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PICTURE OF THE ISSUE

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PRESS RELATIONS

An address to the Raleigh Section NCAIA by Claude Sitton, Editor The News & Observer

I am glad to have this opportunity to discuss with you our mutual concern—a better informed public. I have some brief remarks. Later, I hope you'll have some questions, tough questions. Newspapers are quasi-public institutions. Thus, they are or should be responsive to public needs and desires. Your questions, on whatever subject, can help me to see where those of us at The News and Observer are falling short in meeting those needs.

Some time ago a young politician was making his rounds over the mountains. He came upon an old lady rocking on the porch of her cabin back up in a cove. They talked for awhile and finally he asked her age. She told him and the politician exclaimed: "Why, Ma'am, you must have seen Haley's Comet." The old lady studied him for a minute and replied: "Why, yes, young man, I did. But only from a distance."

What I know about architecture and public relations has been picked up from a distance—as an outsider. But if my role here today is that of an outsider, my interest in your work is more than a casual one. For in a very real sense newspaperman and architects serve the same master. That master is the public. The newspaperman's public is made up of readers. Your public includes all of those who inhabit the buildings you design... all of those who buy your services... all of those who have a voice—through government—in your regulation. And who's not regulated today in one way or another?

The public, our master, is restless. Never before in American history has man been so at odds with the organization. This is an age of division—some say revolution. Church, state, university, commerce, industry and the professions—all of the organizations that make up the Establishment—all are under attack. And at the heart of all the controversy lies the issue best described by that cliche—the credibility gap. Organizations—or so say the dissidents—are no longer believable.

The answer to this complaint, it seems to me, is truth. Don't promise what you can't deliver. The head of a New York advertising agency—William Bernbach—puts it this way: "What I think is required is as simple as this: telling the truth about products, and products that are worth telling the truth about." The word products, of course, covers professional services.

It seems that we of the Establishment have oversold and over-promoted. ("Ralph Nader would be nowhere if automobiles were safe at any speed.") In short it's not college professors, or hippies or the weathermen who're undermining the faith of Americans in technology and progress. Only the Establishment can destroy that faith.

What are the tools of that destruction? False information, of course, is one. Misleading information is another. (We all now that you don't have to lie in order not to tell the truth.) A third—and perhaps the chief offender—is no information at all. By this I mean the failure to explain what your profession is doing—or not doing—and why. Our master, the public, frequently fails to understand what's taking place simply because no one has bothered to say.

Public mistrust, then, is a problem, a very serious problem, for all of us who serve the public. But isn't it also an opportunity? Six hundred years before the birth of Christ, the poet Alcaeus looked around him for the key to the success of the Greek city states. This was his conclusion: "not houses finely roofed or the stones of walls well-built, nay, nor canals and dockyards, make the city, but men able to use their opportunity." Yes, "men able to use their opportunity." That's what we must have to make the Establishment believable, credible, again.

To take advantage of that opportunity, we must have cooperation between the press and other institutions of the Establishment. We depend on you. And you on us. Let me make a few suggestions that may help you to do a better job in explaining your profession to our common master, the public.

The press and its particular public—its readers—are interested in news. And news has three basic characteristics. One is timeliness. Is it something that concerns people today? The second is importance. How many people will it affect? And what does it change their lives? The third characteristic is interest. Is it new? Is it different? Can people relate to it?

Why are these characteristics of news—timeliness, importance and interest—significant for architects? They're significant because they determine what your profession can get into the newspapers. These three factors control selection. They dictate what stories reporters and editors choose to cover. They limit what part of that coverage gets into print. Don't ignore them. There are some other "don'ts."

You have a story you consider favorable to your firm or to your profession. You urge a reporter or editor to get it into the paper. Then comes the next day. A development arises involving you or other architects that you consider less than favorable. A reporter calls you for information, comment or background. You evade his questions or refuse outright to help. Don't do it.

A reporter asks you about a situation with which you're not very familiar. You try to bluff your way through. Don't do it. Don't hesitate to say: "I don't know, but I'll try to find out."

A reporter asks for an interview with the head of your firm or your professional organization. For one reason or another, you're opposed and try to block him. Don't do it. Such officials are responsible men, or should be. Most can take care of themselves. If you shield them from the press, you may contribute to confusion, misunderstanding and bad reporting.

