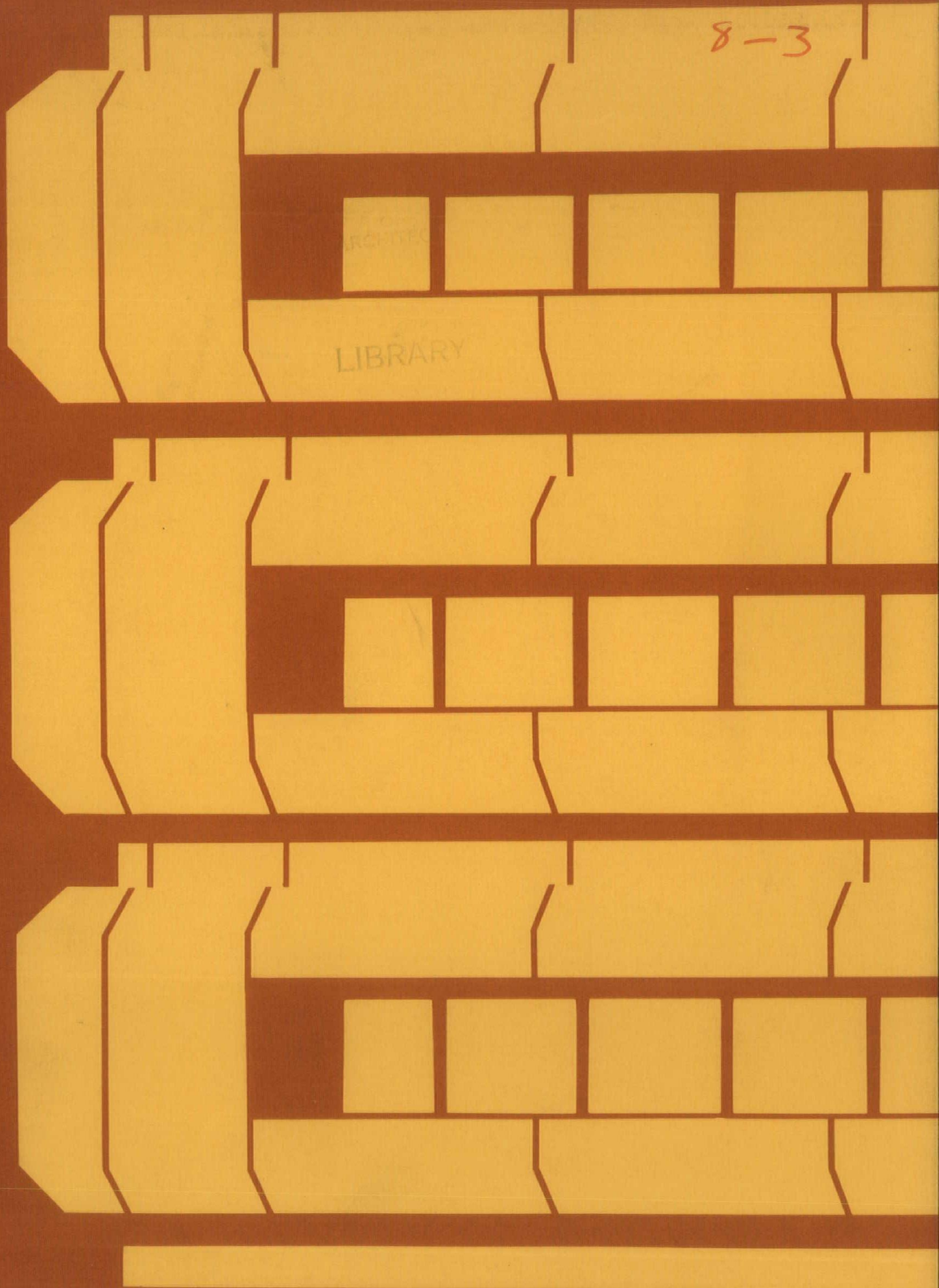


# the mississippi architect





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Volume 8 Number 3 • Winter Issue, The Third of 1977

# the mississippi architect

## COVER

Art Director Priscilla Nash turned a photograph of South Central Bell's new Data Center into the high contrast cover illustration for this issue.

## TWO

Folk Architecture and Us . . . Editor Paul Roberson, AIA comments on rural architecture of the South.

## THREE

Three representative samples from Patti Carr Black's recent photographic exhibit on folk architecture illustrates Editor Roberson's editorial.

## SIX

Mississippi readies for a "close encounter" of its own as the Planetarium nears completion in Jackson.

## EIGHT

TMA visits the recently completed Data Center of South Central Bell for an architectural tour of the state's most sophisticated computer structure.

## TEN

Book Review . . . Greenville architect Robert Ivy comments on "The Failure of Modern Architecture" by Brent C. Brolin.

## ELEVEN

Details of the April 13-16 Gulf States Regional Convention in Biloxi.

## SIXTEEN

Here's your big chance to become a lucky winner. The editors are offering a free Windjammer Cruise to its readers. All it takes is your participation in the magazine.

The Mississippi Architect is published quarterly and is the official publication of the Mississippi Chapter, American Institute of Architects. Appearance of products or services in editorial or advertising copy does not constitute endorsement. Opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the chapter. Annual subscription rate is \$4.00; single copy \$1.00. Advertising rates and subscriptions are available from Delta Design Group, 518 Central, Box 112, Greenville, Miss. 38701; Phone (601) 335-6148. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to P.O. Box 112, Greenville, Miss. 38701. Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Greenville, Miss.

