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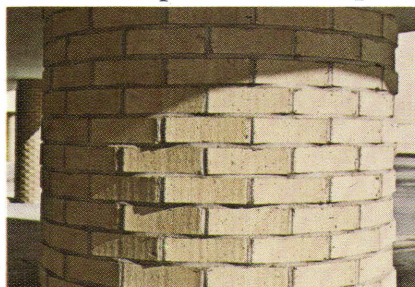


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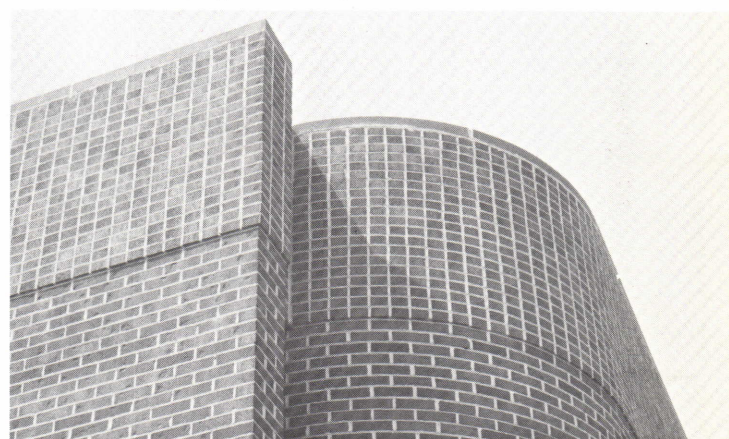
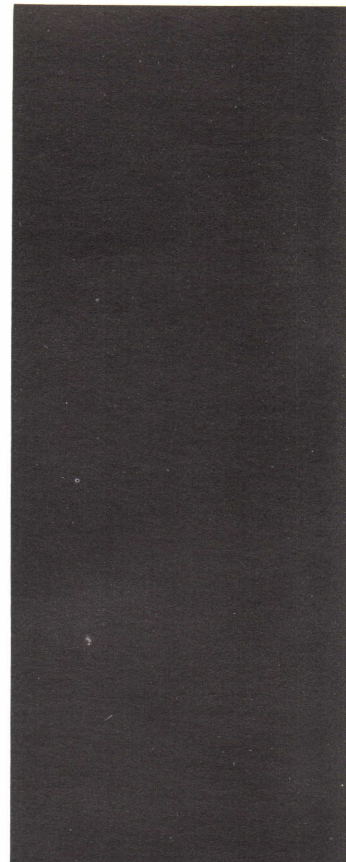


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Official Magazine of the
 North Carolina Chapter
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July/August 1978

Editor **Ernest Wood**

7	Frontispiece		Ernest Wood
10	Urban Asheville	Booms—and busts—have left their marks	Susanne Brendel
16	Biltmore Estate	Re-interpreting the Renaissance	Alan Burnham, FAIA
18	Biltmore Village	A community evolves	J. Michael Cox, AIA
	Center	Another pamphlet for clients from the NCAIA Architectural Services Task Force	
20	Resort Asheville	Hotels, Sanitoria and Houses as a local vernacular	William O. Moore, AIA
26	Roundtable	Architecture in Asheville today	
36	Winners	A 20 year portfolio	
38	Houses	The Governor's western residence	
40	Conservation	"Dixieland" revisited	
42	Books	An Asheville Bibliography	Betty Lawrence
43	The Profession	SARC preview	
44	The Arts	Old and new growing together	April Sauer
45	Index to Advertisers		
46	Critique	A different town	Henry Irven Gaines, AIA

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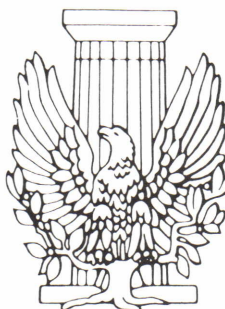
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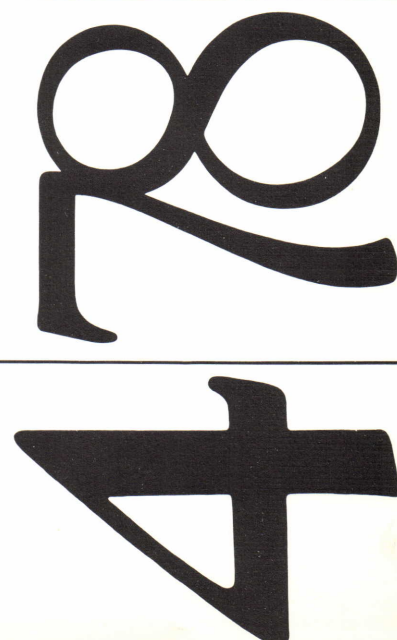
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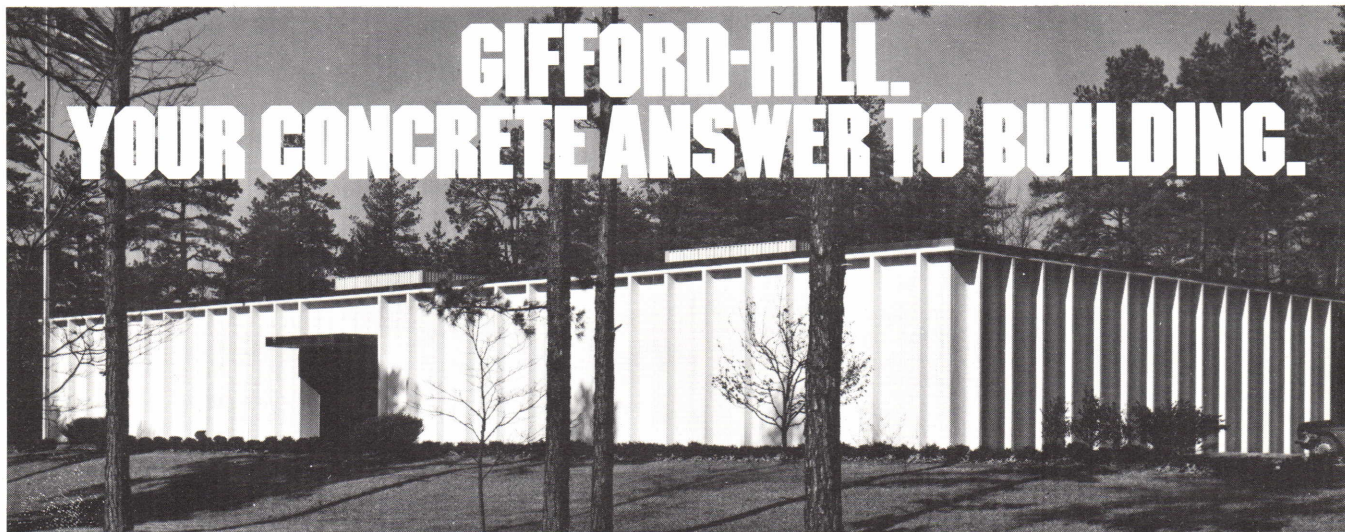
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For the past 100 years — or nearly so — ever since the railroad made it easier for flatlanders to escape to the cool mountains in the summertime, Asheville has been a special place for special occasions. The rich flocked to its grand hotels and the middle-class flocked to its boarding houses and the land speculators tagged along for the ride. The city boomed. Then it went bust. Twice. But the mountains are enduring and so is their allure. And Asheville still gets plenty of visitors. The city's identity and heritage as a resort are so strong that Asheville even calls its minor league baseball team the "Tourists."

If Asheville is a special place, however, there is more to it than cool summer nights and mountain views. Those can be had on any mountain in the state. The character of a city also is found in how its people develop their resources — how they respond to the terrain, the climate, the social forces that brought the city into being and sustained it. Part of that character is found in the city's buildings. And if those buildings themselves are something special — as are many in Asheville — then the city is a special place indeed.

So for our own special occasion in Asheville, we've devoted this issue of *North Carolina Architect* to the mountain city. This issue is a prelude to the South Atlantic Regional Convention of AIA, to serve as an introduction to the city for the architects of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia who plan to attend. But this really is not a convention issue. Though we have included a summary of the convention proceedings and the events scheduled for the Grove Park Inn September 27 to 30, we have used the convention as only a springboard to launch an investigation of the City of Asheville itself. It seems that Charlotte gets all the publicity as North Carolina's most modern, "New South," city; Edenton, New Bern and Wilmington get the publicity for historic preservation. But Asheville has a

character that none of the other cities in North Carolina has.

What it has, we discovered in the course of putting together this issue, is a mix of climate, topography, people, money (and the lack of it) and architectural styles that makes Asheville not only unlike any other town in North Carolina but unlike any other town in the South. Asheville has taken influences from other parts of the country and from other countries; but in so doing it has created a style of its own, that is, well, it's Asheville.

As we see in Bill Moore's article on Asheville's hotels, sanatoria and great residences, this mixture becomes a sort of regional vernacular that gives the city a uniquely dignified harmony with its mountain setting. Yet the early twentieth century commercial and office buildings and the Art Deco fantasies that Susanne Brendel describes in her article on downtown Asheville give the city a more urban feeling than most other Southern cities its size have. Because we so often associate Art Deco with New York, with the very large urban setting, this feeling may be only natural. But as in the hotels and houses, these are imported influences that because they occur so seldom in other cities of the state and region seem to create a special, local identity for Asheville. The phenomenon repeats itself in Biltmore Village and its pebble dash stucco.

Today, as we approach Asheville by automobile and the Interstate instead of by train, we see a city, however, that is facing many of the same issues the rest of our cities face. Asheville's most famous landmark, Biltmore (touted to the touring public on billboards; one of the few buildings in North Carolina regularly illustrated and included in surveys of American architectural history), is inviolate. Despite the encroachment of commercial development at its entrance,



On the cover:
detail, Asheville
City Hall

JoAnn Sieburg-Baker

the estate remains perfectly preserved. But the entrance to the City of Asheville is a tangle of highways and the businesses that service tourists and their automobiles. The motels that cluster around the roadways' interchanges emphasize Asheville as a resort. But much of the development has that All-American sameness. And the rush to give more people easier access to the mountains destroys some of what they are coming to see. A special and unique feature of the city, the two lane tunnel through Beaucatcher Mountain, is being replaced by a slice through the mountain to make the road wider. Meanwhile, building sites are leveled and filled so that shopping malls and factories and houses can be constructed just as they are anywhere else. City schools are emptying and the ones in

the county are bursting at the seams. Downtown is struggling to revive itself. It's a familiar story.

Yet Asheville remains a pretty special place. The Grove Park Inn still echoes F. Scott Fitzgerald, the romance and wealth of the 1920's and the effort and care that went into piling up those huge stones that are the hotel. Thomas Wolfe's home stands, much as it was when he was growing up there. The Governor has a get-away-from-it-all retreat on the mountainside. The traditional crafts and new movements in the arts co-exist and complement each other. And sprinkled all over town, there are some very good buildings. Asheville is a town that's easy to become excited about. And it's a good place to visit for a special occasion. ■

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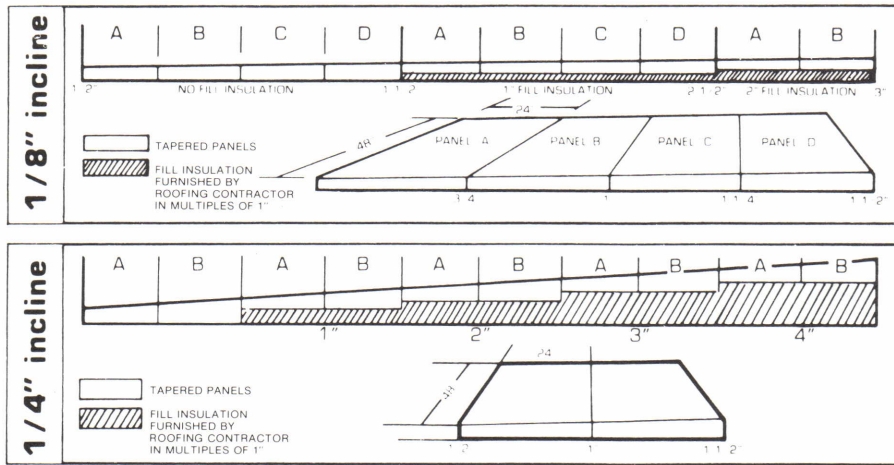
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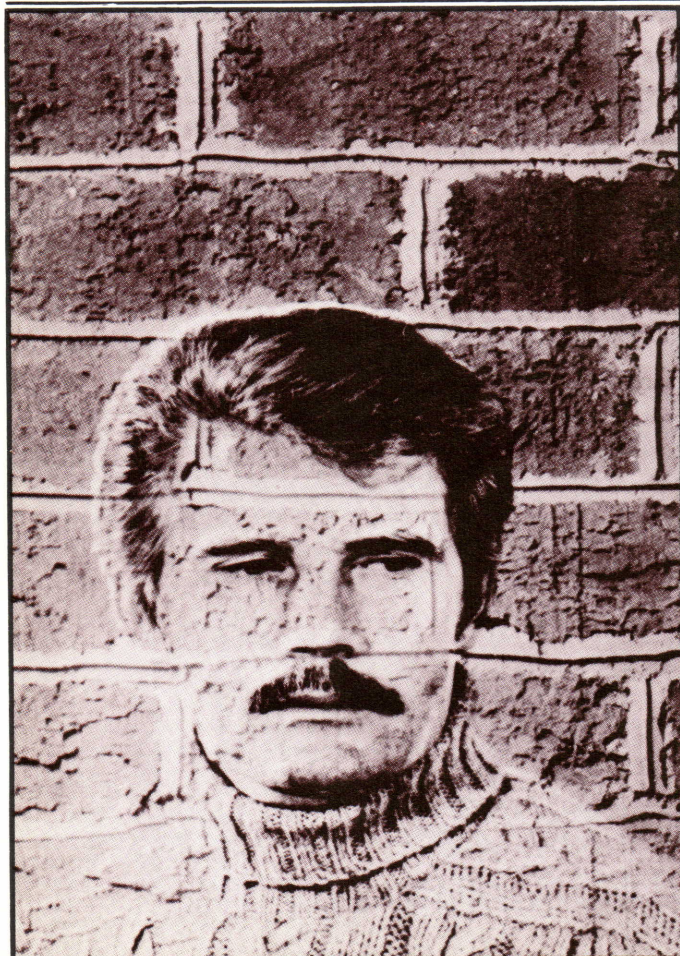
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Urban Asheville

Good times and bad have combined to give the city an extraordinary collection of buildings

By Susanne Brendel

Asheville's architectural character has been shaped by its colorful social and economic history. Vigorous financial booms in the 1890s and 1920s have left their physical legacies. Personalities such as George Vanderbilt and Thomas Wolfe called it home and Thomas Edison, John D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford and thousands of others have come to sample its mountain charm.

The outside world knew little of Asheville prior to 1880. This small village had none of the comforts of a city: no street cars, no pavement and no resort hotels. However, the Western North Carolina Railroad reached Asheville early in the decade and a few years later the Asheville Spartanburg Railway came from the south and the Murphy Railroad from the east. As history has recorded again and again, with the railroad comes progress — and soon Asheville had street lighting, a telegraph and one of the region's only resort hotels.