A reporter digs up an exclusive story. You find out about it and, for reasons of your own, pass the word to his competitors. One, you've made an enemy. Two, you've been unethical. Don't do it.

Now, let's go into some of the things you can do to help reporters get the architect's message across to the public. When that message is legitimate news, of course.

You start with much in your favor. Our society has been swept up in a breathtaking burst of change and innovation. Thousands of years passed between the invention of the wheel and that of the automobile. Yet, in the span of a single lifetime, man has made the fantastic leap from the auto to spaceships capable of carry-

(Continued on page 35)
urban design

vocabulary

process

technique
URBAN DESIGN: VOCABULARY, PROCESS, TECHNIQUE

Fundamental elements of a design vocabulary for the architectural profession expressed in terms of urban-related problems.

PETER BATCHelor, A.I.A.

The objective for the architectural profession in the creation of a new design vocabulary is to increase the levels of perception and communication among designers and clients. As design problems grow more complex, the task of explanation grows more burdensome. The following graphic vocabulary is therefore based on the belief that new communication standards are both desirable and possible, and that complex urban design problems generate their own graphic requirements.

The graphic examples used in this publication have been collected over a three-year period during the operation of the Urban Infrastructures Workshop at the School of Design. This workshop acts as an introductory course in urban design for architectural students and is aimed at simultaneously exploring current urban problems as well as techniques and processes of urban design.
One of the critical roles facing the changing architectural profession is the assumption of an appropriate communications methodology in urban design problems. As long as the architect has to work within the limits of a small site on a single building and for a single client, then traditional methods of communication may suffice, although there is a major movement occurring at the moment which may revolutionize the entire production of contract documents. Nevertheless, the mechanization of the production of drawings, or the use of traditional graphic techniques do not present much of a problem as far as vocabulary is concerned, since the symbolic and representational aspects of architectural graphic communication have been worked out a long time ago in the form of graphic conventions, symbols, and standards. This cannot be said to be true for urban design. The complexity and uniqueness of most large scale design problems has effectively militated against conventionalization of graphic communications, and except for land use and activity standards, the design profession is forced to improvise for each situation.

Setting aside the question of whether or not a basic graphic language is possible — and the author does believe that such a language is possible, but not available — the first step towards the creation of a universal communications methodology is to examine the design process as a whole and to extract or identify those special aspects of the process where graphic communication is relevant. A glance at any of the major urban design studies produced in the last 10 years will show that as much graphic space is spent on the explanation of the design process as on the description of urban spaces thus created. This arises out of the essential difference between urban design and architecture: In urban design the client is usually a large body of people, often representing many separate interests, whose contemplated design actions may take place over a long span of time, with large and often incremental expenditures, and in such a way that future decisions may not be based on the assumptions made at the beginning of the building process. With minor exceptions, architecture is quite different since the entire project is usually conceived within a finite time period, for a specified budget, and in coordination with a client whose interests are not expected to change over the life of the building process. In summary, the factors of time, scale and complexity, as well as the diversity of interests being served, seems to express the difference between the two branches of design. Obviously, these differences are not hard and fast: A building may just as easily express urban design as an urban space may express architecture. But the differences arising out of the client group and the duration, magnitude and complexity of the projects do give rise to a need for communication techniques which reflect these differences.
INTERRELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN
DESIGN PROCESS
AND GRAPHICS

While there may be some differences of opinion as to the ordering and the importance attached to various steps in the urban design problem solving process, there are nevertheless seven definable stages and eleven steps, as shown in the diagram on the opposite page. Problem definition, stage 1, involves the general identification of the problem area and a preliminary attempt to resolve it, a phenomenon often referred to as "pre-conception". This enables the designer to proceed to stage 2 and gather the data that he needs in order to set realistic dimensions for his design program (an enormous amount of energy is currently wasted in urban planning by random data collection. Information without purpose and structure may be worse than none at all!). Stage 3 involves the development of a program based upon the formulation of goals, objectives and developmental strategies. Preliminary solutions are generated in stage 4, and from this set of alternatives an evaluation is made in stage 5. At this point the solutions may not adequately meet the evaluation criteria, and a feedback process may result in the alteration of objectives and strategies as stated in stage 3. Assuming that a viable design solution is produced, then definitive physical design occurs in stage 6, and programs for implementation in stage 7.