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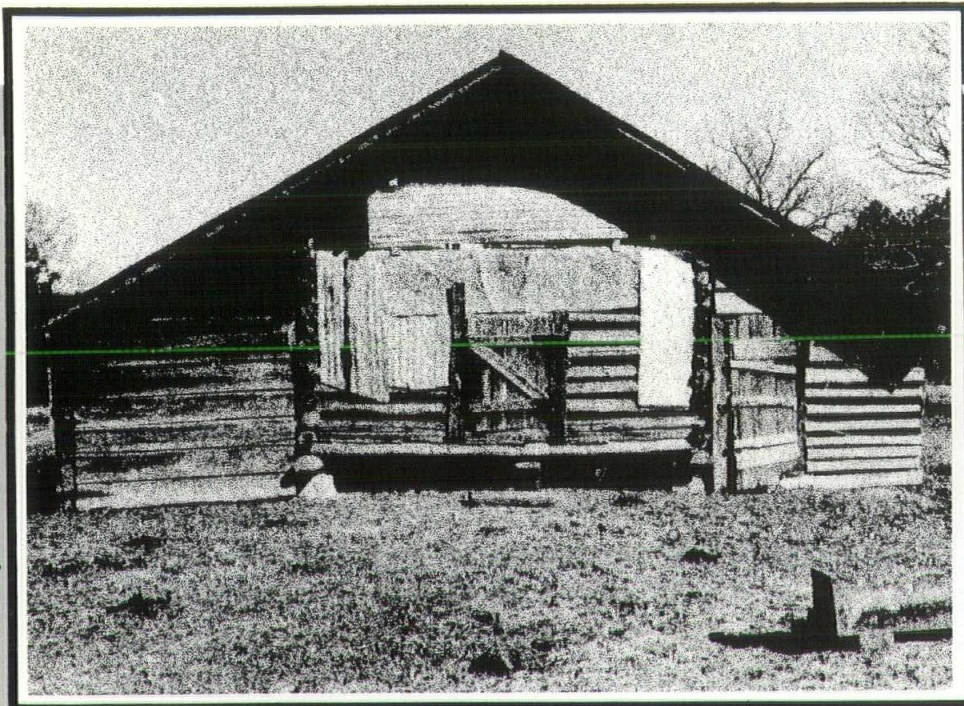
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# Folk Architecture And Us

Photo by Patti Carr Black



by Paul Roberson, AIA

JONATHAN AINSWORTH  
HOUSE — patched log barn.

A recent exhibit put together and circulated around the state by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History featured a photographic study of Folk Architecture from the Piney Woods section of the state (the southeaster quarter of Mississippi). This study by Patti Carr Black brings attention to a sector of Mississippi culture largely ignored in favor of the more affluent society associated with "antebellum architecture". These early buildings done by pioneers with no training in building and architecture reflect logical solutions to environmental and living problems they are useful to us not only as lessons in simplicity and honesty but as vital links to our roots and past.

It takes a lot of guts for modern architects to design simple, graceful buildings, appropriate to their site and intended uses. It takes discipline to avoid the latest fads, fashions, and badly considered cliches that have become the bane of the design professions. It requires a confidence few of us seem to have to avoid destroying a beautiful natural site by littering it with the current design devices picked up from this month's professional journals.

These are the reasons we like to look at the rural folk architecture of the south. It provides a welcome respite from the insane competition to "design" something different regardless of its impact on the landscape.

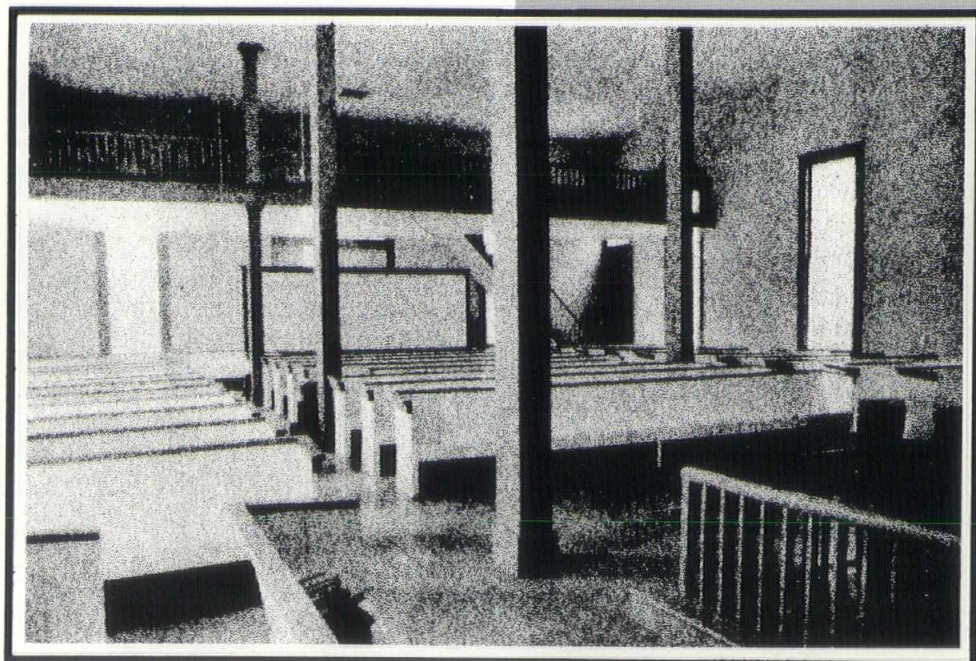
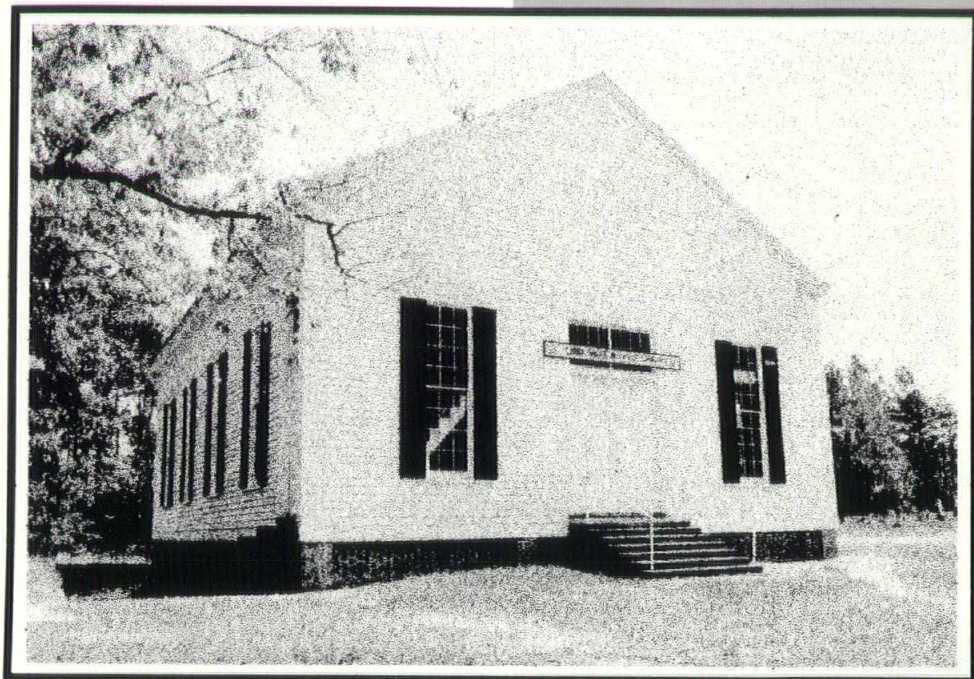


# Mississippi Piney Woods

A photographic study of Folk Architecture — an exhibition at  
the Mississippi State Historical Museum.  
Prepared by Patti Carr Black, Director of Mississippi  
State Historical Museum.

