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Cover

The Roster Issue is here! . . . Finally, something to crow about.

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A Celebration of Architecture 1979 State Convention Biloxi, Mississippi August 2-5

Agenda

Thursday, August 2	
All day 5:30 p.m 7:30 p.m	Welcome Social
Friday, August 3	
8:00 a.m 9:30 a.m Re 9:30 a.m 10:30 a.m	by Institute
10:30 a.m 12:00 p.m 12:00 noon Sponsors L Dude R	anch (Wives included)
AfternoonBus 6:30 p.mBus enroute t	ses depart from Hilton to Gulfport Yacht Club
6:45 p.m. 7:30 p.m 8:30 p.m.	Cash Bar Seafood Buffet at Gulfport Yacht Club
8:45 p.m	Moonlight Cruise to Broadwater Marina
Saturday, August 4	
8:00 a m 0:30 a m	Breakfast Meeting -

8:00 a.m 9:30 a.m Breakfast Meeting —
Executive Committee
9:30 a.m 10:30 a.m Government Program (Institute)
10:30 a.m 12:00 p.m Business Meeting
Afternoon
Boat Racing and Sand Castle
Competitions
7:00 p.m 8:00 p.m Social Hour
8:00 p.m Honor Awards Banquet
Note: The adult hospitality room will be open for

Note: The adult hospitality room will be open for early arrivals and will remain open throughout entire convention, compliments of Tri-State Brick & Tile Company.

Registration

A registration fee of \$65.00 will be charged for each member which will entitle that member to attend all events. Wives or husbands of Chapter members will be admitted to all related events under the same registration at no additional cost. Children attending functions will be required to purchase tickets for that event.

Pre-registration badges will be distributed at the Convention and are to be worn as admission to all events. Additional tickets may be purchased to individual events.





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Chapel Restoration Underway

By Harry E. Wier, AIA

The congregation and friends of the Chapel of the Cross, in Madison County, Mississippi, have raised \$50,000 to match federal funds to restore and stabilize this building. It is anticipated that to complete the construction as set forth in the initial phase of this program additional funds will be required. Request has been made for another \$50,000 federal grant which will require the subscription of an additional \$50,000 by the congregation and friends.

The mid-19th century structure is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and was designed by Frank Wills, an Englishman who was the official architect for the New York Ecclesiological Society. Other Episcopal churches of this period by Wills are the "carpenter gothic" Grace Episcopal Church in Canton, Miss., and Christ Church, in Napoleonville, La.

Margaret L. Johnstone built the Chapel of the Cross on her Annandale plantation as a memorial to her husband John T. Johnstone. The building was dedicated in 1852.

Situated on ten acres of wooded land, the Episcopal chapel is viewed from Mississippi Highway 463 through a beautiful grove of oaks. This setting has great impact and adds quality and dimension to the overall environment.



This church building is a prime physical example of an era that is fast fading away. This preservation program will save it for the enjoyment of future generations, not only as a museum piece, but as a meeting place for a lively and growing congregation in a fast expanding population area.

The first stage of work consists of installation of a poured concrete bored pile and grade beam foundation; subsurface peripheral and under-floor drainage; removal of present wood beams and flooring and replacement on stable supports; removal, replacement and restoration of deficient brickwork on the exterior; cleaning of exterior masonry; installation of cross and parapet coping where they do not now exist on the east sanctuary wall; removal of present layers of roofing down to the wood sheathing and application of nailable rigid insulation; installation of wood shingles and exterior wood trim.

On the interior, furred plaster walls with run ornamental plaster



Wier ui Photo: H.

mouldings will be installed in a manner similar to the original. Fixed steel sash glazed with clear glass will be positioned in the present wood frames. It is anticipated that this clear glazing will be replaced in the future with leaded stained glass sections which will likely be given as memorials. In the first stage, the present heating and electrical systems will be left in place and used. Underfloor air-conditioning ductwork extending underground through the exterior brick wall on

the north will be installed and later connected to underground supply and return piping to a remotely located area housing (the new mechanical and electrical equipment installed in the second stage of construction). Roughing in of certain electrical conduit and junction boxes will be done for future work where these items would be covered up during the first stage of construction.

Completed plans and specifications, executed by Virden and Fields, Ltd., Architects of

Jackson have been submitted to the Division of Historic Preservation, Mississippi Department of Archives and History for review and approval.

Photo: Robert WY

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The second stage of the work which at this time is not funded, will consist of parking areas, walks, service drive, cemetery rehabilitation, overall landscaping, public toilets, storage, mechanical and electrical equipment area; the completion of the air-conditioning and the installation of a new electrical system.



Back To The Drawing Boards

Continued excerpts from Wolf von Eckhardt's address to the Miss. Chapter AIA. Part 1 was published in Vol. 9 #3.