In 1886 Col. Franklin Coxe opened the Battery Park Hotel, "the largest and best hotel in the entire South." Coxe, a successful banker, was the grandson of Tench Coxe, a prominent cotton industrialist from Philadelphia, and had been instrumental in bringing the railroad to Asheville. In only six years, from 1880 to 1886, the town's population had grown from 2610 to over 5,000. What is more, the "summer people" who were brought in by the railroads now numbered 30,000. This year, 1886, witnessed the "dawn of an era, and new life and energy crept into the town. Capitalists and home-seekers began pouring in ..."

In 1890 George Washington Vanderbilt, who probably had his first view of Asheville from the porch of the Battery Park Hotel, started building his estate in Asheville. This event attracted notice from over the world and many people who had not otherwise known Asheville began to inquire about its attractions. The city's reputation as a summer resort continued to spread throughout the 1890s and brought with it a prosperity which the city enjoyed for almost a decade.

Many of the buildings in downtown Asheville date from this 1890s period. Pack Square and the streets radiating from it, Biltmore Avenue, Broadway and Patton Avenue, all contain examples from this period. Most of these buildings are two and four story brick commercial structures constructed in rows to form the city's blocks and squares. Pressed sheet-metal cornices make up most of the decorative elements of the storefronts.

A more elaborate building of this era is the Drhumor Building (1895) which is now occupied by First Citizens Bank. One of the most splendid Romanesque structures



Above: Pack Square, 1978

JoAnn Sieburg-Baker



in western North Carolina, the four story brick office building is trimmed with rock-faced limestone highlighted by exceptionally fine carving on the first floor by the English sculptor Frederick Miles, who had worked as a carver on Biltmore House. Miles is responsible for the decorative work on a number of buildings downtown, and many times he carved the visages of local personalities into his work. One of the faces in the frieze which wraps around the Drhumor building is reported to be a local merchant Cyrus T. C. Deake, who owned and ran a florist shop and greenhouse on Charlotte Street and kept an office in the Sondley Building across the street from the Drhumor Building. As the construction on the latter progressed, interested spectators would gather to watch the foreign carvers decorate what was to be the handsomest building in town. Deake, who would pass by and watch with fascination on his way to his office, caught the eye of Miles and now his bearded face is on the Church Street corner of the building. The architect of the Drhumor Building was Allen L. Melton who also had his office in the Sondley Building (1891), another of his designs (now Pressley's



Far left:
Drhumor
Building

Below, left:
detail, *Drhumor*
Building

Left: *Sondley*
Building

Clothing Store). His client was William J. Cocke, who served in the North Carolina Assembly and as Mayor of Asheville. Cocke's father and grandfather had been members of the U. S. Congress. The site was formerly their residence and the name Drhumor comes from the family's ancestral home in Ireland.

By 1897 Asheville had grown into a little city. Brick pavement covered the center of the city and extended onto some of the main avenues. Asheville continued to cater to the ever increasing rich resort patronage, and the Kenilworth Inn (1891) was built to outshine the Battery Park Hotel in elegance. However, the city was only to enjoy this prosperity for a short time. During the decade of the 1890s, fortunes were made and lost overnight and much of the land in the city was sold and resold on paper. The affluence fed by the boom was fragilely supported by fictitious values and it eventually crashed. A period of stagnation followed. Banks failed, real estate went unsold and the tobacco warehouses were empty. Only one major architectural project took place at the end of the '90's, the building of the Manor Hotel in 1898. Even in its slump, Asheville speculators had enough confidence in the climate and the mountains to build another resort hotel.

Indeed, the slump of the late 1890s proved to be only a temporary setback in Asheville's development. By the early twentieth century, entrepreneurs with new money and new ideas began to leave their marks on the city. One of the most ambitious of these speculators was Dr. Edwin Wiley Grove, who, because he reshaped downtown and the environs, has been called the "Father of twentieth-century Asheville." Grove made his fortune in patent medicines. He was not only the inventor of the process of suspending powdered quinine in fluid but a businessman who successfully marketed chill tonics and cold medicine tablets.

Like so many others, Grove visited Asheville and was attracted by its climate and mountains. In 1905 he began acquiring and developing real estate and his

Top from left:
new Battery
Park Hotel;
Jackson Build-
ing; detail, Jack-
son Building;
Public Service
Building; Flat-
iron Building

Below: Grove
Arcade

Below, right:
interior, Grove
Arcade



achievements include the Grove Park Inn (1913), the new Battery Park Hotel (1923), the Grove Arcade (1926-9), and two of Asheville's residential subdivisions.

In 1922 Dr. Grove announced his three point plan for the Battery Park section of downtown. He intended, in his words:

1. *To provide Asheville with a tourist center featuring a large roof garden, with band shell, restaurant and assembly room.*
2. *To enhance the value of the surrounding property by the large number of business establishments expected to be housed in this central point.*
3. *To preserve the beauty of the Battery Park district by uniform and pleasing architectural treatment of the plaza.*

The old Battery Park Hotel, which had been situated on

the chief hill in Asheville (Battery Porter), was razed and the hill itself was flattened, adding eight to ten acres of downtown property with the dirt fill. On the summit of the new slope, Grove constructed a modern fireproof hotel. The new Battery Park Hotel (architect, William Lee Stoddart, New York) was a 14 story brick structure trimmed in terra cotta. The hotel (now vacant) was lavishly equipped and included a roof garden and terraces for lounges and dancing.

Across the street Grove continued his development scheme with the building of the Grove Arcade (architect, Charles Parker, Asheville) which was a shopping mall and office building (now housing The National Climatic Service). This grand arcade covered a city block and was built of stone and terra cotta tile with Gothicized ornament inside and out. The building is a cross plan incorporating intersecting arcades. In the central section the interior space is open three stories to a skylight roof. Open balconies run on both sides on each floor and sweeping spiral staircases



connect the first and second floors. Unfortunately, Grove died in 1927 during the construction and the stock market crash two years later prevented the completion of the office tower that was to sit atop the arcade.

Grove's activities on Battery Park Hill in the mid-1920s were indicative of the speculation and building throughout the city. The get-rich-quick artists had migrated from Florida after the land boom there had fizzled. They turned their attention to Asheville, hoping that the city's climate and scenery were going to make it the Miami Beach of the mountains. By this time, Asheville was a growing city of 25,000 and the buying and building were at a frenzied pace.

One of the additions to the town's silhouette was the '20s skyscraper. The first to appear was the Jackson Building (architect, Ronald Greene, 1924) which was to house Lynwood B. Jackson's real estate firm (now housing Western Carolina Bank and Trust). Thomas Wolfe's mother sold this plot where her husband's monument shop had been for \$30,000. She had paid \$1,000 for it in 1883. Both the increase in property values and the 15 stories of the building were indicative of the directions of Asheville's expansions. The style used for this new form was a pointed Gothic style, often used to emphasize the vertical nature of a building.

The Public Service Building (architects, Beacham & Le Grand, 1929) is an eight story Spanish Romanesque brick skyscraper with highly ornamental terra cotta. This handsome building was originally built for Carolina Power and Light (now housing mixed office use). It won an AIA Honor Award in 1929.

Still another skyscraper from this period is the Flatiron Building (architect Albert C. Wirth, Asheville). This eight story brick building (now also housing mixed

office use) is in a "flatiron" plan and has a prominent cornice. The main entrance facade is faced with limestone ashlar on two floors. In all these '20s "skyscrapers," the architects continued to apply traditional decoration to a new building form.

To keep pace with all this private speculation, the city of Asheville issued bonds in 1925 for a gigantic municipal building program which was inaugurated as the five year "Program of Progress." The city and county felt that they needed to plan far ahead for the city's growth as one of the major resort areas in the country. This program had 94 major objectives and after two years, half of them had been attained. In addition to road and water projects, the city built a municipal garage, a new incinerator, a new high school, a new grammar school and a tunnel through Beaucatcher Mountain. Recreation parks, baseball parks, a football stadium, a golf course and tennis courts were all created. Not the least of the city's ambitions was the building of a new civic government center with a new city hall and courthouse.

Many of these structures designed from 1925 to 1930 reflected a new style called Art Deco. The style takes its name from the Exposition Internationale de Arts Decoratifs et Industriel Moderne held in Paris in 1925, which inspired artists to express an original modern style of the machine age. They broke with the past, and the Gothic, Tudor, Georgian and Spanish styles were rejected.

Art Deco is a style of decoration that can be applied to jewelry, clothing, furniture and buildings. It consists of a low relief geometrical design using parallel straight lines, zigzags, chevrons (V shapes) and stylized floral motifs. Many of these shapes were inspired by North and South American Indian art. Buildings were covered in concrete and smooth faced stone, with accents in

terra cotta, metal and glass. Vivid colors often were part of the design.

An architect responsible for many of Asheville's finest Art Deco buildings was Douglas D. Ellington. His most notable downtown building was the City Hall (1926-1928), with its mountain like silhouette designed especially for the city. A stylized Indian feather motif is used for decoration throughout the building and the whole structure is reminiscent of an Indian headdress. The building is full of color, with a pink Georgia marble base, buff brick, and a pink and green tiled octagonal roof.

Originally, Ellington conceived of a civic center which was to include a twin city hall and county court house,

connected by a one story bus terminal. After the city hall was completed, however, the Buncombe County officials decided that they did not like Ellington's daring design and the concept of a handsome and architecturally uniform civic center was never realized. Instead, the county chose the more traditional architectural firm of Milburn and Heister of Washington, D. C., who designed a 17 story steel frame courthouse (1928) with a classical skin.

Despite this disappointment, Ellington went on to do a number of buildings for the city and other clients downtown. His Asheville High School (1927-29) on McDowell Street was also part of the city's "Program of Progress." Downtown, he did the First Baptist Church (1927). This building has a traditionally classical form but the use of



Far left: Asheville City Hall

Left: First Baptist Church

Right: S&W Cafeteria

Far Right: Coca Cola Building



Center: Council Chamber, City Hall

Left: Asheville High School



Far Left: Buncombe County Courthouse

Left: courtroom, Buncombe County Courthouse

color and decoration reflect an Art Deco imagination at work. Particularly interesting is the Art Deco copper lantern at the top of the monumental dome which is one of the city's landmarks. The dome is particularly eye catching because of the gradation of colors in the roofing tiles.

Ellington's S&W Cafeteria (later Dale's, now vacant) is perhaps North Carolina's finest example of Art Deco style architecture. Erected in 1929, this fanciful building was one of the state's earliest cafeterias. (The S&W Cafeteria chain, begun by Frank O. Sherrill and Fred R. Webber, was the pioneering cafeteria in the Carolinas. The first outlet opened in Charlotte in 1920.) The colorful and exotic patterns of the terra cotta ornament give the cafeteria a note of gaiety befitting Asheville's 1920 boom



N.C. Division of Archives and History

period. Ellington's work also included a fire station, the Biltmore Hospital in Biltmore Village and a number of residences.

Other public buildings continued to emerge as part of the city's development scheme. A Deco post office (architect, James A. Wetmore, Washington, 1929) was built in the Battery Park area on land donated by Grove; and a fine Renaissance Revival library was erected on Pack Square (architect, Edward L. Tilton, 1925). A recent architectural inventory of downtown shows that over 65 downtown buildings date from between 1920-1930.

This 1920s optimism of both the private and public investor ended abruptly, and there was practically no building during the 1930s. On Nov. 20, 1930, Asheville Central Bank and Trust Co., the largest financial institution in Western North Carolina, failed. Many other banks followed and along with hoards of private citizens, the county, city and public schools lost over \$8 million in deposits. Hard times had hit Asheville. But by 1937 the worst was over and construction began again, but more slowly and conservatively.

In contrast to the earlier decade, only seven buildings were built downtown between 1930 and 1940. The Art Deco style had not been forgotten but it began to change through the influence of the International Style, then on the architectural horizon. Forms became more simplified, streamlined and futuristic. Planes and recesses were used to create shadows which added interest to the building. The buildings usually had less

color and more metal and glass. The term Art Moderne was coined for this transitional style.

The Asheville Citizen Times Building (architect, Anthony Lord, Asheville, 1938-1939) is one such example. Its horizontal glass block strip windows and limestone banding give the building a clean directional emphasis which is halted abruptly by an off-center vertical entrance tower. The use of geometry instead of ornament brings this building into the realm of modern architecture. Another fine example of Art Moderne is the Coca Cola Building (architect, Henry Gaines, Asheville, 1940). The building has streamlined curves and a tiled exterior. The use of clean forms and banded glass block window spaces give the building its modern appearance.



Since World War II, Asheville has been slow to recover from the crash of the 1930s. It was only in 1976 that the last of the refinancing bonds were retired from the city's "Program of Progress." This lesson in the perils of financial frivolity has stayed with the city and county governments as well as the private citizens. As a result of this conservative attitude toward new construction and the gradual economic flight of downtown businesses to the malls and suburbs, the city now has a large group of historic buildings from the 1890s and 1920s remaining.

In cooperation with the state Division of Archives and History, the city and county are sponsoring architectural surveys to identify their historic buildings for future planning. However, it is often said that history repeats itself. Once again, Asheville is experiencing a period of prosperity and developers are beginning to eye downtown sites. While Asheville has been spared the wholesale urban renewal that other cities have experienced over the last two decades, it is now in danger of that same sort of development. However, activities of the local preservation society and the realization by city fathers and developers that the city's historical character is yet another attraction that will draw tourism and business to downtown both are factors which may influence the future architectural development of Asheville. ■

Susanne Brendel is curator and research historian at Biltmore House and Gardens, Asheville.

Biltmore Estate

The details are French Renaissance, but their sum is a unique American chateau

By Alan Burnham, FAIA

When George Washington Vanderbilt first found the site of Biltmore at Asheville, he was looking out over a river at miles and miles of open countryside. It is no wonder that he determined to build a house there as a rural retreat. He probably did not envisage the scale of what he was ultimately to build nor the style of architecture, although as a cultivated man who had travelled widely he undoubtedly had some definite ideas in mind.

Actually, it was the meeting of two exceptional minds which resulted in the creation of Biltmore House and Gardens as we know the estate today. Vanderbilt's friend, the noted architect Richard Morris Hunt, was his counterpart in undertaking this great endeavor.

George certainly knew the little French Renaissance chateau, at 660 Fifth Avenue in New York, which stood next to his father's massive pile of Brownstone. Hunt had designed it for George's brother, William K. Vanderbilt, and he must have admired it for the exquisite quality of its architectural detail. George was widely read, a scholar, who reputedly spoke eight languages fluently and his judgment in matters architectural was to be respected. Hunt, on learning of George's plans to build, was at once filled with enthusiasm for the great opportunity afforded him to work not only with a friend, but with a man whose opinions he could respect.

Hunt glowingly described this project as a "carte blanche commission" led on by George's enthusiasm and by his own visualization of a chateau, not on the Loire but on the French Broad River in a setting worthy of the greatest country seat in America.

This great opportunity came to Hunt late in life, following a long series of architectural commissions which had made him a leader in his profession. He was the first American to graduate from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. He had served as president of the American Institute of Architects (1888-1891), of which he was also a founder. He had been entrusted with the design of the central Administration Building at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893. And he had had commissions for innumerable town houses and palaces at Newport, R. I. Russell Lynes, author of *The Tastemakers*, says of Hunt: "More than any architect of his time, more than McKim or Mead or White, and more than H. H. Richardson, the designer of Trinity Church in Boston and one of America's most inspired architects, Hunt epitomizes the rich and official taste of the decades following the Centennial."