## China Grove Methodist Church

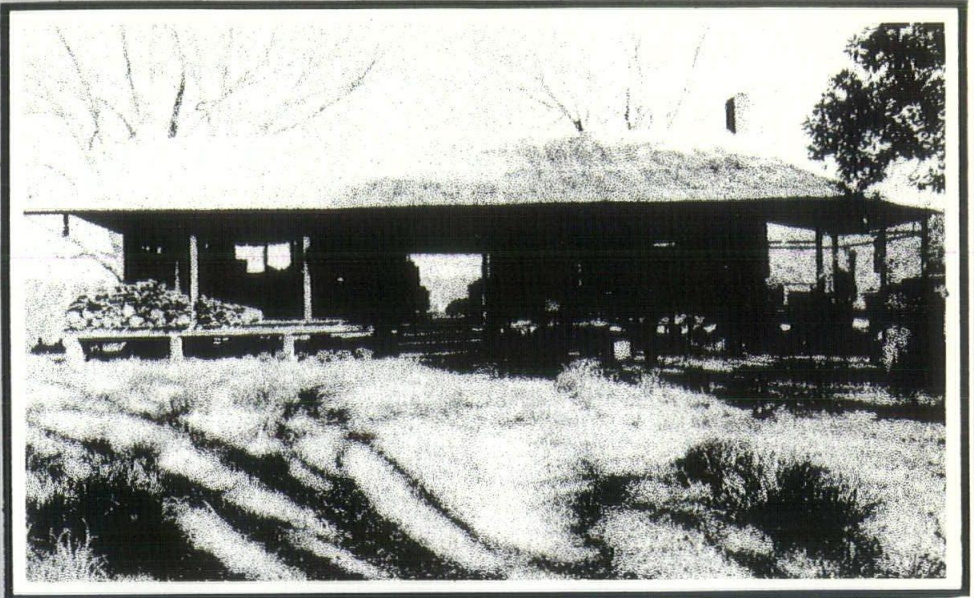
*CHINA GROVE METHODIST  
CHURCH — Built in 1854 in  
Walthall county. This was one of  
the more affluent churches of the  
day and featured a balcony for  
use by slaves and refined  
pew construction.*



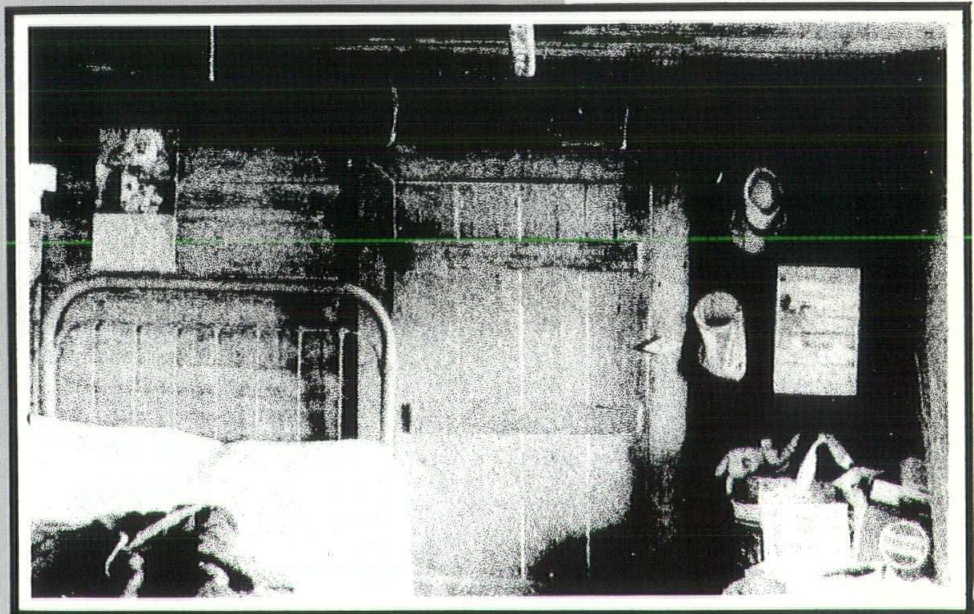


# Jonathan Ainsworth House

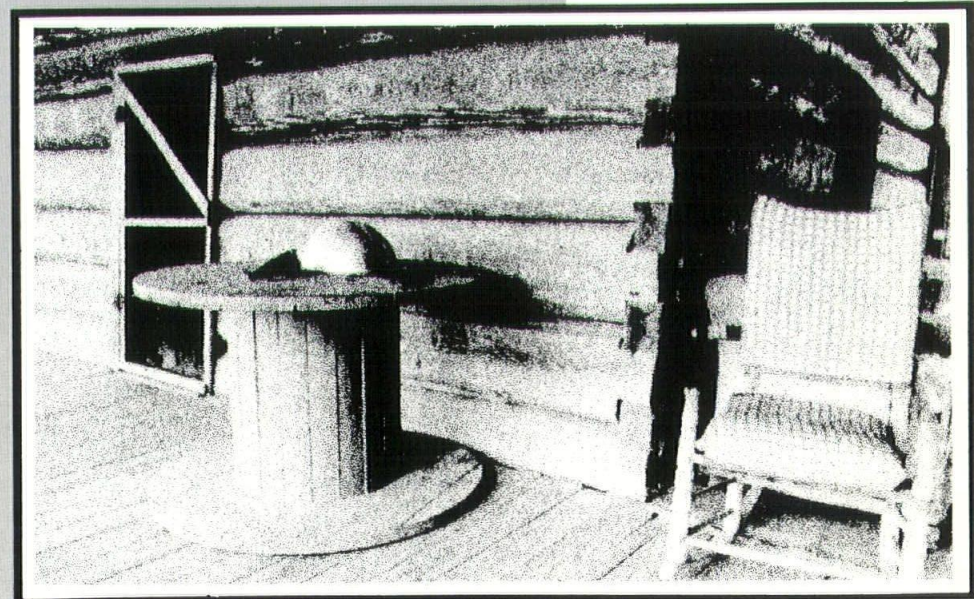
*THE AINSWORTH HOUSE — A dog-trot house built by Jonathan Ainsworth between 1860 and 1870 near Harrisville, Simpson county, of squared split logs. Gertie Ainsworth, the present owner and granddaughter of Jonathan was born in this house.*