Not all of these stages require graphic illustration. Goals and objectives, for example, may be more easily stated in terms of verbal language and mathematical symbols. Nevertheless, there are five occasions in the design process where graphic design provides a valuable means for expressing the final solution to the observer: Development of program parameters; explanation of developmental processes; design of a program — that is, the designer's own conceptual structure with added dimensions and preliminary solutions; specification of design controls; and creation of final design concepts. The author's experience in urban design during the previous decade has led him to believe that each of these five areas has its own special set of requirements, and that each are germane to the communication of an urban design solution.

Twenty eight drawings of typical communications aspects of urban design are illustrated on the following pages as examples of unique methods of conveying multidimensional phenomena on two-dimensional surfaces. There may actually be more than twenty eight unique graphic situations in an urban design vocabulary, although one can be sure that these examples represent the most frequently observed graphic phenomena. Each example must be treated as a kind of "Super Graphic Standards", and read as if another layer of symbolic communication — as expressed by the numerous legends — is needed to break the first stage of classification down into more universal and simpler graphic symbols.
1. Identify problem area
   - Conceptualize solution

2. Develop inventories of data

3. Formulate goals
   - Define objectives
   - Formulate development strategies

4. Generate alternative solutions

5. Evaluate

6. Select alternative
   - Preliminary and detailed design

7. Implementation

Program parameters 1
Development processes 2
Program design 3
Design controls 4
Design concepts 5
Physiographic parameters. Frequently overlooked, the natural form and structure of urban sites is a very strong determinant of view, orientation, drainage, bearing capacity (and therefore distribution of structures), and micro climate. This drawing combines information about contour, slope and drainage in relation to key community facilities on an urban site and conveys in a very sensitive manner those parts of the site which are strongly influenced by the natural landscape. Compare this drawing with the next six illustrations and note the incidence of major facilities falling on the flat north/south axis.
Community parameters. In any given design situation some elements are less susceptible to change than others. Community values are such that churches, cemeteries, schools, monuments and historic sites have an intrinsic worth. By plotting facilities of this kind the designer is able to visualize and to communicate those elements which are the most highly valued and therefore the least likely to change. Some urban designers refer to this phenomenon as the “hard” and “soft” characteristics of the existing urban fabric, hard meaning valuable and therefore most permanent, and soft meaning not valuable and therefore least permanent.
Population parameters. In the strictest sense, parameters are constants, and the set of parameters required for program development constitute the background data used in putting dimensions on a design problem. Populations are never constant, except for infinitely small periods of time, and almost all population maps are obsolete before they reach the press. This drawing indicates part of the problem in attempting to plot population characteristics. One either specifies specific numerical values or irregular areas, or one utilizes a uniform value system. This person has chosen the former method, leaving the observer the task of working out his own densities. Such a method of representation resolves the problem of quantitative programming but ignores the opportunity for instant visual recognition. Each approach has its own advantages and disadvantages.
Structural parameters—housing. As an alternative to the population characteristics shown opposite, the structural condition of housing is drawn here utilizing the uniform value system. Note, however, that while it might be more visually appropriate, it is still difficult to infer quantitative information. The only type of system for utilizing quantitative information and representing it accurately in visual terms is that which reduces all information to a regular and repetitive areal configuration, as shown in the inset. Many persons have experimented with the visual representation of census data, but they have few successes. Some form of graphically symbolic and literal compromise seems to be in order.