At the time that "Biltmore" was first conceived, in the early 1880's, America was coming of age architecturally. Although for many years millionaires seemingly were content to live side by side in identical Brownstones in the city, they invariably sought out architects to design their country or seaside houses. As a result, many large, costly mansions already had been built, but few of them displayed any of that scholarship and attention to detail which literally was introduced to this country through the example of the Classical "Great White City" — the Chicago Fair of 1893.

Biltmore was in the vanguard of good taste and represented the scholarly erudition of its architect. (Hunt paid his first visit to the site early in 1890 with Vanderbilt and Frederick Law Olmsted, who was to execute the magnificent

landscaping of the grounds.) It is interesting to note that although the detail of Biltmore is correct and that the building definitely belongs to the neo-French Renaissance style of architecture, Hunt, working within this style, chose a wide chronological range: starting with the almost Gothic early phase and ranging to the highest Renaissance in some of the rooms.

The Age of Eclecticism, which was just getting under way when Hunt designed Biltmore, required a high degree of selectivity and the adaption of past styles to new uses and new plan requirements. Hunt's recombination of these past forms to create this great chateau in North Carolina was not only ingenious but aesthetically the equal of any of the French chateaux which inspired it.

It has been said that Biltmore is a very livable house despite its size. Certainly, the interior plan is quite regular, straightforward and workable, despite the picturesque appearance of the exterior.

Hunt divested his plan of some of the Medieval accoutrements generally associated with a French chateau, such as the round towers at the corners. Vertical tiers of windows crowned by dormers often were cut into these fortress-like towers and in the sidewalls at a later date to make a chateau more livable. Although Hunt had no towers, he used the tiers of windows throughout; and whereas many of these wall areas were of brick in the early chateaux, Hunt chose limestone, again following a later trend.

In the plan, Hunt established a generally rectilinear scheme with relatively shallow open courts. He took his inspiration from the fifteenth century Louis XII wing at Blois,

which harked back to Gothic sources for its detail. The main entrance tower is derived in mass and form from the tower in the north corner of the courtyard at Blois, while the grand spiral staircase, which he reversed (instead of being installed in a long, straight wall as in the Francois I wing at Blois), is ingeniously nestled up against the large entrance tower. A small square tower of intermediate height makes the skillful transition between these two central elements.

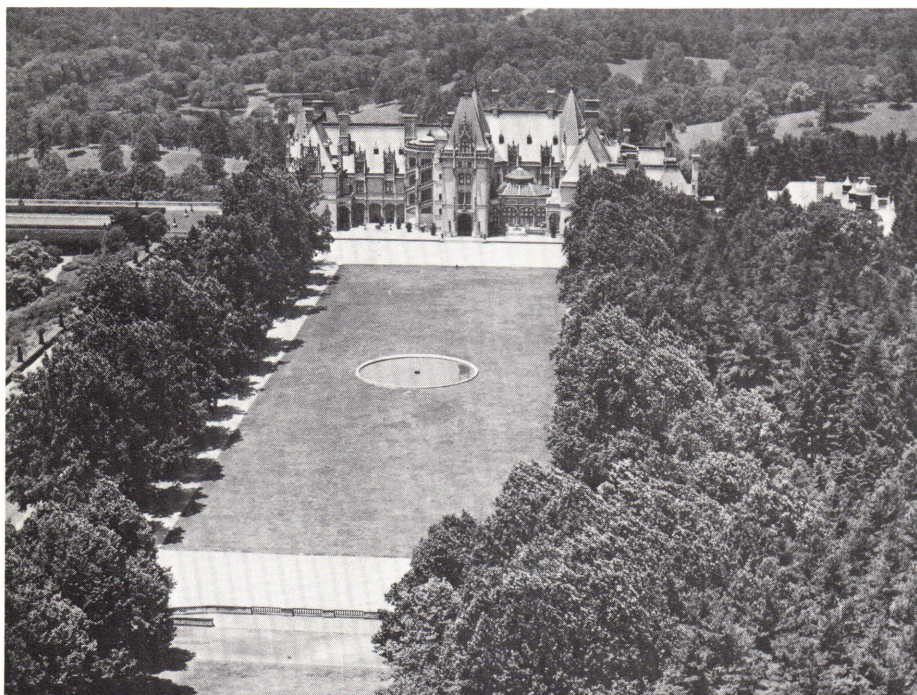
The three-sided bay theme, with its towering slate roofs, found at the rear overlooking the river, is in a sense without precedent, as three-sided features such as this generally, as in the Loire Chateau de Maillant, were stair towers. This is another ingenious adaption of form which produced some very attractively shaped rooms.

The Palm Court (or conservatory) was an almost mandatory feature of the large country house in 1895. Hunt treated it again in Medieval fashion, using three centered ribbed arches of stone, reminiscent of those in the courtyard of the house of Jacques Coeur at Bourges, to support an elaborate system of wood hammer beams.

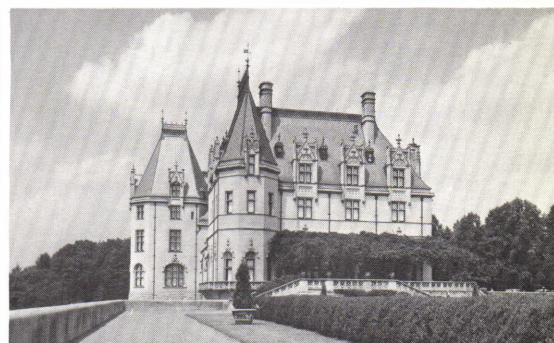
The great slate roofs (with their corner crestings emblazoned with the Vanderbilt "V") and the high ornamental chimneys crown this magnificent chateau — a virtuoso improvisation on a superb Renaissance theme. ■

Alan Burnham, who retired recently as director of research for the New York City Landmarks Commission, was designer for the completion of the Music Room at Biltmore in 1976. In 1977, NCAIA honored Burnham and Asheville architects Baber, Cort and Wood (now Wood and Cort) with a special preservation award for the project.

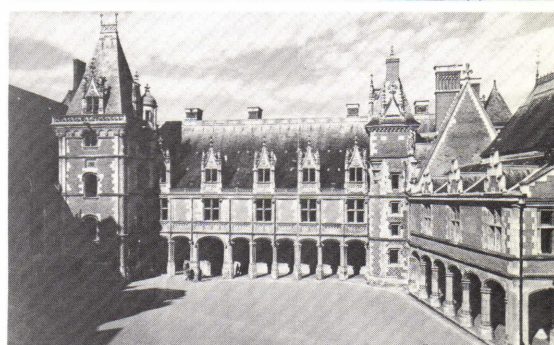
North Carolina Architect



Above: over-view, Biltmore Estate



Top: south side, Biltmore Estate



Above: inner courtyard, Blois Chateau, France

Right: Music Room, Biltmore Estate

Far Right: Palm Court, Biltmore Estate



Biltmore Village

Architectural character has helped the community not only survive but grow stronger

By J. Michael Cox, AIA

In 1889 plans were being made for a village that would complement the sprawling Biltmore estate. The village was sited at the foot of the approach road to the Biltmore House and the town of Best, known also as Asheville Junction, was moved to make way for buildings which would house the estate's workers, craftsmen and support facilities.

Remnants of Biltmore Village have survived and can be found today in somewhat altered functions. The manorial architecture and dominant use of pebble dash stucco make it easy to distinguish the remaining elements of a once bustling community from the sometimes vulgar intrusions of the past two decades.

Extensively used in other regions during the nineteenth century, pebble dash was practically unknown in the Southeast when the village was begun and apparently was introduced to the Asheville area by architects Richard Morris Hunt and Richard Sharp Smith in their development of this project. Pebble dash is a very heavily textured material, prepared by applying two coats of cement and sand and throwing stones onto the surface. In the Asheville area, a third coat of cement was applied, rounding out stone surfaces and filling pitted areas to make a very attractive wall. Pebble dash was used liberally to complement other building materials and was not confined to any particular style.

(Although pebble dash was particularly characteristic of construction in Biltmore Village, it quickly gained popularity in Asheville. It was widely used in the early 1900's, and it can be found

today throughout the city, primarily in residential buildings.)

But many elements have combined to help Biltmore Village retain its identity. Frederick Law Olmsted, in collaboration with Hunt, laid out the fanlike street pattern which survives as originally planned. The oaks which once lined the streets have grown old and few remain, but the texture of tree-lined streets and brick walks combine today to hold the community of buildings together.

Hunt set the style and vocabulary of materials by designing the village's principal buildings. The Parish House, All Souls Church, the Biltmore Estate Office and the train depot were constructed in the 1890's and still are used today as originally planned. All Souls Church is the largest structure and one of the earliest to be built. It maintains the village scale with multiple facades, brick turrets and steeply pitched roofs of clay tile which break the building's exterior into relatively small elements.

Hunt introduced pebble dash in the Estate Office and train depot at the north end of the Village Plaza, and by the time he had completed the church and parish house, half timbered structures of pebble dash stucco had been established as the village vernacular. His resident employee and successor, Richard Sharp Smith, worked within this format in the design of the remaining buildings in Biltmore Village. The balance of construction in the village were one and a half and two story cottages and commercial structures and a one and a half story hospital which remains on the east side of the village.

Vanderbilt added buildings to the village until about 1910,

but most of the surviving original structures were built prior to 1900. In the early 1900's the village was the center of community life, providing schools, churches, and social functions for its residents, and it served as a proper complement to the Biltmore Estate.

But the village's fate was perhaps too closely bound to that of George Vanderbilt. He died in 1914 and the village was sold shortly thereafter. Many alterations were made over the ensuing years and the village eventually fell into a state of decline.

During the '20's and '30's, intrusions were somewhat sensible commercial buildings constructed in the style and materials of the day. They reflected the village scale but did not attempt to copy the original architecture. Then the Biltmore House and Gardens became a successful endeavor, attracting thousands of tourists a year, and banks, service stations, doctors' offices, convenience stores, red and white striped roofs and golden arches moved in to take advantage of the growing tourism.

In the 50's and 60's, it was not unusual for developers and state agencies to buy property, tear down the rotting stucco cottages and throw up new buildings to replace them. Development in the 50's and 60's took a predictable twist. Many of the developers in this period seemed to feel the need to do something historical, although it was not clear what. The resulting structures neither complement nor compare with the original Biltmore Village dwellings. It is not clear whether the "Colonial" facades and "antique" brick which prevailed were the result of a misguided desire to build "something old" or that the trend just happened to be

"Colonial." But these are the cruelest intrusions to a village of somewhat European flavor.

By the early 1970's the history and significance of Biltmore Village was all but forgotten. Most of the surviving cottages were in peril of being razed to make way for a new shopping complex. The economics of replacing the cottages compared well with those of restoring them, but developers Bob and Dick Gray were more sensitive than their predecessors. The turn-of-the-century atmosphere, the unique character of the cottages, and the tree lined streets and brick walks were considered an assets in the creation of a new "shopping district," so it was decided that the remaining dwellings would be saved. The exterior architecture of the cottages was left intact. The pebble dash stucco was repaired and the cottages were painted and re-roofed. The interiors were renovated to meet the needs of the shop owners. Additions where required were designed to complement the existing structures.

The complex of small shops has grown gradually during recent years, and the "shopping district" envisioned by Bob and Dick Gray has become a reality. The village character and pedestrian scale of the community are now recognized as assets and are closely guarded by the individual shop owners.

Today, Biltmore Village is unlike any other shopping area in Asheville. Shoppers and tourists are inclined to leave their cars and wander from shop to shop, and the shop owners have adapted their merchandising techniques to accommodate them. On a sunny day, it is not unusual to find the Bell Shops having a sale with clothing racks and tables of merchandise pushed out onto the side-

walk. In the fall, the New Morning Gallery sponsors an art and crafts fair on the lawn of All Souls Church.

One block east of the Plaza is that part of the village which has remained most intact and includes all of the surviving cottages. The shop of John Simmons was among the first adaptive uses of the cottages and remains today the anchor to a thriving commercial community. Lunch and beer under the yellow and white awning of the Biltmore Village Inne has become a popular attraction for shoppers and businessmen alike.

Adaptive use of the old cottages is now the order of the day. The streets and walks and landscaping in between the buildings are sometimes ill kept, but most of the remaining 14 cottages have already been renovated and more will be under repair during 1978. In 1977, the village was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an historic district.

The use of pebble dash today is limited to the few remaining artisans who mastered the technology years ago and can still prepare and install the heavy mixture of stucco and rock. Although the work of Smith and the craftsmen associated with his projects can be seen throughout Asheville, Biltmore Village is the only cohesive development which remains today an identifiable entity. The pebble dash stucco and half timbered exteriors, brick walks and tree lined streets have been preserved and serve to distinguish the village from its surroundings. ■

J. Michael Cox is an architect with Padgett and Freeman, Architects, whose office is in a pebble dash stuccoed house in Biltmore Village. The firm's conversion of the house into its office received a historic preservation award from NCAIA in 1977.



Above: All Souls Church

Below: Biltmore Village Inne



Below: cottages, today housing shops

Top and above: details, All Souls Church



J. Michael Cox

Resort Asheville

Hotels, sanitoria and great houses come in all styles but as a group form a local vernacular

By William O. Moore, AIA

As buildings, hotels and sanitoria made the greatest contributions to a special character and an ability to attract visitors that Asheville enjoyed from about 1880 to 1930. Grand houses followed. Smaller homes developed under the combined stylistic influences of all these types of buildings. But the hotels came first (along with the railroad) and had the greatest and most prominent influence on Asheville as a resort town.

Concurrent with the development of hotels, sanitoria and railroads, other important changes were happening to Asheville. The decade of the 1880's seems to be the most important in the city's history as development unfolds: 1882, fire department; '83, street lights; '84, Mission Hospital; '86, city water; '88, telephone; '89, street cars and public schools. To some extent, these changes were happening everywhere — or already had happened. But in Asheville they seemed to be happening with more verve and at a breathtaking pace. The hotels created the need for railroads as much as the railroads created the need for hotels, for in summertime South Carolina people and others from the coastal plains for decades had been taking the train as far as it went into the mountains and going overland by horse and coach to Asheville and other points.

The most important early hotel was the Eagle, located at South Main Street (now Biltmore Avenue) and Eagle Street. It was established by James Patton about 1814 and was Asheville's second hotel. In front of the classical portico of the popular Eagle there was a large cast eagle mounted on a pole to welcome stagecoach

guests from nearby towns. The hotel was operated until the 1890's and lived to see a new era begin.

When the railroad came through Swannanoa Tunnel in 1880 and was completed to what is now Biltmore in 1881 and to Asheville in 1886, the isolated little mountain town was never to be the same again. The town doubled in population, from 2,610 in 1880 to over 5,000 in 1886, with summer people counted at 30,000. Many stayed in rooming or boarding houses and hotels or rented cottages. And, of course, they were not all in town at the same time. But the completion of the old Battery Park Hotel in 1886 introduced a chic, wealthy clientele from points as far as the railroad went. These people added a new dimension to the well-established pattern of Southern low country people "summering" in the mountains.

