMN

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Since 1963, Miller Dunwiddie has worked to shape and preserve the environment through responsible, creative design. From providing decades of service to the Metropolitan Airports Commission to completing over 600 historic preservation projects, our range of work is a testament to the firm's commitment to improving and preserving the built environment through excellent design - both in new facilities and existing structures. Our architects and interior designers offer clients complete planning and design services.

Representative Projects
Hiawatha Light Rail Transit, 10-Station (upgrades), Minneapolis, MN; Faribault Woolen Mill (rehabilitation), Faribault, MN; HCMC, Labor & Delivery (remodel), Minneapolis, MN; Beth El Synagogue (renovation), St. Louis Park, MN; The Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts (renovation/restoration), Minneapolis, MN; Grant County Courthouse (renovation/restoration), Elbow Lake, MN; Folwell Hall, University of Minnesota (renovation/restoration), Minneapolis, MN; Bemidji Regional Airport Terminal (renovation), Bemidji, MN.

PETERSSEN/KELLER ARCHITECTURE

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Established 2009
Contact: Lars Peterssen or Gabriel Keller

Firm Principals
Lars Peterssen, AIA
Gabriel Keller, Associate AIA

Peterssen/Keller Architecture is a full-service architectural firm that specializes in custom homes, lofts, cabins and boutique commercial projects. As residential architects and designers, we integrate sustainable design practices into every project, from small additions to LEED-certified new homes, finding solutions that merge environmental thinking with exceptional design. At Peterssen/Keller, every client is our passion, and every project is an opportunity to create a home crafted to last a generation.

Representative Projects
Lake Harriet Georgian Home (addition/remodeling), Minneapolis, MN; Cedar Lake International Style Home (award-winning historic restoration, addition), Minneapolis, MN; Linden Hills Cottage (transformation & 2-story addition), Minneapolis, MN; Tyrol Hills Modern (remodeling), Golden Valley, MN; Mid-Century Modern Home (remodeling & addition), Los Altos, CA; Lake of the Isles Tudor (remodeling & addition), Minneapolis, MN; Lake of the Isles Harry Wild Jones Home (remodeling & restoration), Minneapolis, MN; Rolling Green Contemporary Home (remodeling), Edina, MN.
SKD has provided a full range of both commercial and residential architectural services for 35 years. The projects have been divided between new construction and remodel, renovation and sustainable construction. For renovation projects, we start with a building condition assessment, both structural and functional. The result is a building that is revitalized and adapted for a new purpose or growing needs.

Representative Projects

Commercial: Roth Distributing, Wolf and Subzero Showroom, Hopkins, MN; Davisco International, Corporate Offices, Le Sueur, MN; Twin City Fan Companies, Plymouth, MN. Residential: Carrier Residence (full remodel/renovation), Bear Path, Eden Prairie, MN; Dierks Residence, Greenwood, MN; Rotman Residence (full renovation), Golden Valley, MN; McNaughton Residence (full renovation), Plymouth, MN; Bergman Residence, Eau Claire, WI.

TEA2 ARCHITECTS

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www.tearchitects.com
Contact: Dan Nepp, AIA, CID

Firm Principals
Tom Ellison, AIA, CID
Dan Nepp, AIA, CID

TEA2 Architects is an award-winning, 32-year residential firm specializing in additions/renovations, new residences and retreat homes. Our mission is to create distinctive and unique architecture that responds to our clients' goals in meaningful ways and contributes to an ongoing pursuit of design excellence.

We strive for quality design work that incorporates broader values including historical and neighborhood sensitivity, durability, longevity, and life-affirming qualities in the broader context of sustainability of the building process and our cultural potential.