As mentioned earlier, there were some 2,700 units of single-family and duplex residences in Northwest Raleigh. They were classified by census tracts as presented in Table 10 or sheet 9. From that area 3 units had more than three-fifths of their housing units in this category. East area 4 is a new division analyzed on the basis of existing buildings which explains the high percentage of 39.5 percent for the area as a whole and the percentage of single-family units was about 20 percent and slightly less than 19 percent for the entire population. In the entire area the average age of structures is less than 30 years old. The area around the State Government Center was the oldest in the city with the oldest neighborhood and contains most structures constructed over 30 years old. Northside Neighborhood is area 9 in the youngest.
Structural parameters—movement. The description of movement systems, while complex, does not involve an elaborate graphic symbolism. Louis Kahn's classic reduction of automobile movement flows in Philadelphia to arrows indicating direction, one or two way flows, and traffic volume, still remains one of the clearest and simplest reductions of movement system characteristics to graphic representation. This drawing is considerably more detailed than Kahn's masterpiece, but it also handles street hierarchy and railroad rights-of-way. Perhaps the ideal kind of graphic symbols for structural phenomena would be those that separate enclosed volumes from interstitial urban spaces in such a way that the one plus the other describe the complete topology of urban form.
Aesthetic parameters. Kevin Lynch was one of the first urban designers to show that the aesthetic parameters of city landscapes can be mapped. His graphic symbolism does require some form of interpretation through the use of a legend, but the most physically "imageable" areas or points in a city immediately stand out in a quick skimming of an area mapped according to Lynch's fashion. This drawing indicates the five major components of Lynch's graphic representation of urban imageability: Edges, paths, nodes, districts, and landmarks, of both major and minor character. By keeping districts and urban edges as areal graphics, Lynch is successfully able to introduce three more symbols—paths, nodes, and landmarks. The upper limits of graphic symbols on any one map is usually considered to be three.
Evolutionary parameters. By previous definition, “evolutionary parameters” is a contradiction in terms; graphics describing growth and change ought to be referred to as variables. Nevertheless, our approach to urban design requires that we “freeze” all information for the purpose of making useful statements about the future based on a current understanding of past incremental changes. Therefore, a drawing should indicate anticipated growth or trends — as opposed to incremental changes in the past — if it is to fulfill this function. This drawing describes the growth pressure points in an urban area in a sufficiently fluid manner so that a variety of decisions can be made which do not overlook such changes.
Parameter manipulation by electronic computer. A very large proportion of the previous material may be stored in the memory files of an electronic computer and recalled for purposes of map-making. These two computer drawings illustrate two ways in which the Urban and Regional Data Bank operates. The large one, showing accessibility to the central business district of Raleigh, is a digital printout of information mapped on a grid cell system. The inset is an isometric plot of land values for the same city. The original accessibility map measures 40" x 40" and would take a skilled draftsman 3 to 5 days to draw. The digitized printout, handsome in its own way, required only one minute of computer time, or approximately seven dollars' worth of electronic labor!
Site selection processes. Nearly all types of urban design deal with some form of site selection process. Such processes are difficult to visualize, demonstrate and draw, although there are a few well-known graphic techniques in current use. The flow diagram, shown below, is useful for conveying the quantities and types of information required to select sites, as well as the relationships between site selection parameters, but it does not convey much in the way of physical feeling for the area under examination. Administrators and non-designers find flow charts such as this one easy to grasp, while architects tend to utilize more visual and less literal graphics for such processes. Nevertheless, the client is as much part of the graphic problem as is the designer.
Residential site selection. Another way of showing the type of process illustrated on the other page is to make a series of sequential drawings related to the site. Through a process known as “sieve-mapping” one can subtract all of land judged suitable for development (maps 2 to 6), on the basis of a model (map 1), from the total amount of unurbanized land (map 7) and yield a picture showing sites most suitable for residential use (map 8). Several series of such maps can be used to show the differences between various kinds of trade-offs utilized in the model, none of which can be demonstrated graphically using a single series.
Program Design. Perhaps the singularly most difficult task in urban design is not the design itself but the structuring of a program to accomplish the diverse objectives of a project. A designer must prepare some kind of "master plan" or conceptual development of his project which shows in sketch form the nature of the problem, the information contained in his anticipated solution, and nature of the end product. This serves to clarify his own design objectives as well as to give order to the complex manner in which the program must be built in order to satisfy the needs of the client.
Program Design