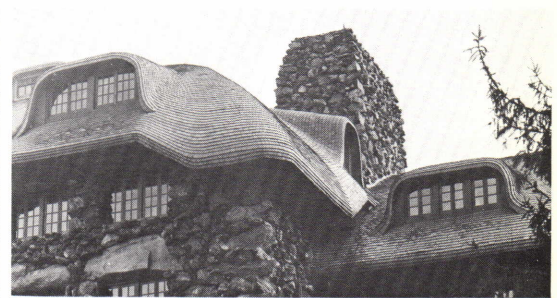
The old Battery Park was built on old Stony Hill (which later was graded down to become the site of the present Battery Park Hotel, built in 1923 and now vacant). This rambling, fascinating "Tudor-Victorian Chateau" was well adapted to its site and seemed strangely appropriate in its setting — more appropriate than any other buildings of the era and more appropriate than the second "Park Avenue Style" Battery Park that followed. The old hotel, developed and owned by Col. Frank Coxe, boasted wide porches, grand ballrooms and game rooms, bowling and billiards, elevators, hot and cold running water, and, though not advertised or documented, no doubt steam heat. The architect and builder was Capt. John A. Wagner. The 25 acre hotel site was well landscaped and made a pleasant park within easy walking distance of Pack Square, the town's principal public space.



Left: old Battery Park Hotel



Above: Grove Park Inn



Top: roof detail, Grove Park Inn

Above: Palm Room, Grove Park Inn

This enthusiastic quotation tells part of the story: "This famous and romantically situated hotel was the first building of magnificence and magnitude for the accommodation of wealthy people with discriminating taste to be erected in Asheville." A partial guest list tells more of the story and establishes the era: George Vanderbilt, Grover Cleveland, William McKinley, William Henry Harrison, Theodore Roosevelt, Mark Hanna and others. The hotel further served the functions of a country club and as the center of Asheville's social life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Rhododendron Ball was held there annually and being listed in attendance by the newspaper seemed important, judging from the listings, which included a number of out-of-town people. A newspaper columnist, in fact, once called the old Battery Park one of the "three leading resorts" in the South.

The railroad, climate, mountains and hotels brought another famous hotel builder to Asheville: E. W. Grove of St. Louis, who came for "the cure," treatment for a bronchial ailment. By 1900, Asheville had grown to a population of 14,649 and Grove, manufacturer of Grove's Chill Tonic and Bromo Quinine, was one of an additional 50,000 "summer people." He was so impressed with the setting and its healthful benefits that he staked a large portion of his fortune on the Grove Park Inn (1913), the Grove Arcade (1926-29) and

the new Battery Park Hotel (1923), among other projects.

The Grove Park Inn site was selected at the foot of Sunset Mountain and was later to overlook a rolling green golf course. It commanded a view of the western mountain ranges that Thomas Wolfe later described as "like lions rolling down to the sea." The massive Grove Park, with its native boulder lintels, granite walls and red tile roof, could be called a successful piece of "folk-building." The design is unique, rustic and perhaps naive. But it cannot be denied that here was a search for an indigenous, regional style or at least for a unique building appropriate to its setting. Grove's son-in-law Fred Seely, Sr., who was not an architect, planned supervised construction of and for many years managed the hotel. (Seely later was to build a castle for himself atop Beaucatcher Mountain.) Despite the hotel's massive exterior rusticity, looming on a misty day like a grey ghost, the building contains a cheerful and slightly incongruous space inside several stories high called the "Palm Room." This skylit space surrounded by balcony/corridors and furnished with wicker and palms, adds a pleasantly surprising element of sophistication. If we don't know what style the hotel is, at least it was good enough (to drop a few more names) for Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone, Henry Ford, Scott Fitzgerald, Herbert Hoover, Franklin

Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower. It remains to the great credit of the designer that he did not impose some currently popular eclectic “style” on the building.

Several other hotels played important roles in the era. The Langren remained standing downtown until the 1960’s, when it was demolished. The George Vanderbilt remains near the new Battery Park, but it was severely “improved” and renovated into apartments for the elderly in recent years. The Asheville-Biltmore went the same route.

The Manor Inn was built in an English Tudor and shingle style on Charlotte Street in an area called Albemarle Park. It eventually was partly surrounded by a complex of about 14 cottages. A publication called *Southland* in 1902 described the Manor and its extensive grounds as having an “air of refinement essential to the comfort of cultivated people.” It has been advertised as: “In America, an English Inn.” The property was developed by William Green Raoul of Savannah, president of Georgia’s Central Railroad.

After bringing his large family to Asheville for several summer vacations, Raoul bought a large farm which his family often had visited. This was to become Albemarle Park. With planning assistance from Samuel Parsons, Jr., Superintendent of Central Park in New York, Raoul and his son Thomas started developing the park in 1889. The inn was started the same year and opened with 25 rooms in 1899. The Manor was surrounded by woodlands, but it adjoined a meadow which yielded good views of mountain ranges to the north and west. The complex was enthusiastically described as having a site with “woody hillsides, flowers, gardens” and an interior with the atmosphere of a comfortable English country house. It had a huge fireplace, comfortable lounge chairs and wicker furniture, terraces and sunrooms — with comfort and personal, unobtrusive service everywhere. Although adapting styles from other regions and periods, this pleasant inn was well adapted to its site and the Victorian touches seem to have taken on a vague sense of regional appropriateness. The inn and cottages eventually could accommodate 250 guests. It was added to, renovated, closed, opened again and today is used as a retirement home.

Most of Asheville’s hotels of this period, in some unique way, responded to their environment enough to intrigue us with the idea of the beginning of a regional style. Some of the hotels later became sanatoria or hospitals, testifying to their durability and leading to another building type.

In the early 1930’s, there was a periodical called *Carolina Mountain Air* published “exclusively” for the medical profession to disseminate information on Asheville’s climate, drinking water content, facilities and other conditions. It included listings, advertisements and photographs of a number of sanatoria, primarily for treatment of tuberculosis. These sanatoria ranged widely in size and service, from converted residences and cottages lodging ten to 15 people to institutions of hospital scale. One of the typical cottage types was Milfoil Cottage, part of a cluster on the Manor grounds, which was advertised for rest and recuperation with



Clockwise, from above left: *The Manor*; detail, *The Manor*; *Milfoil Cottage* on Manor grounds, used as a sanitarium; new *Kenilworth Inn*; *Clio Cottage* on Manor grounds; *Clematis Cottage* on Manor grounds

N.C. Division of Archives and History





William O. Moore



JoAnn Sieburg-Baker

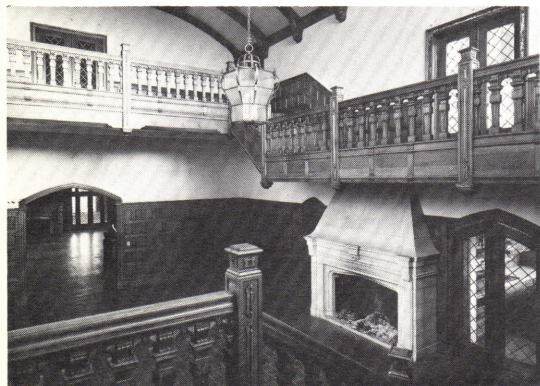
sunny porches and special diet and services. Most of the sanatoria were of residential scale, provided comfort, view, sunshine and, of course, were open to physicians' visits. St. Joseph's, an "institutional" type, originally was a sanatorium for the treatment of tuberculosis which remains rebuilt today as a modern general hospital.

One of the most important sanatoria was Winyah, founded in 1888 by Dr. Karl von Ruck, formerly associated with Dr. Robert Koch who was credited with discovering the cause of tuberculosis. Dr. von Ruck practiced in two sanatoria, the first of which was rather undistinguished architecturally. It was relatively modest and faintly Victorian, with a mansard roof and with wide and broad porches, presumably for rocking and viewing. The second Winyah was an informal Tudor affair a block or so off Merrimon Avenue. Even in later years while operating as a second-rate apartment house it still had a pleasant "Old World charm." Whatever quality it had, however, is now lost to demolition.

The Kenilworth Inns provide another interesting case of rebuilding on the same site and of conversion from inn to hospital. The old Kenilworth was a pre-Disneyland fantasy looming to eight stories, counting the basement and garrets. There were many gables; steep roofs; massive, cylindrical, rusticated foundations; balconies; projections and chimneys. This powerful form overlooked the Swannanoa River Valley, Biltmore and the hills beyond. Even after it burned, in a spectacular fire of 1909 from which many persons only narrowly escaped death, its masonry ruins were interesting. The new Kenilworth Inn, rebuilt on the same site, was a pleasant neo-Tudor building, but it suggested nothing of the fantasy world of the old inn. During World Wars I and II, it served as a military hospital and between wars it was a mental hospital. Today it remains, known as Appalachian Hall, still as a place for treatment of "mental disorders" and alcoholism.

The grandest of all Asheville residences is, of course, Biltmore House, designed by Richard Morris Hunt, called America's finest country house and described by the Guinness Book of World Records as "the largest private house in the world." But Asheville contains other homes of various sizes that also are of architectural note.

An interesting group of "cottages" given names like Chipmunk, Clematis, Cherokee, Galax and Possum Trot were developed as part of the Manor Inn around 1900. Clustered into a resort village of their own, they were first built as summer houses to accommodate visitors to the Manor who needed more space and privacy, and they since have gone through changes in use that reflect the evolution of two or three eras. It is reported that the Manor's developer William Green Raoul often was confronted with the hardship of finding accommodations for a large family and developed the cottages to accommodate ten to 12 persons plus servants as a result of his experiences. (Once, when facing this problem in attempting to find lodging for his own family, he is reported to have said to the innkeeper, "Well, how many children will you take, and I will dispose of the remainder!") At least one cottage



Far left, top:
Zealandia

Far left, center:
*interior,
Zealandia*

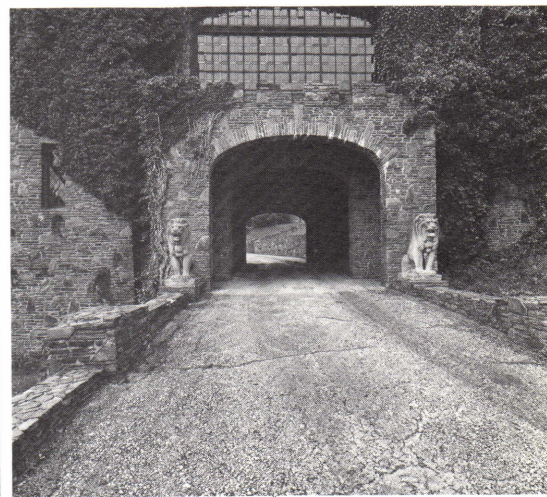
Left: carriage
house, *Zealandia*

Below, left;
Seely's Castle

Below: entrance
detail, *Seely's
Castle*

Opposite:
Ellington House

Paul Brezny



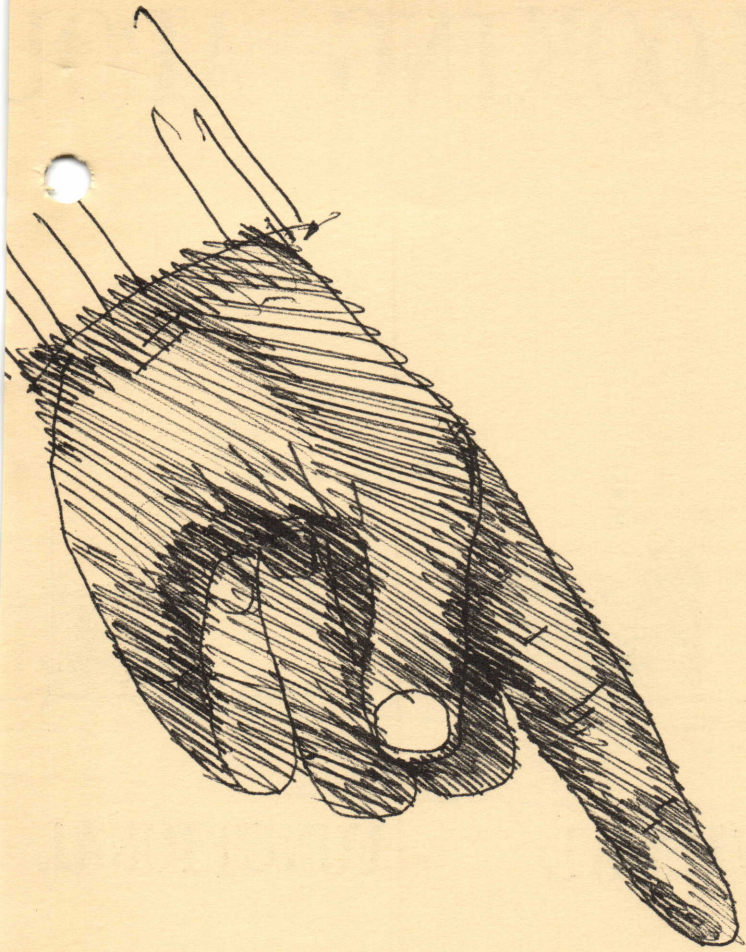
was used later as a sanatorium and today most cottages remain as very desirable year-round houses, some having been divided into apartments. The cottages were planned by Raoul and his son Thomas, presumably with help from others who helped plan the inn, such as Samuel Parsons, Jr. Each cottage was patterned after an easily recognizable European style. Swiss Chalet (with rather rich gingerbread), English Tudor (with authentic heavy timber) and French something-or-other all are in evidence. Of more importance than the styles, however, is the vague Victorian romantic mist that pervades and veils all combined with common materials of shingles, heavy timber and stone to create a pleasant harmony often not achieved by more "learned" hands.

An important residence called "Zealandia," with 28 rooms was built in 1884 by John E. Brown on the ridge of Beaucatcher Mountain above the present tunnel. Brown, a native of Pennsylvania, had lived in North Carolina, searched for gold in California, lived in New Zealand and served in that country's legislative body

(hence the name "Zealandia") and finally settled down to enjoy his mountain home with its view of the east and west. The house, supposedly patterned after Morro Castle in Havana, later was bought by Philip S. Henry of Australia, who made additions and furnished it with a great art collection.

Zealandia's handsome carriage house down the hill is perhaps a more successful piece of architecture from the exterior than is the main house. Inside the main house, however, are distinguished and expensive spaces, finishes and details. The grand foyer, with a fine stair wrapping around the walls and ascending to the second floor, immediately reminds us that this house is from another era and another social order and is perhaps inspired by far away lands. It is said that Calvin Coolidge considered acquiring Zealandia as a summer White House. During World War II, it was used as an Officers' Club by the Army Air Corps and then reverted to a private residence.

Another distinguished residence resting on the same



Selecting & Compensating Architects



From the North Carolina AIA
Series on Architectural Services

LOOKING AROUND

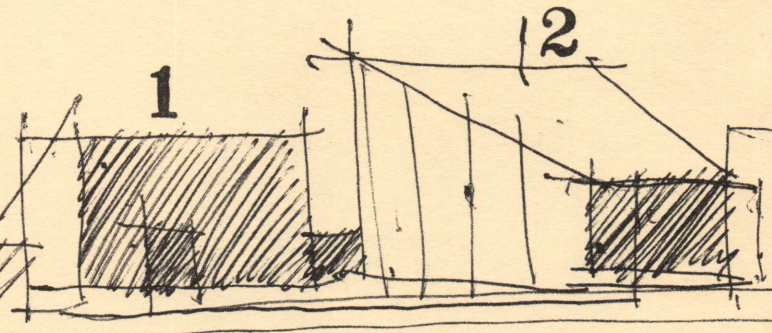
Not long ago, a leading young architect was asked, after completing a lecture on his work, how he had found clients who would commission the daring new houses he designed for them. The architect confessed. It was not, he said, their love of his particular brand of architecture that had brought the clients to him. Instead, they had come to him through "the old boy network." One was a college classmate. Another, a former high school sweetheart. In fact, though the critics had applauded his work, the clients, while pleased in the long run, initially were quite surprised at the houses they got from their old friend.