You remember Watts, the little suburb near Los Angeles, exploded and they made a survey to try to find out what happened and they found that only 14% of the people in Watts had automobiles. Any of you who have been in Los Angeles know that if you don't have a car, you can't go anywhere. You can't march down that freeway and protest to city hall or find a job or even see your girlfriend and that got people very angry.

As you all know this whole concept of taking large areas of slums, tearing them down and then trying to sell that land again to developers to develop according to a mostly city-made plan didn't work or didn't work very well, because it never occurred to anyone that if you tear down a slum even a slum has people living in it and we never built sufficient replacement housing for these people, so some urban renewal which was originally meant to create more housing for the poor has actually destroyed more housing for the poor than it has built and so the blacks in the ghetto got mad . . . rioted in Washington and eight years later it still looked the same. I am obviously speaking of the old northeastern cities, not so much of the cities of the South but there are parellels and you can't be surprised that New York goes

bankrupt if it's just a poorhouse, which it is.

Another contributing factor to the so-called "urban crisis" in my view is modern architecture. At the time that this was a new approach I certainly very much welcomed. This was something we all thought was not only going to bring a new architecture, but it was also going to bring a "brave, new world"; it was not just to create the new kind of more livable buildings and architecture, but also a new kind of man, be new, be very educational, wholesome. The basic concept I think negated two very important factors. One of these factors is the human urge for ornamentation and decoration. If you don't let people decorate their homes and their houses, they decorate themselves - there is a wild craze of tattooing the human body this urge for ornament and to some extent self-expression which is probably psychological, is absolutely essential t people.

Erik Erikson, the psychologist, said that man first gives some of himself to a public monument, to a garden or to a painting that he hangs in his house and then that painting or that garden or that monument gives that self back to the person in the form of a sense of identity. You don't feel at home in a just institutional room until you have done something to it that expresses your own personality. And this is also true for a community. Washington has built the Washington monument and we have given this to our natural environment, to our national capital as a symbol and now, if we go to Washington, we buy a picture postcard of the Washington monument, send it home to say we've been to the national capital.

There was the idea at the Bauhaus with le Corbusier that we are now in a new age, the age of technology. In this age people can not build their housing and their villages for themselves anymore, the architect has to step in and build the total man-made environment.

The inspiration for the new style, the style that came into vogue in the 1920's and came to America with Phillip Johnson mostly after the war, earlier with Richard Neutra — was not architect or

builders, but painters, Modrian, the cubists, the constructivists, the Russian school of painters that only painted architecture and Illizitski who said that painting was the turning point of art, but le Corbusier painted everyday. He painted in the morning and he designed buildings in the afternoon and had a very — it was purely a visual art, rather than what it has to be, certainly in our age more than ever - a social art - an art that doesn't accommodate machinery and machinist's aesthetics . . . but accommodate people and the ultimate in modern abstract art was modern abstract architecture, Malayvich's painting white on white and Phillip Johnson's glass box or Mies van der Rohe's glass box are really very much the same thing. It is taking non-art and non-architecture ad absurdium, practically.

Now aesthetically this might be very nice, but as a form maker, as a model for something for people to live in, it was of course all off. And the consequence was that the builders went right ahead and built what they thought the public wanted and you people, you architects, have virtually no influence on residential architecture.

If any of you have been in Lafayette village where Mies' townhouses are, people don't know what to do with their furniture, because it's all glass walls and they don't want to show the furniture. They all have to have unifrom curtains and be very much regimented because if the curtains were what individuals wanted the building wouldn't have that aesthetic appearance that Mies wanted to give it. So modern architecture was not only missing a lot of things that people wanted, it was actually regimenting - you had to conform to that style.

La Corbusier, for one, turned around and said, "OK if I can't use the straight, fair and square box, I am going to turn the whole building into a sculpture," and chaos and hell really broke loose because then you have conflict and tension within the modern movement between the formalistic glass box or square style and this concrete plastic self-expression the free form building which of course clobbered the city and the

city scape.

Brazilia is an example of architecture, not as it announced itself to be, namely form following function, (there is no functional form) but of sculptural expression. Inside the Bowl sits the legislature. And of course it's very symbolic of our day, just like the United Nations where the most dominant element in the composition is the administrative tower. Brazilia is the same thing it is not Harlem; it is not Washington; like the state capitol here with its dome predominant. with democracy and the symbolism of the legislature spotlighted - it is the clerk sitting in the tower. This is just to show that even though architects and modernists often complain how little influence they have, they have had tremendous influence in the notion of the radiant city, with its high rise, and open spaces between. Even though Corbusier was thinking of the park in which people would enjoy the sunshine, it inevitably turned into a parking lot.