Design of a highway corridor. This sketch shows the elements of a program for the design of a highway corridor prior to any major design solutions. It consists of three parts: a plan describing a sequence of views for the design study; a mock-up (lower left) of the information required to support the study; and a details, as anticipated. The mock-up constitutes the core of this program since it tells the designer how much information he needs, how he must proceed to persuade his client of the adequacy of the scheme (note here that the program is laid out as if on a wall before the mock-up); and what the magnitude of his design concept will be like.
Controls and criteria for urban design. While control systems may be the last step in the execution of an urban design study, the designer should begin to think about them at the same time that his preliminary design solutions are coming off the board. Design guidelines, such as those shown below, not only ensure some reasonable standards of site planning and physical design, but also yield design criteria which shape the designer’s own conceptual thinking. Unfortunately for America, most of the attempts to guide physical development break down because design control systems are not fitted into the long-term implementation of large projects. The field of design controls is very complex, and it is not possible to do it graphic justice in this small space.
Preliminary design: Design by image. Urban design, as so many current texts will reveal, is not a rigorous and well-defined design discipline. Thus conceptualization, or the act of designing, has a tendency to vary a great deal among designers and their projects. This approach, entitled "enhancement of image" is an extension of the urban mapping technique described under "aesthetic parameters." The designer quite literally wants to reinforce those aspects of the city which create its urban identity. From this two-dimensional approach he can begin to build a spatial frame of reference based on the character of the existing area.
Preliminary design: Design by plan, criteria, strategy and sketch. Some or all of these methods might be utilized by a designer, and all are valid. The ideal community approach (upper left) is utilized a great deal to get new towns and neighborhood renewal plans into the concept stage, and this is often supported by specific criteria (upper right). If the development is very large and takes place over a long period of time, a design strategy may be employed (lower left). Finally, the designer may take the three-dimensional approach as a first step if he thinks that the context of the problem warrants a direct design solution. This latter way of looking at urban landscapes often succeeds where the others fail, since no amount of data collection and rigorous design can supply the designer with the insight he needs for his synthesis.
Final design: Design by prototype. Having guided the development process and established design criteria, the designer might justifiably let the builder take over on the basis of a prototype design. This is certainly a sophisticated way of designing since it permits several degrees of freedom within a controlling framework. Such an approach works best of all where the problem is typical (such as the suburban development situation shown below) and where the physical structures are repetitive. This drawing very clearly demonstrates what a series of suburban development layouts might look like in a prototype design solution.
Final design: The physical development plan. Often overemphasized in the past, the physical development plan is only one of many aspects of the design process. The one illustrated here is a classic example of what most of the design professionals think of as an urban design concept: large scale architecture, heroically conceived and complete, and properly dominant in the urban landscape. In some cases — particularly in the case of the government center shown here — this approach is in order. Yet the urban designer must also grapple with the small scale, the ubiquitous, and the generally pervasive components of cities. Urban design is, after all, the design of cities.
Inside Front and Rear Cover: This drawing is an urban design concept plan for a neighborhood renewal area in Raleigh. It was produced at the end of a lengthy program development stage in response to goals, objectives and criteria stated by citizen's groups, and then translated into a physical development program to coincide with the plans of a public agency and a quasi-public institution. This drawing is particularly exceptional in its ability to convey form and structure without committing the designer to excessive detail.

All graphic examples shown in this publication are derived from studies dealing with the growth and development of Raleigh, North Carolina. Most of the drawings have originated in studios as an outcome of specific urban design problems given by the author to Fifth Year Architecture classes between 1968 and 1971.

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PRESS RELATIONS
(Continued from page 8)

ing him to the moon and back. We are rushing headlong into the future. And the results can be fatal at times as the unfortunate accident involving the Russian cosmonauts proves. Whatever the outcome of our adventure, architecture is certainly in the forefront of this spiral of change. Modularism is one example of the pioneering you’re engaged in. No one could question that your story is timely, important and interesting.

Now, what are steps you can take to get that story into the newspapers and thus to the public?

Start off by establishing a feeling of mutual trust with the reporters with whom you work. Reporters, by the way, are like Heinz food products used to be. They come in 57 varieties, maybe more. Most are good. A few are bad. Some are just indifferent. But don’t try to deceive them. It doesn’t pay.

In passing along information, be specific. There’s no substitute for facts and figures in describing a situation. Generalities not only don’t tell the story, they confuse and mislead. Consider yourself a guide and a teacher. This can be your most valuable role in working with the press. Help the reporter learn what he needs to know.

In telling your story, why be solemn and pretentious? Let us have the facts with the bark off. Give your explanation in plain English.

Candor is important, too. Don’t hide the facts from the press intentionally. Sooner or later you’ll get caught. The inevitable result is a loss of credibility. If you’re involved in a bad situation, it’s in your favor to be the first to admit it. Explain how it got that way. Tell what’s being done to remedy it. Then fasten your seat belt and pray.