It's true that much of the world's business — from buying insurance to engaging a stock broker or lawyer or architect — is done this way, through "the old boy network." Personal contacts and recommendations of friends and associates still are perhaps the most common ways to find professional services. To get what you want, however, you may need to do a little more work than simply seeking out recommendations. For it's also true that the more thorough a job you do of selecting someone to provide a service, the more likely you are to find the right person. And when the job at hand is designing a building, that person is crucial to the entire project. In fact, it often is stated that the selection of the architect is the *single most important* decision the prospective owner makes as he plans his building.

Think of everything that's at stake. Large sums of money often are involved. And the new facility — or renovated older one — will be around for a long, long time. So one of your basic tasks as the owner is to find an architect you feel at ease working with, who can provide the services you want in the way you want them provided so you wind up with the best building to suit your needs and desires.

This applies to any building project. A corporation planning a new building, for example, should put as much care into hiring an architect as it normally does into hiring a top executive. Not only do you want someone with a special expertise to do a special job when you hire an architect — just as when you hire a permanent employee — but the architect may well have a greater effect on the business than any single executive. The building that architect designs will be around long after most executives have moved on to other jobs or retired.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN



VISUAL

FUNCTIONAL

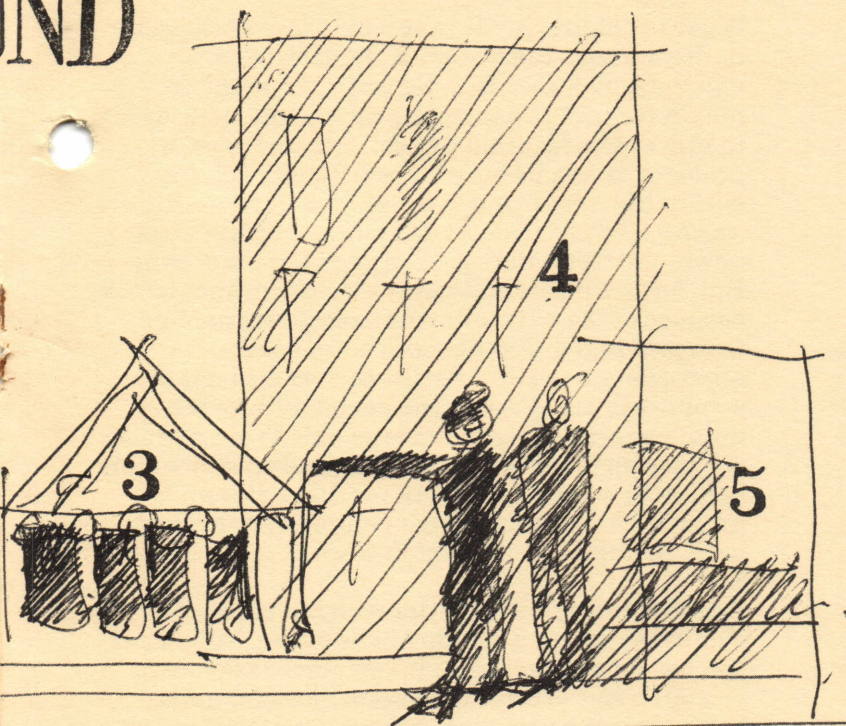
Before You Begin

Even before the owner begins talking with architects, there are things to do to prepare for construction of a new building. Some owners by themselves acquire a site, obtain financing and determine the building's program — the traffic flow, arrangement of work areas and other details of how the building will "work." But even if you proceed this way, you don't want to get too far ahead of yourself. Your architect and other members of your design team may have ideas that will make you want to modify your plans. You may, in fact, want to put off most of these decisions until you have hired your architect. An architect can advise on sites and give you a better idea of a building's cost than you may be able to determine by yourself. He can help you determine the feasibility of your project — whether or not you should build at all. And, of course, "programming" is a valuable service of the architect. The size, form, even the location of a building often come from the building's function — so the architect's involvement at this point can be crucial.

But there are other early steps that you, the owner, will have to take, too. You will want to think about time schedule for the project, procedures for approving each phase of the plans and the architect's work (this is particularly important when a committee or a board is involved), whether or not it will be necessary to call in special consultants to help with zoning changes, traffic

DETERMINE
EXPECTATIONS

ND



COST/SCHEDULE

control and other, related details of the project and how much you want the architect involved in administering the construction itself.

Examining these expectations and desires and defining as much as possible the scope of the architect's work are important steps to take. If you spell out these items now, you can help avoid misunderstandings later. But taking this step also is of immediate use in selecting the architect for your job. When you begin interviewing firms, this knowledge of your own desires can help you determine the capability of various firms to carry out the work; and your description of your desires can help each firm decide whether or not it wants to undertake the job.

Looking Around

People occasionally complain that they can't tell one firm from another when they look up "Architects" in the Yellow Pages and call a few firms to inquire about designing a building. But that shouldn't be such a surprise. Not only is architecture a visual medium, but an architect-designed building is a custom solution to an owner's needs. So there is little that either architect or owner can find out on the telephone. One thing that you, the owner, can accomplish, however, is to ask for a brochure that gives information about the firm's staff and illustrates some of its previous work. Most architects have such publications available and are happy to send them out without charge. And getting the brochure

is a beginning. After all, the best way to evaluate architects is to evaluate their architecture.

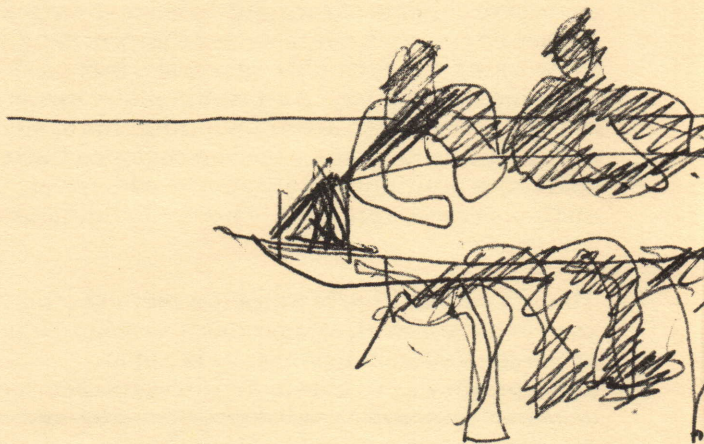
Evaluating architecture, of course, means deciding whether the architect's buildings please you aesthetically. Many owners, in fact, are attracted to a particular architectural firm in the first place because they like the way the firm's buildings look.

But evaluating architects also means asking whether or not a building fulfills its functional requirements, whether its overall design is appropriate to its use, whether the construction cost was within the budget and what kind of working relationship the owner and the architect had. Talk to owners. You can learn a lot from other people's experiences. But no matter what you hear, make your own judgments as well. You're the one who's going to work with the architect. And you're the one who's going to be living with the finished building.

Selection

You may find it possible to decide from looking at previous work and through references from third parties which architectural firm you want to design your building. But if you cannot decide that easily, you can invite firms for interviews to talk about their previous work and what they can do for you. (And if you are putting up a public building, you may be required by law to hold such interviews.)

First, narrow the field down as much as possible. Invite only those firms you are seriously considering. Then, provide each firm in advance with a brief statement about your proposed project — your time schedule, your budget, your site if you have it selected, the specific use of your building.



Compensation

Just as there is a variety of building types and construction problems, so is there a variety of methods for compensating architects. And now that you have selected your architect, you must determine how he will be paid. This range of methods enables the architect and owner to settle on a method which is most appropriate to the project at hand. Flexibility is the keynote.

If the project is relatively simple, you may want to pay the architect a lump sum. This method covers only specific, agreed-upon services and must be re-negotiated if the scope of the project changes. Or, if the project is very limited, if you seek advice from the architect as a consultant or if, as in much restoration work, the amount of work is unknown, you may want to pay on a per diem basis.

To compensate the architect for salaries, overhead and profit for services actually rendered, you may want to take the firm's direct cost and apply a pre-determined multiplier to arrive at the final compensation. This method is commonly used in designing commercial facilities. The American Institute of Architects has developed an extensive method of determining payment using this system called "Compensation Management Guidelines for Architectural Services." A related method is to pay a cost plus a fixed fee. The fixed fee usually is employed to retain a particular architect and cost covers the firm's expense. But this method requires that services be spelled out relatively specifically in advance.

The traditional way of compensating architects has been to base payment on a percentage of construction costs. This allows flexibility to vary with building type and size of the project. More complex buildings carry higher percentages while larger buildings carry lower percentages. This is the method that government agencies most commonly use. It is a system, however, that has some rather serious defects. Owners sometimes suspect architects of running up costs to earn a higher payment. Architects feel they are penalized for working hard to hold down costs, because lower costs mean lower pay. As a result, many owners and architects alike are abandoning this system and adopting methods based on cost plus fixed fee, cost times multiplier, lump sum — whichever method is most appropriate for the building under design.

Though competitive bidding is a method often used to obtain work and products in other phases of the construction business, it is not an appropriate way to obtain architectural services —

because bidding holds inherent disadvantages for both architect and owner. If the services are governed by a specified bid price, the architect may have to cut back on the time spent on design in order to fulfill other duties; if an unforeseen problem arises, he may have difficulty solving it within the pre-arranged price. And if the architect has been forced to do a rush job to keep his costs down, the result may well be an inferior building. But, basically, architectural services cannot be bid because of the nature of what architects do. Each firm provides different services and each approaches a job differently. So it is difficult to compare firms by cost. And each building is a unique project. Contractors are able to bid a project because an architect's drawings and specifications define the scope of the work for them. But an architect at the beginning of a project is dealing with an unknown amount of work.

Another caution: No matter which method of compensation you use, do not be overly influenced by cost cutting tactics. A half a percentage point on construction costs may seem like a lot at the beginning of a project, but there are other factors to consider as well. Be sure to compare the services that will be provided for the various fees. And, of course, be sure to compare the quality of the architects' work.

With completion of negotiations, you will be ready to sign contracts with your architect and together begin designing your building. If everything has gone well, you already have laid the groundwork for a successful architect-owner relationship, in which the architect truly can be your agent, the person who looks out for your best interests all through the project. You've probably already told your architect a lot about what you expect in your new building and the architect probably already has some ideas on how he will meet your specific needs.



COMPENSATION METHODS

- 1 COST PLUS FIXED FEE
- 2 COST TIMES MULTIPLIER
- 3 LUMP SUM
- 4 PER DIEM
- 5 % OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS

It's time now to examine those ideas more closely and begin turning them into that three dimensional, workable object called architecture.

This pamphlet is one of a series on architectural services. Others include: Architects & Architecture: Some Questions and Some Answers. What is Architecture? Before You Build ... The Architect's Services. The pamphlets are free to the public.

To order, write: North Carolina Chapter, American Institute of Architects, 115 W. Morgan St., Raleigh, N.C. 27601.

Produced by the NCAIA Architectural Services Task Force, C. Robert Shields, AIA, chairman. Members: J. Hyatt Hammond, FAIA; Marvin R.A. Johnson, FAIA; Wesley A. McClure, AIA; William H. Sigmon, AIA; Lloyd G. Walter, AIA. Written by Ernest Wood. Design by Gary Hixson. Drawings by Edwin F. Harris, Jr., AIA.

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Do not expect the architects to have solutions for your project at the interview, however. Coming up with design solutions takes careful analysis, time and close work with the owner. The only way to get specific designs at this stage is to hold a competition, a method of selecting an architect that is not customarily used except for significant, very large or monumental projects. (Results of past competitions have been erratic as well. Some are very good and some are disappointing.) But if you think a competition might be appropriate in your case, contact the American Institute of Architects for suggestions and for a set of professionally recommended guidelines.

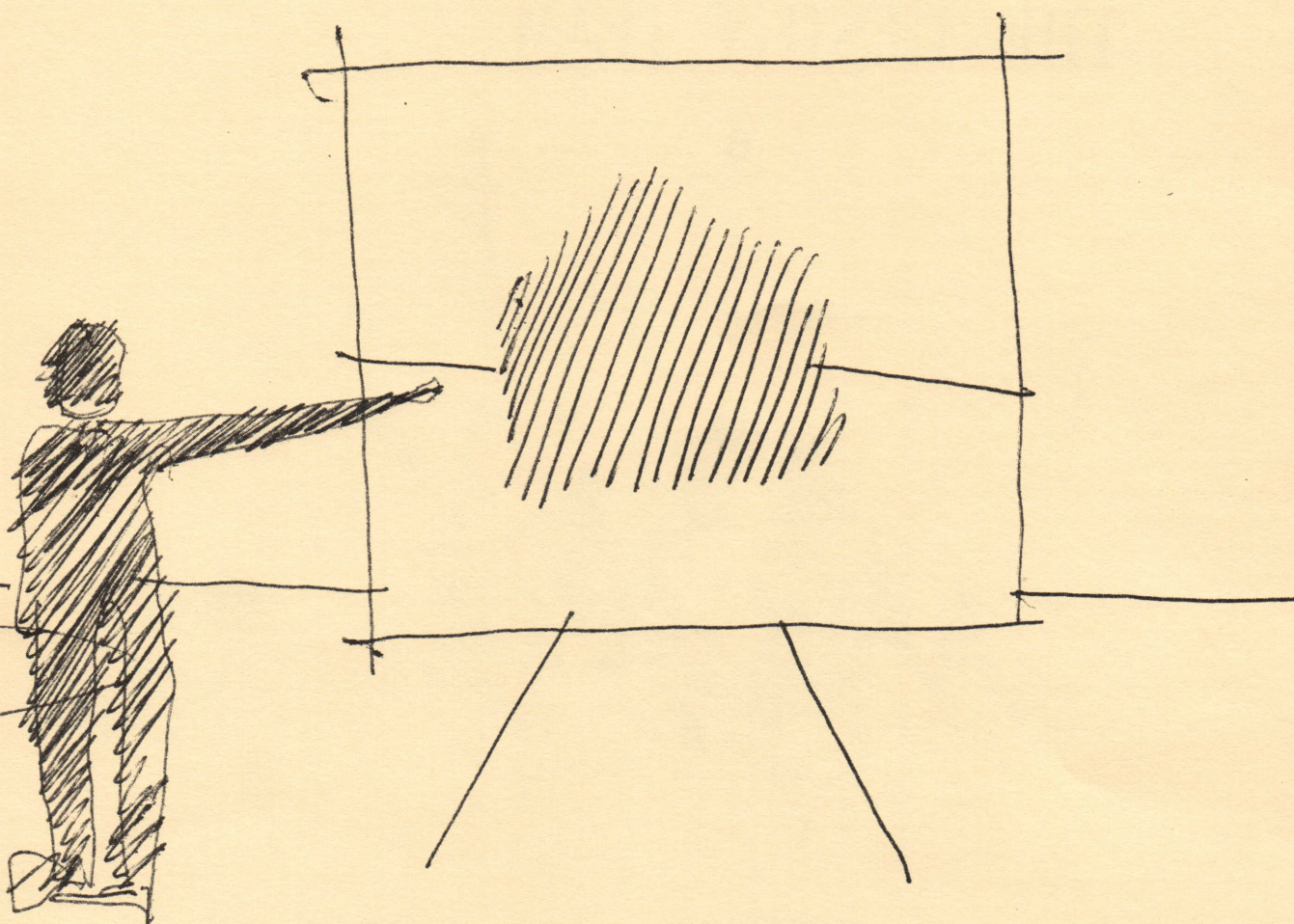
In a normal interview, however, you can expect the architect to present previous work and to discuss the staff he has available or the consultants he can obtain. He may want to present his philosophies of design and the methods by which he would tackle your job.