Representative Projects

Mediterranean Revival (renovation/ remodeling), Lake of the Isles, Minneapolis, MN; Kenwood Carriage House (renovation), Minneapolis, MN; Comprehensive Addition/Remodel, Harvard IL; Mississippi River Boulevard Residence (addition/remodel), St. Paul, MN; Deephaven Revival (renovation/remodel), Deephaven, MN; Kitchen Remodel, Edina, MN; Front Porch Facelift (renovation/restoration), Minneapolis, MN; Master Suite Renovation, Country Club, Edina, MN.
Hiawatha Maintenance Facility
page 26
Location: Minneapolis, Minnesota
Client: City of Minneapolis, Department of Public Works
Architect: RSP Architects
Principal-in-charge: Jeremy Mayberg, AIA
Project lead designer: Marc Partridge, AIA
Project manager: Steve Maurelli, AIA
Project architect: Steve Nordin, AIA
Project team: Morgan Blum; Joanne Chappellaz; Christina Kovacs; Chris Weidenhamer
Sustainability consultant/Energy modeling: Viridian Energy & Environmental
Structural engineer: Palanisami & Associates
Electrical engineer: Paulson & Clark Engineering
Mechanical engineer: Paulson & Clark Engineering
Civil engineer: BKBM Engineers
Landscape architect: Damon Farber Associates
Cost estimating: Constructive Ideas
Public works consultant: Oertel Architects
Acoustician: Kvernsten Ronnholm Associates
Commissioning agent: Engineering Design Initiative Ltd
Millwork/Cabinetwork: Shaw/Stewart Lumber Co.; Midwest Hardwood Corp.; Wood from the Hood
Flooring systems/materials: Forbo; Daltile; Lee’s Carpet

Window systems: Pella; Kalwall; Kawneer
Architectural metal panels: MCI; Nucor
Precast concrete: Fabcon
Brick restoration: Knutson Construction
Burnished CMU: Amcon
Earthwork/Site material recycling: Bolander
Recycled pavers: VAST
Pervious paving: Gravel-Pave
Fuel island canopy: Recycled site material
Site fence: Recycled Lowry Bridge deck
Solid surfacing: Shetka Works
Photographers: Paul Crosby; Heather Novak-Peterson

Renaissance Box
page 32
Location: St. Paul, Minnesota
Client: Aeon
Architect: LHB
Principal-in-charge: Kim Breheim, AIA
Project lead designer: Kim Breheim, AIA
Project manager: Kim Breheim, AIA
Project architects: Maureen Colburn, AIA; Andy Madison, Assoc. AIA; Ben Trousdale, AIA
Project construction administrator: Roger Purdy
Energy modeling: Steen Engineering
Structural engineer: Mattson Macdonald Young
Mechanical engineer: Steen Engineering
Electrical engineer: Steen Engineering
Civil engineer: LHB
Lighting designer: Steen Engineering
Interior design: LHB
Construction manager: Ferichs Construction
Landscape architect: LHB
Landscape supplier: Leo Vander Broek
Masonry restoration: American Masonry Restoration Corp.
Cabinetwork: Diversified Distributors
Flooring systems/materials: Hamerrick Decorating Center
Window systems: Marvin, Shaw/Stewart Lumber Co.
Concrete work: Hicks Concrete
Photographer: George Heinrich

Boy Scout Base Camp
page 36
Location: Fort Snelling, Minnesota
Client: Northern Star Council, Boy Scouts of America
Architect: LHB, Inc.
Principal-in-charge: Rick Carter, FAIA
Project lead designer: Bruce Cormwell, AIA
Project architect: Mark Kalar, AIA
Project management: Target Corp.
Historical consultant: Landscape Research
Energy modeling: The Weidt Group
Structural engineer: LHB, Inc.
Mechanical engineer: LHB, Inc.
Electrical engineer: LHB, Inc.
Civil engineer: Bonestroo, Inc.
General contractor: JE Dunn Construction
Landscape architect: LHB, Inc.
Landscape project team: Jason Aune
Windows: Andersen Windows, Restoration Window Systems
Climbing wall: ThemeScapes
Photographer: Dana Wheelock
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"Noted conservationist Sigurd Olson and his wife Elizabeth treasured their private retreat at Listening Point—a simple cabin on 36 acres of boreal forest on Burntside Lake (page 44), near Ely, Minnesota. I doubt they lingered for long over morning coffee at the kitchen counter. In his book Listening Point, Sigurd wrote, ‘While a scene might be beautiful from the inside, something important is always lost there, for a vista divorced from the open air and the smells and sounds and feeling around you is only partially enjoyed.’ This morning moment was unquestionably a prelude to the observations of the day.”

—PHOTOGRAPHER NANCY A. JOHNSON