*Rooms are small, tight and snug. Doors are made of wide pine planks with a simple swivel latch.*



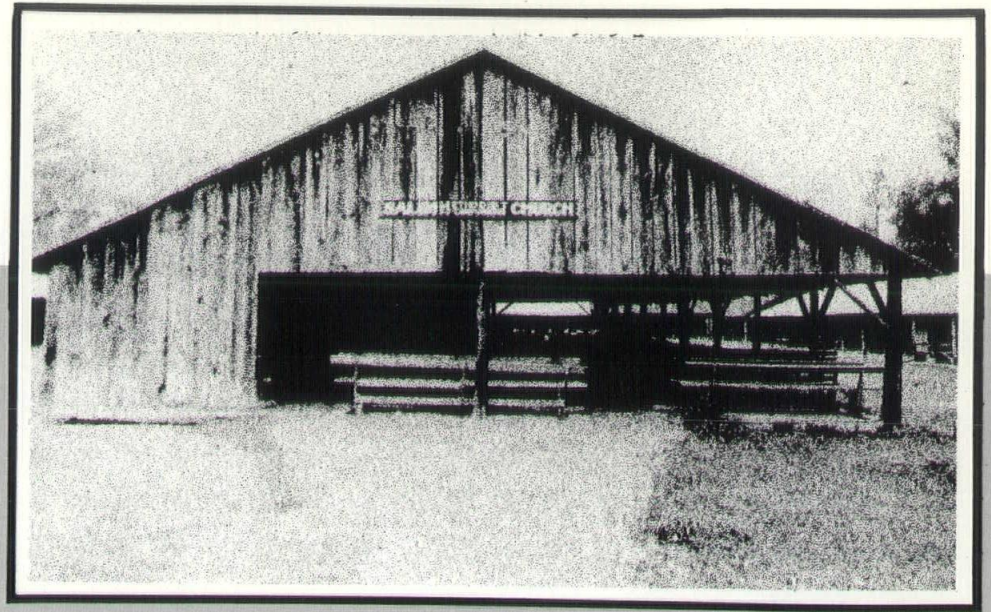
*A current feature to an old house — a cable spool table with a street light reflector center piece. Note the square notch method of joining logs together at corners.*



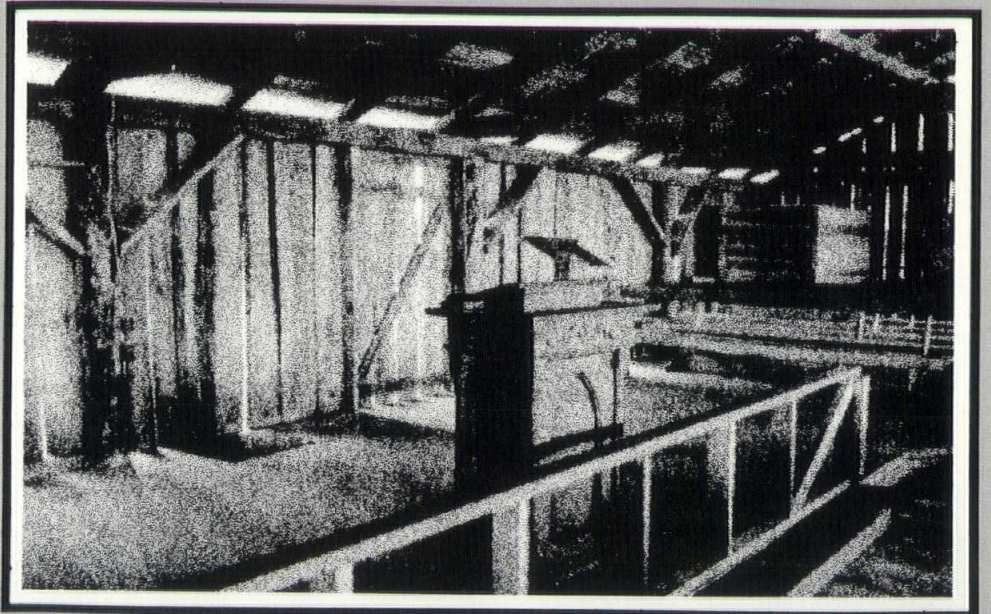


# Salem Methodist Campground

**SALEM CAMPGROUND** — Salem Methodist Church Campground on the Jackson-George county line, is the oldest extant campground in Mississippi. The first camp meeting at Salem was held in 1826 and the present site selected in 1842. The original buildings were replaced after a tornado in 1906.