During the interview, you will want to determine the architect's experience on similar projects, size of staff and facilities, availability of consultants, information on the individual or individuals who will be supervising the project, workload and commitment to other projects, preferred method of compensation and interest in the project.

Aside from the interview, you will want to determine the architect's professional reputation, quality of work and reputation as a businessman. Articles by or about the architect in professional journals, membership in professional societies such as The American Institute of Architects and honors accorded by professional societies can serve as indications of the architect's professional stature. Quality of work and reputation as a businessman can be learned through references, by contacting previous clients, contractors and others who have worked with the architect.

After the interview, you may want to visit the offices of architects under consideration and you may want to visit either completed projects or buildings under construction.

Examine all facts carefully. Selecting the architect is an important step in a big undertaking. But remember, the architects have an interest in your plans, too. So when you make a decision, notify all architects under consideration — including those not chosen for the job — immediately as a matter of courtesy.



INTERVIEW ARCHITECTS

The Design Team

A newspaper once wanted a picture of an architect standing in front of his newly completed building. But when the news photographer arrived at the site, he was surprised to find dozens of persons waiting for him. Not only was there more than one architect in the group, but there were engineers, interior designers, landscape architects, graphic designers and more. There were food service consultants, acoustics and lighting specialists, budget analysts and secretaries. All these, and not one person, it turned out, were "The Architect."

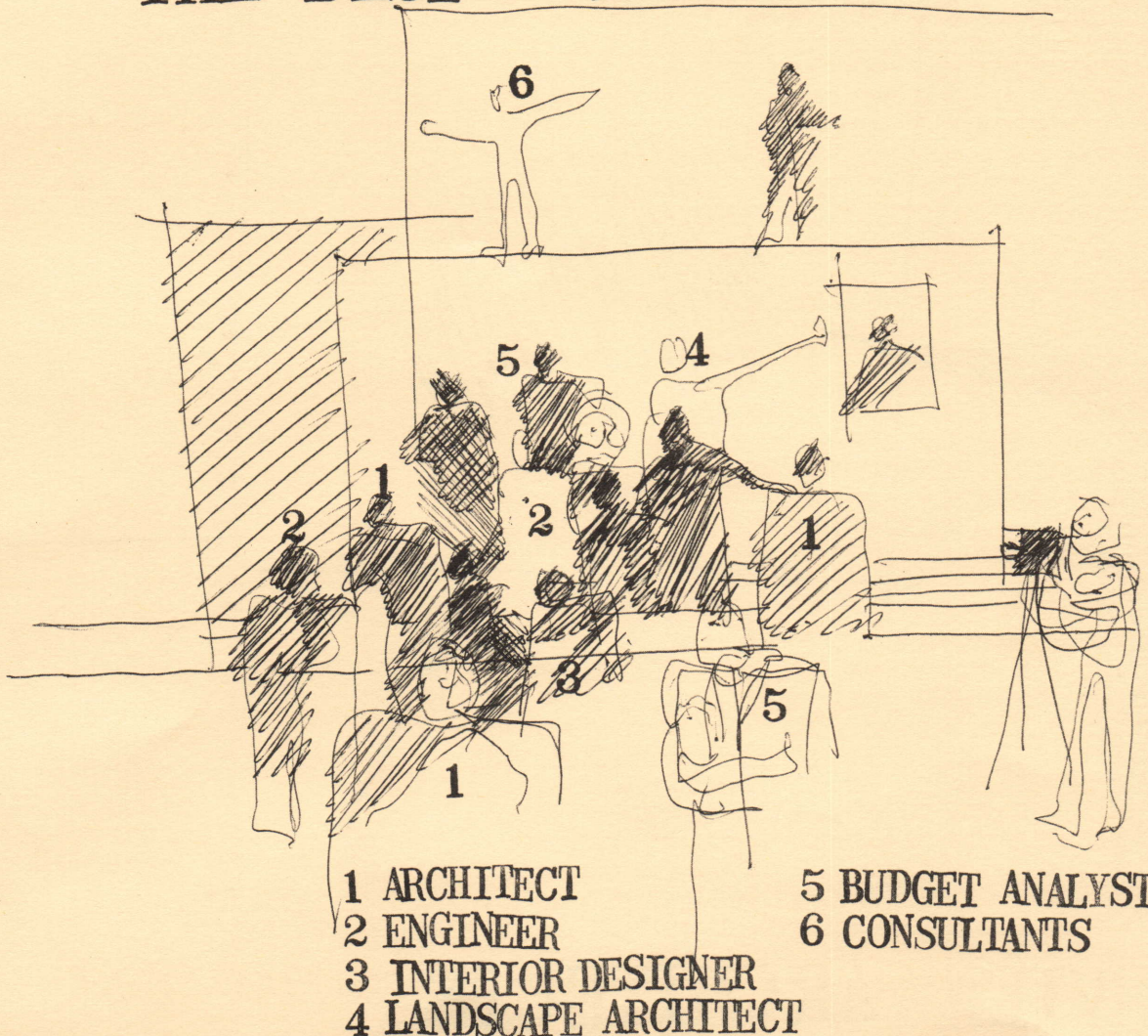
That's the way the story goes, at least. But it is true that with today's complex building problems, most buildings are designed by teams and not by individuals. One architectural firm is hired for the job. And one architect within that firm is assigned the position of "Project Architect" to oversee the work. The architect leads the team. But now, more than ever before, many other people are involved in designing a building, too.

Hiring this "Architect" — putting together this design team — therefore becomes an important step in the design of any building.

So it is important to be aware of the differences and similarities between firms. A firm may be an individual with a very small staff or a large office employing several hundred people with many specialties. One feature common to all firms is that there is a principal (or principals) who is the managing architect responsible for the firm's policy decisions, who has legal liabilities and who determines the architectural emphasis of the firm. It is a combination of firm size and the nature of these individuals — their talents, philosophies and emphases — that makes differences in firms.

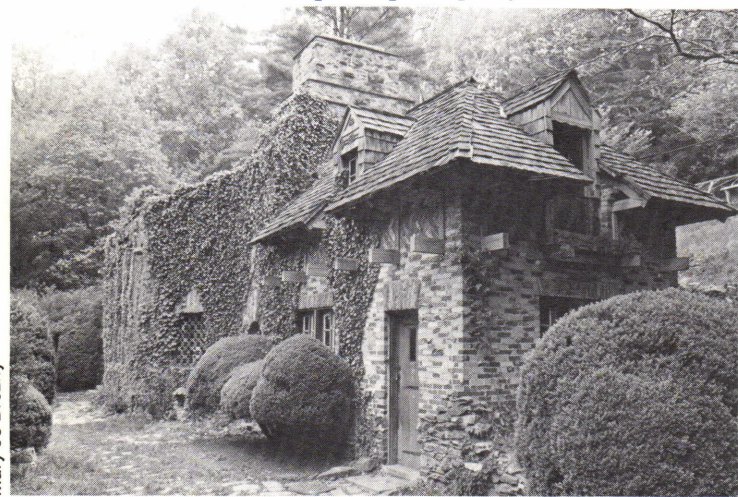
As you examine the scope of your own project, you will have a better idea of the type of firm you need for your job — whether you want a large office with specialists on its staff or a small office which will assemble specialists from elsewhere as consultants. Large and small firms each have their distinct advantages, so you will want to investigate each type. But once you understand your own project and expectations, you will be in a better position to ask the right questions when you are interviewing architectural firms.

THE DESIGN TEAM



ridge as Zealandia is "Seely's Castle." This castle, like Zealandia, was located and oriented to look down each side of the ridge to the east and west, but it also looks to the south along Beaucatcher Ridge. It was surrounded by gates, gardens, service buildings, a garage and other structures and was well landscaped beyond the immediate gardens. Enough of the setting remains to suggest the original. This castle of fine, small scale random ashlar stonework was very English, complete with a "ruin," or intentionally unfinished tower. The castle, designed, built and owned by Fred Seely about 1919, was copied from a castle near London. Much of the original interior quality remains today: massive stone fireplace, high ceilings, rich paneling, ceramic tile floors, wainscots, cork floor in the library, carved mantels imported from Europe and ornate plaster casting. There perhaps is a bit more unity in all this than in the typical grand eclectic house of the day.

One of the most special houses in Asheville — and not a very well known one — is the Ellington House in Chunn's Cove, built about 1926 and designed by Douglas Ellington, a prominent architect of the period. Ellington taught architecture at the University of Pennsylvania after studying there and at the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Paris, worked in Pittsburgh and came to Asheville about 1925 or perhaps slightly earlier.



Mary Jo Brezny

Douglas designed this residence for the family of his brother Kenneth Ellington who assisted him as a business manager, and Douglas lived there with the family off and on for several years. Built onto an existing 120-year-old log cabin, the Welsh Cottage style of the new part was blended so skillfully that at first one cannot be sure the log cabin was not a whimsical addition. Douglas' niece Martha Pettigrew relates that the house was entirely hand-made with local labor and craftsmen, with the exception of an Italian master mason. To a large extent, the house was built from salvage from other of Ellington's projects: cut stone from City Hall, ceramic tile from the S&W Cafeteria. Ceiling boards, for example, are from the concrete formwork from City Hall, complete with stains and workmen's footprints intact. Another piece of whimsy is a special six-inch high door upstairs, built as a hiding place where a "Good Fairy" on occasion would leave candy for the Ellington children.

Designing and building this house from bits and pieces of recycled log cabins, variegated ceramic tile, multi-

colored brick from an old, painted store, hand-made hardware by a descendant of Daniel Boone and heavy timber beams from a school attended by Zeb Vance must have been an exhilarating experience, especially for Ellington's draftsmen/students who helped with construction. Probably, Antonio Gaudi would have appreciated it. This combination of Welsh Cottage and mountain cabin adapted and secluded beautifully at the foot of a hill and beside a stream and including many personal touches has a special unity and uniqueness that owes most of its character to its creators and inhabitants, the Ellingtons.

The ambiguous term "regional style" has been suggested, for lack of some more distinct term, to describe those Asheville hotels, sanatoria and residences which appeared from the 1890's through the 1920's. Certainly, there were architectural influences from Europe that can be identified as derivative: Swiss Chalet, half-timber, Tudor, "French Chateau." And there are other influences harder to define: Victorian, "English Inn" and "English Cottage." And the log cabin era was not so far removed in influence. (The white, classical temple or palace on the mountainside was rare, however.)

To go further searching for a regional style where no distinct style existed would be an academic exercise. What is more important is that certain indigenous and romantic ideas contributed examples of architecture that added up to a community and an informal harmony greater than the sum of the parts. The major buildings such as the old Battery Park, the Manor and the Grove Park had an important influence on entire neighborhoods as well as on individual buildings. The builders of the Manor in an eclectic way created their own village and their own style. Only a neighborhood away, near the Grove Park, there was another, a "Bavarian-Alpine" cluster of single family houses creating their own unity. In the Kenilworth neighborhood, English Tudor was prevalent. There are many examples of vernacular shingle style houses and houses built with pebble dash stucco and half timber which seem to follow the influence of the early hotels and exemplary residences.

Perhaps we can conclude by asking what common thread of continuity ran through the architectural character of these buildings and developments. Perhaps it was a romantic search for form compatible with setting which, above all, looked to the mountains as a place of escape and retreat. Although Asheville society was touched in different ways by Scott Fitzgerald and Thomas Wolfe as two literary interpreters of an era, it is more difficult to similarly select an individual or single work or style to broaden our understanding of the architecture of the period. Perhaps it is a vaguely defined vernacular architecture, which in retrospect takes on more unity and sense of purpose, that will remain to have some lasting value. ■

William O. Moore is an architect with Moore/Woodard Associates, Asheville. He currently is working on a publication on Southern Appalachian regional architecture and folk building.

Roundtable

Today's Asheville

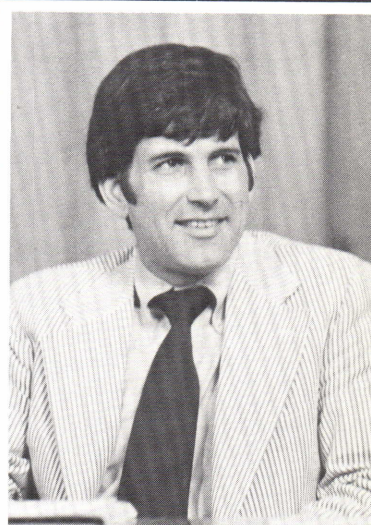
The mountains, the climate, the people all go to make this a special Southern city



Verl Emrick



Walter J. Boggs



John E. Cort

Ewart M. Ball

On May 3, 1978, six Asheville architects and the Asheville city planner got together in the Art Deco council chambers of Asheville City Hall to talk about today's architecture in their city. Participating in this roundtable discussion, organized by **North Carolina Architect**, were:

Verl Emrick, Asheville city planner;

Walter J. Boggs, AIA, who maintains his own practice; 1978 President, Asheville Section, NCAIA;

John E. Cort, AIA, of Wood & Cort;

Anthony Lord, FAIA, retired, a founder of Six Associates

J. Bertram King, FAIA, head of a firm bearing his name;

John Reid, AIA, who maintains his own practice; and

Thomas F. Bridges, AIA, of Six Associates.

Ernest Wood represented **North Carolina Architect** as moderator.

The following is an edited transcript of the two and a half hour conversation which ensued:

Architect: This roundtable is intended to be a way of getting at the current issues of architecture in Asheville, since most of our other articles are dealing with historic buildings. Maybe a good place to start would be to think in terms of Asheville as compared to the rest of the state. For a variety of reasons, it seems to me that Asheville is very different from any of the other cities. So maybe we should begin by addressing the question: "Is there anything, really, different about Asheville and what is it?"

King: I'll tell you the word the Chamber of Commerce uses more than anything else when they're trying to entice new industry here and that's the word "livability." And you can put a lot of meanings on the word "livability." That might mean just the overall quality of the air or the temperature, the scenery and what not, but that's the big word. And amazingly enough, when people come in here, they say, "This is just a great place to live." And we have high powered executives come in here and refuse promotions just to stay here.

Cort: This is true. Talking to the state people who look for new industry, they say one of the major drawbacks, or one of the negative factors about the area and any industry locating here is that if it's an international organization or a national organization is that people will not transfer out of Asheville.

Architect: How can this be related to architecture?

King: Well, certainly architecture has got to be related to "livability." I mean, they build a house up on the side of the mountain, they wouldn't part with it for anything in the world. Or Biltmore Forest. My gosh, once they get entrenched there, there's no way to get them to leave!