Speak up. Don’t hesitate to let a reporter know when you feel that a story lacks accuracy or balance. Most reporters do their best. They want to be read. They want to be trusted by their readers and by their news sources. Their reputations are among their most treasured possessions.

But reporters are, after all, human and fallible. They make mistakes. But they should be eager to correct those they make and to avoid similar ones.

(Continued on next page)
PRESS RELATIONS (Continued)
in the future. If they're not, their editors are. Call them if necessary. The same holds true for the editorial page. Call up the editor, the associate editor or the editorial writer. Perhaps you can persuade him to change his mind. At the very least, he'll have your call in mind when he sits down the next time to write an editorial involving your firm or profession.

We at The News and Observer are interested in architects and architecture. When we pass a hole in the ground, we want to find out what's going in it. Jane Hall, our staff expert in this field, tells me that we give more coverage to your profession and its practitioners than any other newspaper in the state. But we certainly can improve our coverage just as you can improve the effort you make to get your story across to the public. This is a challenge for us both, and thus an opportunity. "Men able to use their opportunity." They made the difference in ancient Greece. They could make the difference in modern America. It's up to us. There's no one else.

HISTORIC BUILDING PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION AWARDS GIVEN

The North Carolina Chapter, The American Institute of Architects, has announced awards for two structures for historic preservation and restoration. Certificates were presented at the Friday night banquet during the annual Summer Meeting of the Chapter at the Grove Park Inn, Asheville, on August 6.

Liberty Hall, the Kenan mansion in Kenansville, was opened as a museum for public exhibition of the building and antique furnishings. The Kenan family donated the property to the Duplin County Boards of Education and Commissioners who restored the early 19th century structure. Leslie N. Boney, Architect, of Wilmington, was the restoration architect.

The Stevenson House, New Bern, has been restored as an exhibition home in the Tryon Palace Complex. Regarded as an outstanding example of early 19th century Coastal Carolina architecture, the restoration architect was William G. Perry of Perry, Dean and Stewart, Boston, Mass. Nominator of the project was Miss Gertrude Carraway, Director, Tryon Palace Commission.
InCidentaLLy

H. Samuel Kruse, FAIA, Miami, Florida, National Advisory Committee Consultant; Dr. Dean Colvard, Chancellor, UNC-Charlotte; Dr. Bonnie E. Cone, Vice-Chancellor, UNC-Charlotte; James E. Ambrose, Associate Professor of Architecture, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee; Robert G. Anderson, AIA, Dean, College of Architecture, UNC-Charlotte, were among a group of distinguished educators and architects who met recently in Charlotte to discuss the curriculum for the new College of Architecture at UNC-Charlotte. Also participating in the Consultants’ Conference was Richard D. Berry, Associate Professor of Architecture and Planning, University of Southern California, and members of the North Carolina Chapter AIA Advisory Committee to the new College of Architecture: Leslie N. Boney, Jr., FAIA, Robert L. Clemmer, FAIA, William F. Freeman, AIA, Richard L. Rice, AIA, J. Norman Pease, Jr., FAIA, B. Atwood Skinner, Jr., AIA, Macon S. Smith, AIA, and A. G. Odell, Jr., FAIA.

The Winston-Salem Arts Council presented its award for distinguished service this year to Mr. and Mrs. Michael D. Newman. It is the first time the award has been given to more than one person since the council began presenting the award in 1950. Newman, a partner in the firm of Lashmit, Brown and Pollock, is also president of the Winston-Salem Council of Architects and was Chairman of the Winter Convention of NCAIA held in Winston-Salem in February. He is a past president of the Winston-Salem Arts and Crafts Association and the Gallery of Contemporary Art and a past director of the Piedmont Craftsmen. His wife, Margaret, has worked with the Children’s Theater Board, the Winston-Salem Symphony Guild and has been a trustee of the Arts Council.

Clark Walter, Honorary Member of the North Carolina Chapter AIA, died at his home in New Jersey on May 7th. Mr. Walter was the grandson of Thomas Ustick Walter, a founder and second president of The American Institute of Architects. A note from George W. Walter states “Even though my Dad was not an architect, nevertheless he valued and enjoyed his affiliation with your Chapter”.

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