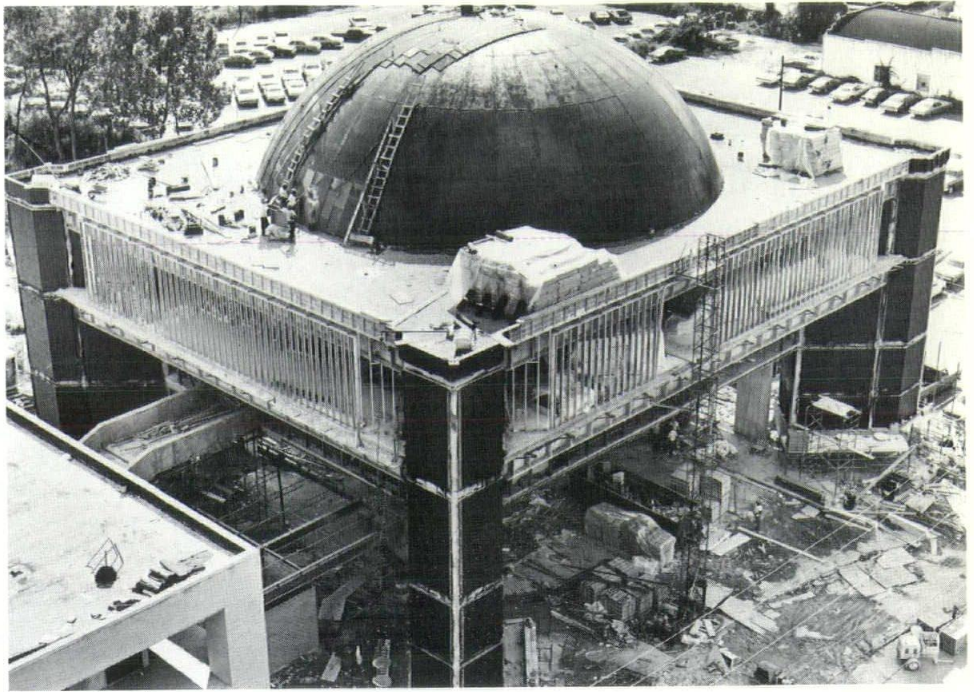
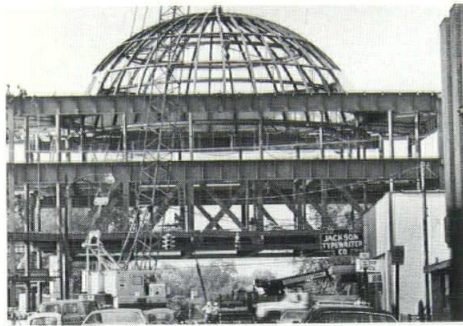
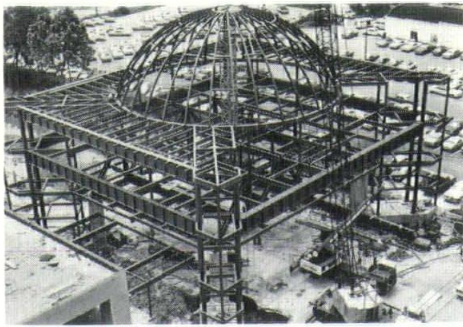


The "Tabernacle" is the central building with cabins called "tents" surrounding it in a "U" shape. The Tabernacle holds 300 people and houses week long meetings once a year.



This is the parker tent, the oldest on the Salem Campground.







# Arts Center/Planetarium Nears Completion

A civic dream and architectural triumph has become reality in downtown Jackson, Mississippi, as the \$4.2 million Mississippi Arts Center/Russell C. Davis Planetarium complex nears completion.

The 51,000-square-foot complex is being constructed by Rouse Construction Company, Inc., of Jackson. Henry W. Rouse, President, directed the operation through some unusual construction problems.

The structure, which is set 20 feet above street level and rises 81 feet from the street to the top of the planetarium dome, bridges a bridge over Town Creek in downtown Jackson.

As if that weren't enough of a headache, the creek was undergoing an extensive reculverting job at the same time that construction began on the new planetarium. Finally, the street which crosses the bridge over which the building was being

constructed had to be extended — through the building.

The Rouse team had to penetrate an existing bridge structure — which had to remain in place — with a new foundation that had to be installed in a free-flowing creek.

The general construction contract for the complex came to \$2.5 million. In 1972 voters approved a \$1.5 million bond

*continued on page 14*



photos by Donn Fletcher



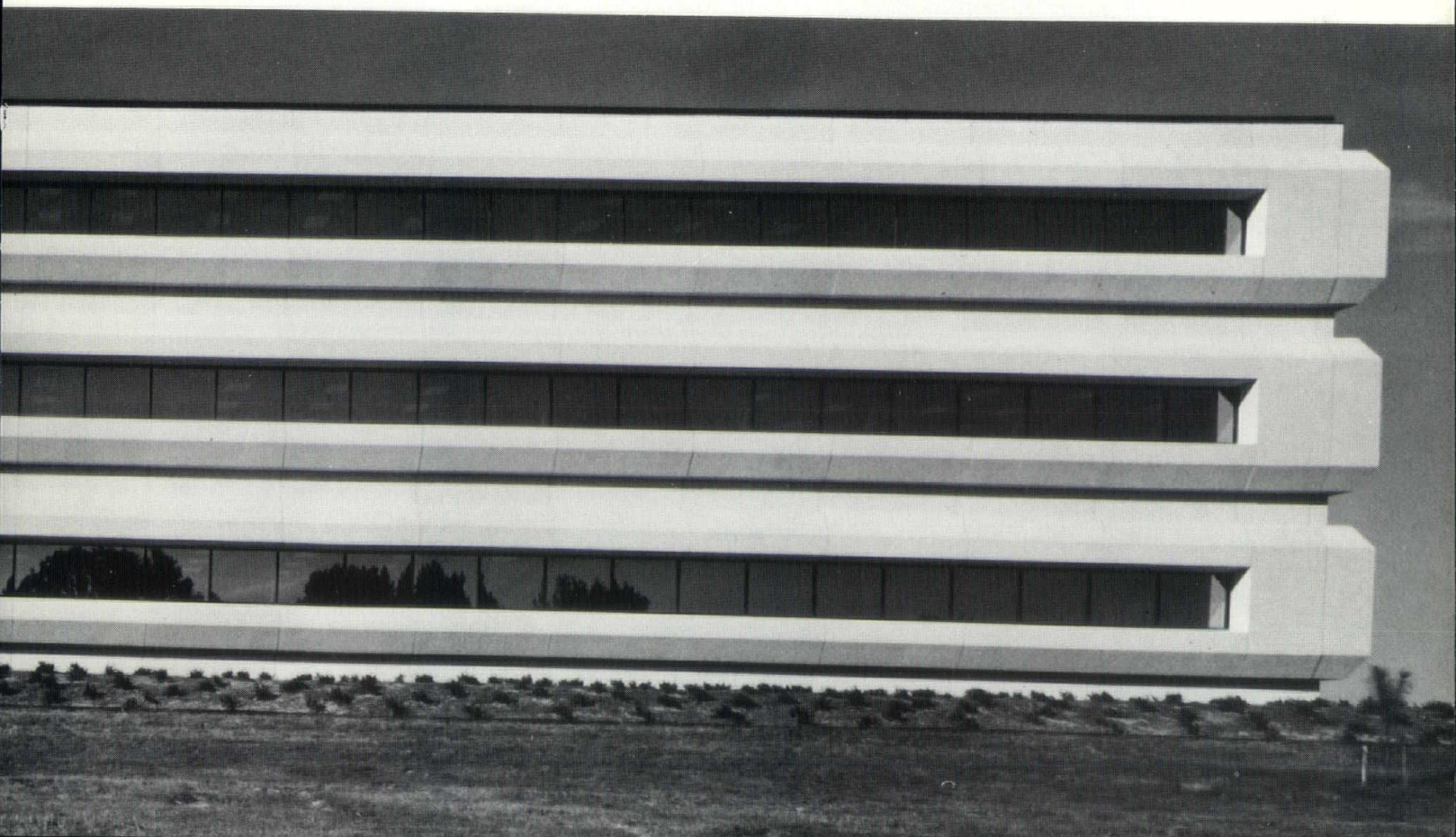
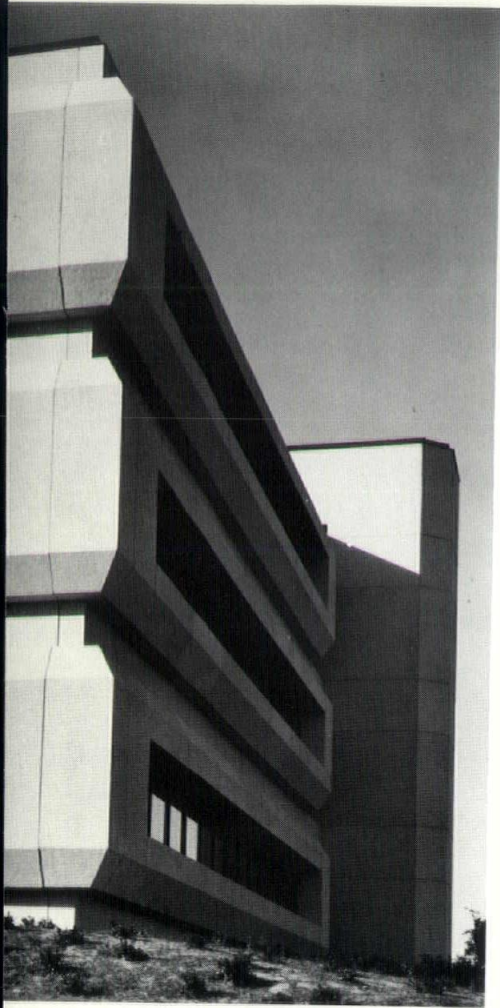
# South Central Bell Data Center