Many of our cities are canyons of abstract architecture, and people go to the lively places, full of human vitality. People's reaction to this kind of abstracted environment is to fight it. It contributes to the angst, anxiety many people feel today, it gives a Daliesque / Kafka-esque feeling of being lost in the big city.

Modern architecture has been particularly painful for the poor, largely because the great American middle class rejected this kind of architecture and the only people who had to endure it were the poor. Government and the housing administration hired architects.

So where do we go from here? I think this kind of romantic technological Archigram future that we talked about that is putting a Bucky Fuller bubble dome over New York, that future, thank God, is behind us. I think it will never be seriously attempted, because it is not what we need nor what we want. One of the big difficulties if not tragedies of our times is that we have come to a position where we can do almost anything we want to do technically. That confronts us with choices. Charlie Eames once said that if a sculptor has a piece of granite, it is almost impossible for him to do something bad, but if he has

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plasticene, it's almost impossible to do something really good. What we have in a sense is plasticene: technologically we can always hire an engineer who can make "that thing" stand up somehow. We can have southern exposures and glass walls with solar gain because we can always find a civil engineer to make it livable. Life is much more difficult for the designer.

Bob Venturi has done more to develop architectural thinking than almost anyone, (although he has done very little to develop a good architecture himself,) but his notion that the real folk art is on the Las Vegas strip is, in my view, totally mistaken. It's fun to go to Las Vegas if you have the money to lose, or to see the bright lights for one or two nights, but this is not where we find the inspiration for the new vernacular - the new architecture. I don't think we find it in blue whales (the Pacific Design Center). I'm afraid that post modernism is just in the wrong direction. I think it's fun to build theater sets even in a public square, even out of real marble, as in the piazza d'Italia in New Orleans, but it isn't going to lead us out of the dilemma we're in. Nor does turning the bowels of the building inside out as at the Pompidou Center in Paris. The Plaza in front of it works very nicely - there is always life there, and it just shows that you just can't kill Paris very easily certainly not with one or two buildings.

I think one direction (and I very much welcomed it upstairs in the very impressive exhibit for the Pearl River Project), is the Habitat idea of stacking up individual buildings with which a person can identify. While it is obnoxious to be forced into a slab, here everyone has a garden and a terrace. I must say I congratulate Tom Biggs and the class that worked on it. It is one of the most impressive projects I've seen. Moshe Safde began the movement with Habitat, and did it better I think in Coldspring, a New Town in Baltimore which is now under construction.

Then we have Phillip the Great with his little toy, (the AT&T building, New York). Because of TIME magazine and others, it probably is the most popular building in the United States today among the people, even though it is not yet built. It is also a most controversial unpopular building among architects. Architects grow very uneasy when everything they learned in Gropius' class at Harvard is thrown overboard, when everything that is supposed to be a crime is now practiced by the very men who introduced the new style into the vernacular. But I think it's a very sincere attempt to get back closer to the people, back closer to the tradition of McKim, Mead & White, to continuity of American tradition that was somehow disrupted by the people from Weimar and Paris.

It was here, in the United States, that traditional forms were brought into a technological age skyscrapers were shaped by Sullivan and Jenny into accepted non-traditional forms which formed a continuity evolving and developing through the ages. I don't think any art style is going to last long that makes an abrupt break with the past. I think where we went wrong is the abruptness

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continued from page 13

with which we tried to condemn everything that had gone before us. You can't live without history, you can't live without continuity, you can't live without your past, because if you don't know about your past, you don't know anything about your future.

I think a great deal of the basis for the kind of architecture, the kind of environment, the kind of livability and communities that we develop in the years to come (and again I think the problem upstairs is a confirmation of this), comes not of the modern movement but out of the New Town movement. Reston and Columbia didn't care too much about architectural forms, but they cared a great deal about community design, community architecture, urban design, interaction of people, so people can live the good life and have the vital necessities of life within walking distance. All this goes back to human nature, but I think Reston is a much greater breakthrough than the Bucky Fuller dome of the World Trade Center.

I think a great deal of the inspiration of the new architecture to come is in the making - you can feel it if you have your ears to the ground. It comes from this whole new movement of the adaptive use of old buildings from Ghiradelli Square to the present widespread adaptive reuse. Mississippi State Architectural School illustrates Charlie Eames' granite theory: you can make more out of a wonderful old garage, a cow palace. I think the architecture school of Mississippi is wonderful — a very suitable, very inspired building in large part because it didn't have to be created from scratch or from looking at paintings or old issues of Forum magazine.

The Architecture School came out of a very sound, humble building which had to be adapted to new uses. The architects and school became consciously more aware of what the new function really was and how to accommodate it. They could do this better because they had something to work with than if they had had to start from scratch. I'm really convinced of that.

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	(formerly G802)	4.50	3.00			
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