Reid: I think that much of what you just said might be the crux of the issue. I think people get here and get entrenched in their own, local environment that they very carefully nurture and take advantage of to, sometimes I think, isolate themselves from some fairly important things that go on around here. I've made the observation before that many people who, at least as far as politics is concerned and social action and sort of running of the day to day aspects of life, it's very

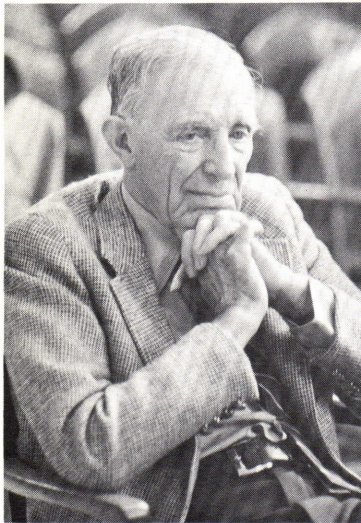
difficult to get a lot of these people who come here and live here excited about very much. I used to think that it's partly because they come here to get away from all of these other things that they just don't want to think about.

Bridges: Of course, that could be because they're happy with the way things are.

Boggs: This sort of leapfrogs down your category, but I think it fits into what you're talking about here: Is Asheville unique? And we'll agree that it is a unique place. And I think the thing that is really most different about it from other Southern cities, at least North Carolina cities, is not our topo but our climate, which generates a way of life that's different than the whole "New South." It's been stated, and I think pretty correctly, that the air conditioning machine remade the South into a vital economic thing. And we in Asheville are permitted to live — the air conditioning machine is not part of our basic requirement for residential life here. And it just releases us from all kinds of shackles that other communities have because of the air conditioning machine and the battened down house.

Emrick: Well, I can agree with

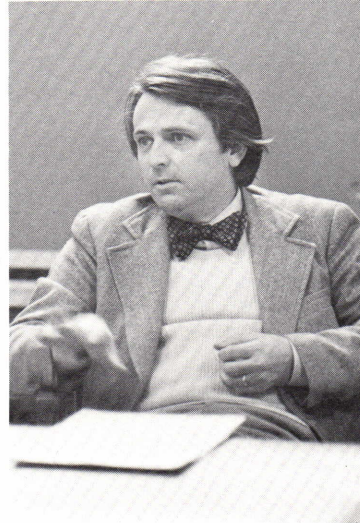
North Carolina Architect



Anthony Lord



J. Bertram King



John Reid



Thomas F. Bridges

most of everything that everybody has said. I think we have to take it one step further in typifying Asheville's uniqueness. I think it ties in with what John has said: It's the people. They're the ones, after all, that dictate the fabric of the city from an architectural standpoint. They demand more out of their residential areas, in the older areas. Issues such as trees in the downtown area are becoming very important — those types of quality of life things that probably wouldn't occupy as high a priority within the political system somewhere else, say Charlotte or some of these other towns, other than Asheville. I do think the interest of the people and their demands on the architects do contribute a great deal to the uniqueness, or accentuate our uniqueness. And the fact that we are isolated. The freeway system is just now opening up. In the past ten years, from an economic standpoint, some changes may come because of that. Some drastic changes — with the cutting of Beaucatcher — to solve a traffic problem that was really horrendously bad. But there could have been other ways to do it.

Reid: Beaucatcher is maybe one manifestation of our collective people that admin-

ister the city and the business types who, though they are administering private operations, do in fact have some impact on the decisions that the local political officials make. It seems to me, and it's not unique here, that increasingly the major decisions that are made that have major impact on our overall physical environment are of a much more intellectual nature than they are of a physical nature. No one ever said, at any point in the discussion (of cutting Beaucatcher Mountain) — and seriously had that point entertained — what was it going to be like to live here once this problem is solved, given this package of information — traffic counts and highway speeds. And, you know, no one ever seriously scratched their head and had an open discussion and a serious discussion about what it's going to be like once that decision is culminated in a particular act. And I think that's also going on in all of the peripheral developments. It's all intellectual.

Emrick: But you as a profession haven't had that dramatic input into the planning. Nor have you taken an overt role in the plans that dictate that. I'm thinking that basically your client-architect relationship dictates what

you put where.

Lord: In general, the architects have waited for things to happen and then taken advantage of whatever was there. I mean, they fished in whatever kind of water, whether it was clear or muddy. It's after the fact. They never influenced the fact. So far as I know, the profession has never attempted to direct the course of events. That is, only in a minor way.

Emrick: Well, perhaps there is an opportunity now.

Lord: I think that's opening up. I think the people are far more alert to these values than they were five years ago.

Emrick: Another facet of that also is that the planning that has gone on has been directed toward economic development.

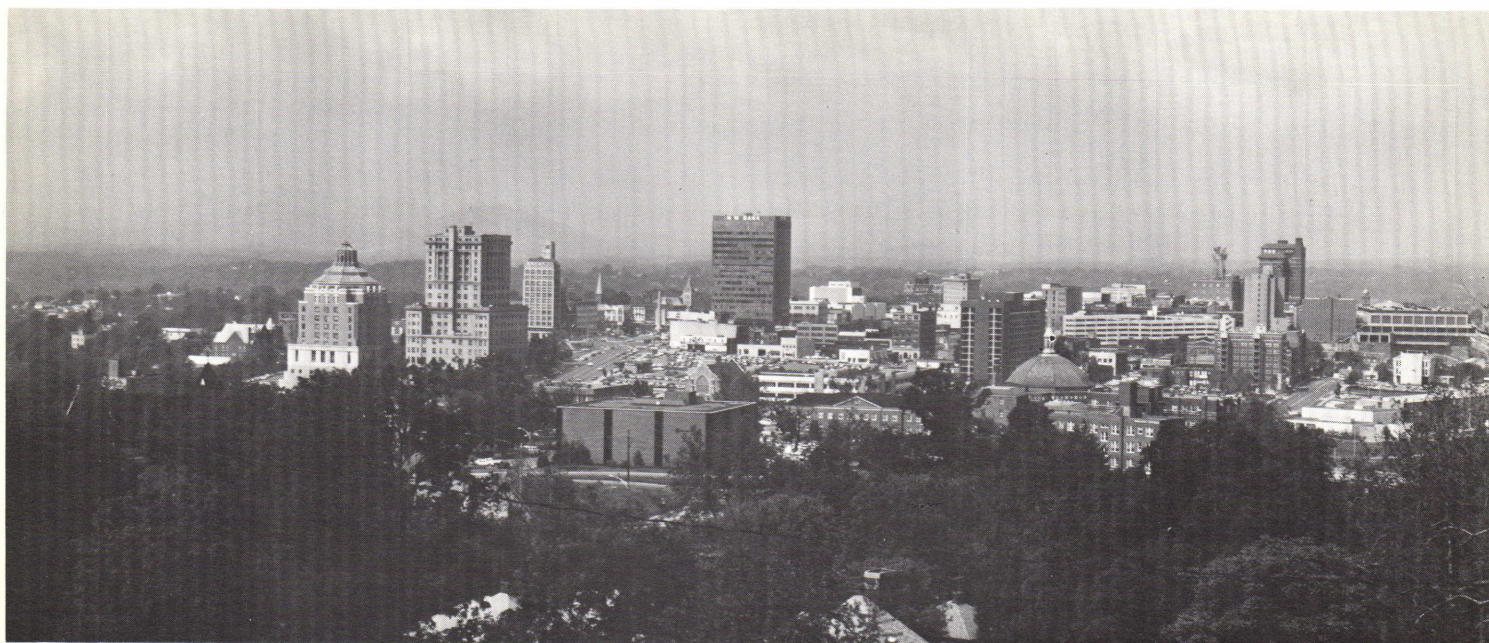
Lord: The visual aspect of it has pretty much been neglected. The expressway through town illustrates that. There are so many things that the expressway opened up that could have been played up — views that were recovered, old views that you used to see before things grew up came out again. Advantage has not been taken of these small opportunities here and

there to really do something and take advantage of things that went along.

Boggs: I just last week had that pleasant experience that most of you have had, a refresher for an Asheville resident. We had people in from Indiana, house guests. And you're looking at the city through different sets of eyes. Suddenly, this happens and you're trying to think of the things that you want to show them and one thing suggests another to you and the pattern is that it almost gets cloying because they are so enthusiastic. And you know, it's just not natural for people to sit around for two days and say nothing but compliments! But that's what can happen in Asheville.

Architect: Maybe it's just the fact that these strip developments and franchises and this sort of thing are everywhere in the country, including Asheville. Maybe people just don't see them anymore and they look at other things.

Boggs: Well, there's something on each side of them that merits interest. And what this is, it seems to me, is a collection of little things and it really expresses our environment in a way that we really don't see. Asheville is a product of its people, influences



Sondra Baucom



Ernest Wood



Top: Asheville as seen from Beaucatcher Mountain

Above, center: cutting a new road through Beaucatcher Mountain to relieve tunnel traffic

Above: Tunnel Road, Asheville's main area of strip development

from other regions and has been for a very long time now.

Reid: People who want to be here.

King: This area is comprised, especially the business and industry around here, is generally people from away from here.

Lord: Pretty much imported.

King: It just dawned upon me. You're talking about people coming here and people do come here from away from Asheville in this state and we've gotten a lot of retired general-type people, retired industrialists. Not only retired. But we've got a rather cosmopolitan population here, certainly much moreso than normal cities.

Boggs: All right. You bring those people here. And then, carrying on my previous thought about you're not bound by air conditioning. What these visitors that I've just experienced, are aware of, and they help you see again, is that there is a marvelous juxtaposition of all kinds of scale and character of architecture. And it has the feature—our topo provides this—that very few large vistas do you see in any kind of detail.

Cort: I think this is a very valid comment, because Asheville's saving grace is the topography and the climate. You get, what Walter was saying, we have the strip development, we're going to have it and there's nothing we can really do to really alter that. We can help. We can try. We've got urban renewal. You

cannot legislate aesthetics in urban renewal. And you can't do anything about it. Really, you can make strides in the direction and talk about it, but you're fixed with the same thing that every other American city is fixed with. Because, you know, everybody has his own thing. You'll go and rape the mountain for a while, but it'll grow up and be just right. You come in our worst strip in Asheville, which is Tunnel Road. I can remember coming home after being at Fort Bragg and driving down Bragg Boulevard, a mile wide of asphalt straight into Fayetteville. But when you come down Tunnel Road and look at it, you see that strip in the confines of the valley and everything else dominating it. So I think, really, strides need to be made in conscious planning, but even if it doesn't get done, we've still got something here that gives variety and delight in built environment because of the topography and the climate and the lushness.

King: You know, the amazing thing about that, too, is you can get up on the side of the mountain, and if you get just far enough away from it, the worse slum and the worst mess in the area looks fine. When you look down on it, it makes all the difference in the world!

Reid: I agree with what you're saying, John, about how the mountain takes care of things. I recall the first time I came here, back in '69 or '70. I came in through one of the highways from the west, I guess through Waynesville, and I was struck by the insig-

nificant quality that the highway had and I just became very aware of my dimensions, the dimensions of the vehicle that I was in and the dimensions of that thing that I was traveling on. And I recall saying that I can't imagine what one would do to this to actually make much of a difference. Now that I live here, I have a much more, I admit, intellectual association with the impact that we can have on that something and I have become reasonably aggressive in trying to sell that point. I agree that there is no question that whatever we do, given enough time, the mountains will take care of themselves, because they're so big. But I do believe that's one laurel that we must not allow ourselves to rest on. That's nice and we should just sort of keep that in our hip pocket and...

Cort: We've got the macro environment that's going to take care of us. We need to take care of the micro.

Lord: Well, look at the history of the commercial development. The first major thrust here, perhaps, was Mr. Grove. Now, what did we do. We sold him Battery Park Hill and what did he do? He dug it up and moved it. And every developer since has taken any hill that was in sight and dug it up and moved it. I mean, we may be in the mountains, but we don't like hills. And we don't develop things with a difference in elevation in mind at all.

King: But he did a pretty fair job with the Grove Park Inn, though, Tony. Without an architect, as a matter of fact. But you know the amazing thing. The most interesting type of architecture in the world has got to be residential, residential architecture. And the people come here and they're not used to these hills and they want to build up on the side of the mountain. They like that because they want the view, just like if you moved to the ocean, you'd want to be right on the bloomin' ocean. And they want the view. But they don't want a mountain house. They want to be able to drive in level from the uphill side. And when they want to be able to walk level out on the earth terrace with their flowers on the other side. By the time you've chopped it down over here and filled up over there to get this huge level area, you

don't have a mountain house anymore.

Lord: Nobody will fly houses off these mountainsides.

King: Well, they wouldn't think of parking up on the third floor.

Lord: ... and going down.

King: It's just they don't, most of them, don't think it matters. Now, there are a few local architects who have been able to convince them otherwise and have done some fairly nice jobs. But they come in here with their stock plans or their stock ideas and they won't change them. It's too bad, because there were some great chances for some great architecture on these mountains.

Architect: Do you have some specific examples of some houses in mind?

King: I think Bill Moore's probably got a pretty nice mountainside house. Some of the public housing that Wiegman-Hall designed around town.

Reid: N.C. 712, out at the end of Montford, I think, dealt intelligently with the site. Not of the orientation of the structures in relation to the climate, but — that's the one called Klondyke — that particular development was a scattered project.

Boggs: There was something here that Bert started talking about and Tony started talking about. I guess you have to start out confessing. The place was here for something of staggering beauty and great significance. The setting was here for a type of architecture that could have unparalleled. And obviously that has not been achieved, not by any stretch of the imagination. So an opportunity really has gone aglimmering.

Cort: I'll mention a few buildings here that are pretty well influenced by both the client and the terrain. Number one, you've got your school systems. And in your county schools, right now, they're developing large sites that encompass recreational parks on the same site as the high school. And there is a very great topographic challenge in a 100 acre tract that is really affecting major architecture in the county. Bert's done jobs that way; we have.



William O. Moore



Paul Brezny

Top: architect's residence by William O. Moore

Above: Klondyke, a public housing development by Jan M. Wiegman

It's quite a problem out there. These are large buildings that have to take several elevations in grade. Back in town, one of Bert's jobs, which really was mandated by the hillside, was the Asheville High School vocational building. You had to get the cars in and out and a very pleasing building came out of it. Six Associates, they have a client, or two good clients, that happened to be on hillsides opposite from each other. So they built a bridge and called it a building or a building and called it a bridge to connect the two hillsides. A problem that our firm's been involved with is the Civic Center. When you walk in the front door, to get out the back door, it's 50 feet straight down. And they weren't going to build it any other place. So how do you deal with that?

King: The lot wasn't large enough, so you hung it over the street.

Cort: So you hang it and you run the street up under the building. These are some very unique specific buildings and unique situations to Asheville and to the problems that architects in Asheville have to address.

King: It also runs your costs up, too.

Emrick: I think, perhaps, y'all are homing in on what I think is the best opportunity architects have had in any number of years to influence any great deal of architecture, that being this latest effort to renew the downtown, which is about, what, sixth in a series that has never fully come to pass. We've talked with the merchants and they, like every other merchant, want the traffic to flow by their place of business in unlimited quantities, which is a situation that cannot ever be addressed fully or accurately. But yet, what do you guys think you can do to help us?

Bridges: Is this going to involve any kind of review process?

Emrick: Within the creative ordinance, there are provisions for a design review board much the same way as works with the housing authority, except you're dealing with facades rather than internal construction.