A 40-acre tract was chosen for the location of the most sophisticated computer structure in Jackson. The facility would house first and second generation computers. Power requirements included automatic switch-over for dual primary service from the local power company with emergency generators and uninterrupted power source capabilities. The design solution incorporates a linear spine dividing the building into two sections- office space and computer areas. This spine is defined externally by the stairs and window penetrations. Office functions are expressed by bands of windows and computer spaces by their conspicuous absence. Future growth both horizontally and vertically and the need for other facilities in the area were programmed. Accelerated construction techniques were utilized resulting in reduction of five months in the project schedule.

*Barlow & Plunkett, Architects*









# The Failure Of Modern Architecture

By Brent C. Brolin

reviewed by Robert Ivy

We stand at a change in course professionally from modernism's graven truths to something more responsive to context, to human use and habitation. The death knell of the absolutes has been sounded by leading critics and practitioners alike, led by such men as Moore, Blake, and Venturi, but architect Brent Brolin expresses and explores many of these formerly scattered sentiments at one time, one place.

His book is polemical, argumentative. It is therefore controversial since it sets out to declare a new order, but its strongest feature is its criticism of modernism and where that road has led us. It is weakest in its presentation of alternatives.

The book is divided into three major sections: a study of modernism — its origins, practice, and limitations; a study of sociological design, or the failure of design divorced from human experience; and two case studies. In discussing modernism Brolin maintains that despite half a century's exposure to the modern style, most people (the masses) have not accepted it. "Is this due to most people's inferior taste?" he asks rhetorically. Inherent in this rejection is a nineteenth century notion that artists and their work form an elite, separated from middle-class values. However, in one major area of design where architects and the middle class

could meet, at the private residence, architects have abdicated the field for two reasons: not only has it been uneconomical, but most families, uninitiated into modernism, have known what they wanted and have not desired an architect's services.

Brolin exhibits the roots of modernism: in the 19th century cult of "genius" or originality, in the naive belief in the machine and of consequent Progress, in the theory of Evolution which seemed to show a natural tendency toward simplification and refinement, and in the reaction to excessive applied ornament and decoration. But as Brolin shows, simple forms were not easily achieved. Many apparently simple details required expensive hand finishing, such as contemporary chrome and glass furniture which must be turned and rubbed by hand.

Out of the nineteenth century roots came moral truths which reinforced a new visual order: HONESTY of materials, HONESTY of form which reflected actual use, HONESTY of structure. Architects seized morality as a shield and buckler and sallied forth to face the brave new world. As Corbu said, "It is a question of morality; lack of morality, lack of truth is intolerable." Rigorous words. But the forms architects sought to defend were ultimately shaped by aesthetic preference, not truth. The Ten Commandments never included "Less is More."

The underlying failure of abstract modernism was that the universal truths of the solid/void relationship and the open plan did not always acknowledge the diverse, more complex and ultimately richer world at large. Man in the abstract does not

exist; men do. And Sanaa, Yemen, which Brolin explores, differs from Canton, China, differs from Canton, Mississippi.

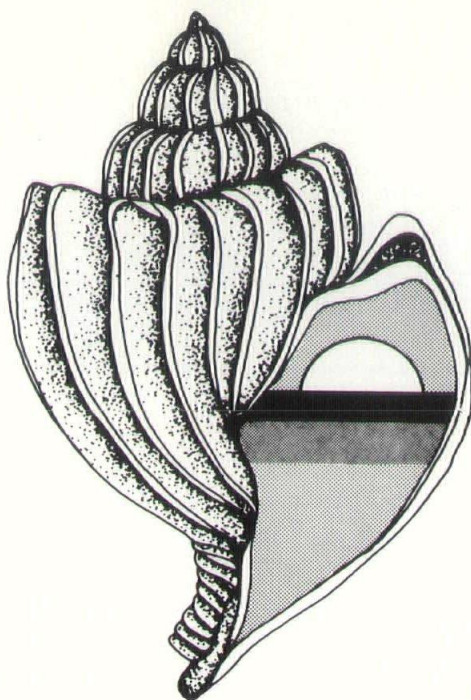
Brolin's arguments are not new to most architects. They themselves have been changing, as is witnessed by the diversity of contemporary design including a popular trend among architects to renovate existing structures, where use of warm wood, brick, and color are common.

While many of the author's arguments are thought provoking, and his photographs delightful, his scholarship is less than rigorous, he tends to generalize, and he selectively omits positive debate, such as the fact that architecture produced a vigorous, viable art form when other arts were foundering in philosophy. Margaret Mead is quoted on the book's flyleaf as follows: "a visually fascinating attack — possibly on the wrong people."

Read *The Failure of Modern Architecture*. Some of its excessive polemics will enrage you; others will strike chords of recognition. It guarantees at least one excellent conversation with a friend.

—Robert Ivy, Associate Member  
AIA — Virden & Roberson LTD





# 25th Gulf States Regional Convention

## ARE YOU READY FOR GSR?

The Mississippi chapter will be the host for the up-coming 25th Gulf States Regional Convention of the AIA, April 13-16 at the Biloxi Hilton.

With less than two months to go, things are really starting to happen. The exhibitors are all lined up to show their products. The first mailing for Honor Awards entries has gone out. Tentative schedules have been set for you, the ladies, and students attending. If the preparations for the Gulf States Convention are any indication, the event should be a great success!

### CHECK THIS LIST:

- ☐ Have you volunteered your services? Your participation is directly related to the success of the convention.
- ☐ Are your reservations made? Don't wait until the last minute. Be sure to bring your wife!
- ☐ Have you entered your work in the Honor Awards competition? If you don't enter, you can't win!

## EXHIBITORS

The following is a preliminary list of exhibitors for the Gulf States Regional Convention. Be sure to visit their booths while at the convention. Also, be sure to register for door prizes!

American Desk Manufacturing Company  
 Binswanger Glass Company  
 Butler Manufacturing Company  
 General Electric Company  
 General Equipment Manufacturers  
 W.R. Grace Company  
 Gulf South Prestress Concrete Association  
 Kewanee Scientific Equipment Company  
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 Pellerin Laundry Machinery Sales Company, Inc.  
 Port Distributing Company  
 P.P.G. Industries  
 Silbrico Corporation  
 Paul Westerfield Company

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### THURSDAY, APRIL 13

**9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

REGISTRATION — Hilton Lobby  
 Sports Activities — Reservations required (Golf Tournament, Tennis Competitions, Swimming)

**2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Gulf States Regional Council Meeting  
 Student Orientation

**4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Tour of Historic Homes, Tour of Gulfport & Marine Island, Tour of Tullis — Grass Lawn, Tour of Biloxi. (Tour Registration Required)

**7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

Welcoming Cocktail Party

**9:00 p.m. to ?**

Free to sample Gulf Coast Restaurants



## FRIDAY, APRIL 14

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

REGISTRATION — Hilton  
Lobby

7:45 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Sweet Roll Breakfast

8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Gulf States General Meeting

10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Continue Gulf States General  
Meeting

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Student Presentation to Pro-  
fessionals

12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Lunch in Exhibition Hall

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Exhibition Time (Door Prizes;  
Entry available at booths)

5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Architects/Exhibitors Banquet  
(Door Prizes & Booth awards will  
be awarded)

## SATURDAY, APRIL 15

7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Breakfast with Architects

8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Programed Speaker

10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Programed Speaker

12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Programed Speaker

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tour of Louis Sullivan Homes,  
Tour of Bruce Goff Homes, Tour

of Coast by Air (Tour Reserva-  
tions Required)

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

AIA Component Meetings

6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Cocktail Party

8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Awards Banquet (Enarman B.  
Mitchell, Speaker)

9:30 p.m. to 12:00 midnite  
Dance

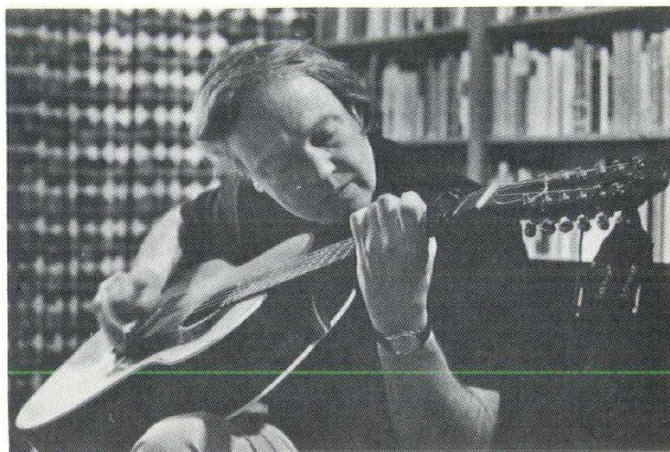
## SUNDAY, APRIL 16

Until 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast on Your Own

9:00 a.m.

Tours of Litton Industries (ship  
building), Tour of NASA, Tour of  
Ingalls Shipyard



## POET JAMES DICKEY TO BE GUEST SPEAKER AT GSR

Poet James Dickey, literary critic and renowned author of "Deliverance", will be the guest speaker at the 25th Annual Gulf States Regional Convention of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) on April 15th at the Biloxi Hilton.

Jackson architect, David Trigiani, president of the Mississippi chapter of the AIA and chairman for the event, made the announcement of Mr. Dickey's appearance recently.

"The theme of the convention is Regionalism and how it affects architectural design. James Dickey is a poet foremost, but also a Southerner and in his own words 'a beholder' of the South as a place and time unto itself. We expect he will provide a fresh view of the South which will serve as inspiration to the architects from

Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Alabama and Tennessee expected to attend the Gulf States Convention," Trigiani explained.

Dickey's substantial list of credentials include: National Book Award Winner in 1966, Consultant in Poetry for the Library of Congress (the equivalent of poet laureate for the country), Poet-in-Residence at Reed College in Oregon, Writer-in-Residence at the University of South Carolina, and is considered America's First Man of Letters.

Several hundred members of the participating chapters of the AIA are expected to attend the convention, hosted by the Mississippi chapter headquartered in Jackson.



## ARCHITECTS & DRAFTSMEN REFRESHER COURSES

The AIA, under the auspices of the School of Architecture, is sponsoring classes in Structural, Electrical, and Mechanical Design at the R&D Center in Jackson. The instructors are Otto R. Maganos, Consulting Structural Engineer; William W. Adams, Consulting Electrical Engineer; and David Butler, Consulting Mechanical Engineer. The classes are structured to be a refresher for architects and candidates for registration examinations, and to teach the basics of each discipline to draftsmen and others. There are twenty students enrolled, including one interior decorator.

Class convenes at 6:30 each Monday. Classes have been underway since early December, however, new students can enroll at any time. The Structural course will continue through February and March. The Electrical course will end on February 6. The Mechanical course will begin on February 13. Classes in Structure

are from 6:30 until 7:45 and Electrical from 7:45 until 9:00. The Mechanical will supplant the Electrical in February.

The cost is \$25 per month per student. Questions are to be directed to Arthur J. Godfrey, Chairman of the Continuing Education Committee.

## MEETING NOTICE

AIA Monthly Meeting  
February 24, 1978  
Mississippi School Supply Co.  
4155 Industrial Drive  
Jackson

Speaker:

Irving D. Schwartz, FASID, AIA  
President, IDS Inc.  
821 So. Neil St.  
Champaign, Ill.

Topic:

Architect/Interior Designer  
Relationship

Cocktail Buffet — 6:30 P.M.  
Program — 8:00 P.M.

February 23 — Irving Schwartz  
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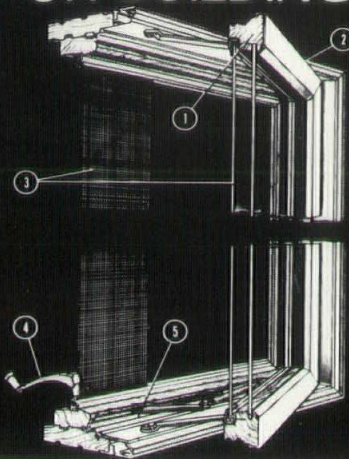
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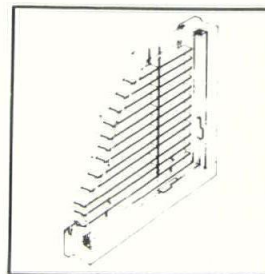
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*continued from page 7*

issue to bring the long-planned Arts Center to reality, and civic leaders raised an additional \$1.3 million to help defray construction costs.

The complex, which is located on Pascagoula Street in downtown Jackson, will be one of the showcase arts centers of the South. Included in the Arts Center will be Jackson's first art museum, a bookstore, a gift shop, a manager's office, meeting rooms, a studio for art instruction, an exhibit hall, a restaurant, and offices, practice rooms and studios, for the Mississippi Art Association, Opera/South, the Mississippi Opera Association, the Jackson Ballet Guild and the Jackson Symphony Orchestra.

The planetarium, named in honor of the mayor who helped guide the crucial bond issue to passage, will feature a 60-foot diametric dome and will have seating capacity for 170 people.

## the mississippi architect

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The Arts Center building, over a decade in the planning, will officially open in late Spring. Some of the organizations have already begun their moves into the new structure, and all will be located there by the time the Arts Center is formally dedicated at the end of April.

Exterior construction on the planetarium is expected to be completed near the beginning of February, with final installation of the telescope and technical instruments finished in the summer.

Doug Tuttle, executive director of the Jackson Redevelopment Authority, who supervised construction, said the Authority was "most satisfied" with the construction job — which put the complex ahead of schedule.

Rouse Construction Co. is one of the nation's largest construction firms, with offices in Mississippi, New York, Georgia, Tennessee, and the District of Columbia. Architects were Biggs & Weir of Jackson.

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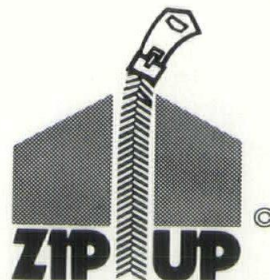
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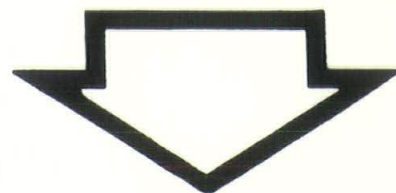


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# Travel Sweepstakes Announced



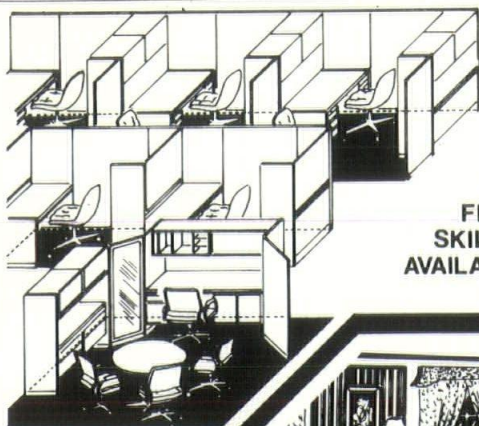
The main purpose of **The Mississippi Architect** is to serve as a communication vehicle for the Mississippi Chapter AIA and all architecturally related firms. You must realize that this is best accomplished through active participation from our readers. To encourage readers to further participate in the content of **The Mississippi Architect**, we the editors have set up a Travel Sweepstakes.

The prize will be a Windjammer Cruise. The cruise is discussed in the ad on the inside back cover of this issue. It is being made available to our readers in exchange for advertising space in the magazine.

The Travel Sweepstakes rules are simple. Each reader submitting an article which is subsequently published will have his or her name placed in a pool. At regular intervals (when we have built up sufficient credit with Windjammer Cruises), a lucky reader's name will be drawn from the pool and a free cruise will be arranged.

Any reader is eligible to submit any number of written articles, letters to the editor, features about fellow architects, photographs, or graphic illustrations.

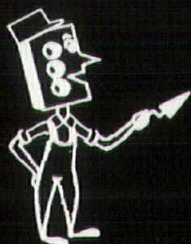
The name of the game is participation in your magazine . . . so as they say in show biz, keep those cards and letters coming. Win a free trip to the romantic West Indies, drink exotic rum smashes, sunbathe and swim . . . after all, everyone's a winner, because **The Mississippi Architect** will be even better for your contribution.



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