Bridges: Sometimes that's the biggest help an architect can have, when there's someone

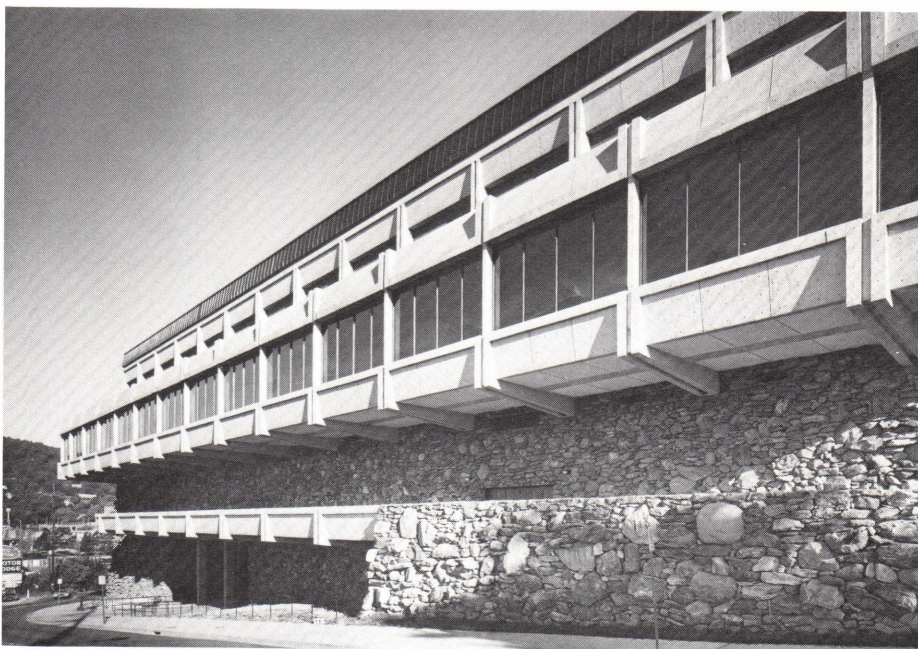
backing him in his fight with his client to do something nice, particularly a political body. Now the appearance commission in Chapel Hill is a good example of that. I'm glad to hear that there will be some review process. I hope that there will be some design input.

Emrick: It is envisioned to be made up of three or four architects, an engineer, a politico, just to try to jell all the factions that are necessarily involved with a lot of those things. Here, again, I think we're talking about an educational process. We have to educate both the policy-makers who are going to approve it and the clients.

Boggs: There's one other thing that I think is really unique about Asheville that deserves recognition. It is really a town that has happened and has continued to be a pretty vital force with-

Emrick: Well, I think in the metropolitan area, we're up around 155,000 to 160,000 now. Since the last census, that's a 14% to 15% growth rate, positive numbers. And again, from '60, about the same percentage. So there is that expansion. Slow. It's growing more slowly than we anticipated. At the same time, the demographics show that the age pyramid, which is a good buzz word, is inverted, where you have more of the older people at the top. And it contracts and comes back down to the school age people, which you can see within the city itself. The city school system is crying for students. They're laying off teachers, while in the county, they're wanting to build more schools. They're just busting at the seams.

Boggs: I still contend that the population has really not significantly expanded, but the services have. When we



Left: Asheville Civic Center by Wood and Cort

Opposite, top: Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) by Six Associates

Opposite, bottom: Erwin High School by Wood and Cort

Brezny and Mauldin

out any real expansion. The economy hasn't expanded greatly and the population hasn't expanded at all for 50 years now. It's nearly 50 years. It's been in a zero growth situation and really negative growth.

Architect: If the city hasn't grown, the first question is: How has it survived?

King: It's the metropolitan area that has grown. Tremendously.

Boggs: It hasn't grown so much in population, but it has in services.

King: Where *have* we grown?

came here, there were probably, in 1951, three or four supermarkets, for instance, and there were two or three banks downtown. Now, all of those things have mushroomed on the order of 25 times. With the same number of people, but we're all working in a different way. If an expanding population had gone along with all this, Lord knows what this place would have been.

Architect: I wanted to ask, to get back to some more specifics of architecture, what are the general trends in construction, what types of buildings are being built, if there is any sort of trend, say,



Brezny and Mauldin

that the level of apartment construction versus office versus schools versus the various building types. Can any sorts of conclusions be drawn at all?

Emrick: We see more commercial structures being developed over the past, what, two, three years. The residential construction is done significantly. New starts, single family houses, apartments. Multi-family is up. You can't find a place to rent. There is absolutely nil. Then, as far as architectural form, from what I see as a non-architect, we have a sameness that is generated with each of the new buildings. K-Mart comes in, Sky City, it's the same elongated suburban shopping center, with miles and miles of parking.

King: And most of those developers are from out of town.

Lord: Of course, what you do see here that you don't see in other cities of North Carolina are motor hotels. There is an enormous number of hotels.

King: The mom and pop variety, plus the chains.

Cort: We had the Hilton and the Inn on the Plaza come in and these were two major hotels that are somewhat of a different character than all the rest of them. And then, in the suburbs, we've had a great growth of stock plan motels.

Lord: It's extraordinary how much easier it is to find a night's lodging in this area

than it is in New England, for example.

Architect: Well, that's because Asheville is basically a resort town — or to a tremendous extent — isn't it?

Emrick: It's a pass-through town. It's not a resort town in and of itself. You come here, you stop for the night and then you go to Boone or somewhere else.

Architect: I was wondering about the changing nature of the resort. There was a day when people would come and stay at the Grove Park, Scott Fitzgerald would come down and stay for months, that sort of thing. But people like that don't come to Asheville anymore.

King: I can remember Dorothy Dix would come here every summer. She was the letters to the lovelorn lady. She was the Abby of her day. But when I was working at the Grove Park Pharmacy jerking sodas there, Dorothy Dix would stop there. The air conditioning was the reason. People would come up here from Florida or the big city or the hot place and spend a nice cool summer. They don't have to do that anymore. They can spend a nice cool summer in Miami, if they like.

Architect: I suppose transportation has something to do with it, too.

King: Transportation has a lot to do with it. But we got people *for the summer* and we still have summer residents, people who have summer homes.

Architect: But they don't really come to the *city*, they come to the region. They might come to 30 miles out, on a lake or something.

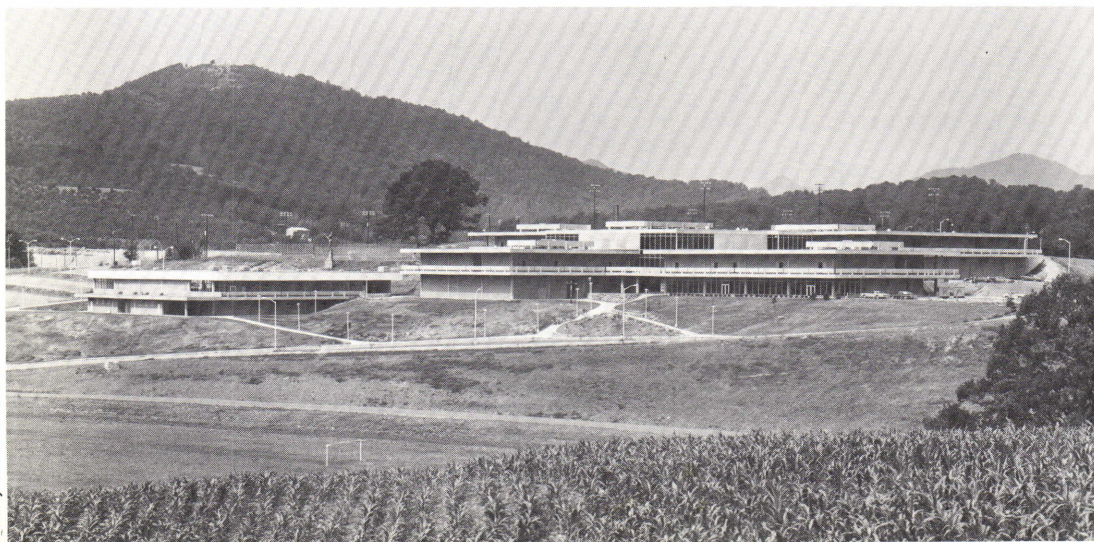
Cort: Asheville is the service center of the resort area of North Carolina, that's about it. It in itself is not a resort city.

King: The Grove Park Inn is now a convention hotel. It's not a resort hotel.

Architect: It seems like there is a tremendous amount of road construction going on right now. I would think that the number of roads and tourist traffic through the town would, perhaps, generate more strip development than you would get in another sort of town.

Emrick: It becomes very difficult to control that. In fact, you can't. The more roads we put in the more pressures that are going to be exerted to let these things grow up around. The next one is going to be all the interchanges you see at the connector. There's going to be a hell of a lot of pressure to leapfrog across Tunnel Road and get back on that mountain with commercial development.

Reid: It may be an excellent opportunity for us, as a group of professionals, to start trying to explore ways that we can make some inroads into the overall impact of whatever happens and I don't think we've got any of the tools right now to do it.



Brezny and Mauldin

Obviously, the individual project is not the way, unless you're designing the interchange or something and that's not going to happen.

Emrick: This is not a unique situation to Asheville at all. I think every urban situation I've run into has the same problem. It all goes back to the Americans' attitude toward property ownership: it's mine, by God, I'll do what I want with it.

Reid: Well, in Boston, for instance, there are areas, urban renewal areas, that the developers, the urban development authority, the city government are very active in. And city fathers are very active in making decisions about where some things are going to go and where some things are not going to go and then they set out to find for themselves a developer to make it work for them, who will do what needs to be done to satisfy the needs of the particular community at a particular time. And the Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants Association are the only people who are doing that, going out and hustling things to happen.

Architect: What are they hustling?

Reid: Oh, they're pretty good about bringing things in.

King: They're the industry hunters.

Architect: What sort of buildings have those put up that have come in in recent years? Anything particularly noteworthy?

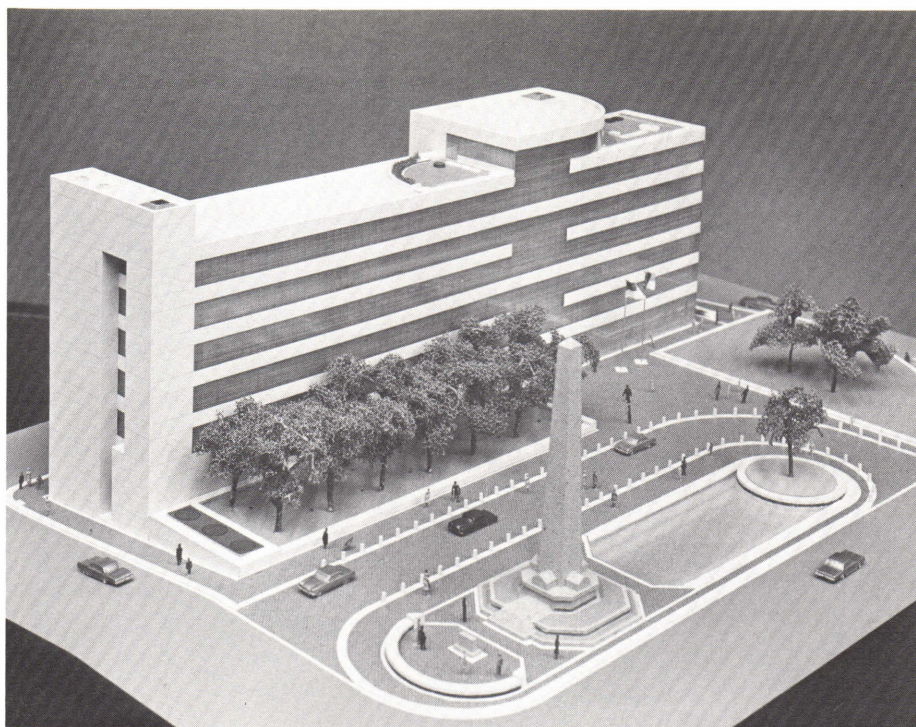
King: They generally bring their own plans, their own stock stuff and they have to chop off the hills and fill in the valleys to place the plant here.

Architect: From the way you talk, it seems like a lot of the work is going to people who bring their own architects and engineers from elsewhere.

King: Only when there's something important to do. (laughter)

Cort: Well, I. M. Pei has been commissioned to do a building right up the street here. As Bert says, when something important...

Reid: The AKZONA corporate headquarters.



June Glenn, Jr.

Left: model of AKZONA corporate headquarters. The building by I. M. Pei and Partners currently is under construction on Pack Square

Below, left: shops, Lexington Avenue, part of a rehabilitation project in downtown Asheville by John Reid

Below: interior courtyard of John Reid's rehab project



Boggs: I'm sure every city has architects who want to live there regardless of the economic situation. I would say, almost, that it's true that everybody's here because he thinks he can make a go of it and likes other reasons to the exclusion of other considerations.

Architect: On the other hand, Asheville was at one point a boom town and produced some extraordinary architecture — for North Carolina, at least. There's nothing like the downtown area in any other city in the state. This may have grown up because people came in from other parts of the country, like we talked about. It's reflecting New York in some places as well as North Carolina. But it is in a way an attractive city architecturally — I mean attractive in the way that it could attract someone to live here and prac-



John Reid

tice here because of what has gone on here in the past.

King: You say it once was a boom town, and that's probably been the biggest detriment to progress, at least during the '40's, '50's and maybe '60's. The fact that Asheville boomed so in the '20's and so many people got absolutely killed in the crash of '29. And the older people — and, Tony, I'm sure you can remember plenty of them — that wouldn't invest a penny in this area because they were afraid they'd lose...

Lord: They're most of them gone, now, you know.

King: That's what's happening...

Lord: And I think that may be one reason why things are picking up...

King: That's right. So many of them have gone now, but they remembered the crash and they were some of the most conservative people you ever saw.

Emrick: I think that probably this renewed interest in historic restoration might, from an architectural standpoint as well as an economic standpoint, be a second coming for the city.

Cort: In the next ten or next 20 years, our immediate future here, we're going to have to come to grips with these old historic buildings, because they are starting to really have some serious problems. The architect has to be inventive, to find out a way to preserve them. It really is a pretty big responsibility.

Architect: Was the city, also



Above: interior, St. Lawrence Catholic Church



William O. Moore

Above, right: interior, Unitarian Universalist Church by William O. Moore

Right: Bank of Asheville, downtown, by J. Bertram King



Gordon H. Schenck, Jr.

because of the boom, was it overbuilt? Was there also not the need for new buildings for many years? And also, is the volume of old buildings that were preserved, that weren't torn down because nobody was building any new things, is that going to mean new work in rehab, renovation, that sort of thing?

Cort: I think so.

Reid: There's still not a need to build any new building.

King: This guy here is doing one of the most interesting rehabs in the city that I've seen. He took the worst street, the worst buildings and the worst environment, the worst everything and he's making something out of it.

Reid: There are some folks that would say it's pretty nice.

King: Beg pardon? What did I say?

Reid: You said it's the worst, the worst, the worst. And in the eyes of many people, it is.

King: But it's not anything you'd classify as a historic building. It didn't have any of the things going for it that you'd think of as a restoration and he's really making something fantastic out of it.

Reid: Well, let's get this on the record that much of what has happened there is a result of the developer's vision. I have by and large been more conservative than he has. He's trying to take these dozen buildings and develop a central courtyard and make it very lively, healthy community. And I look around me and see very negative attitudes about the central business district. I see

people's negative attitudes toward being in that area and yet just as quick as we can get something ready, we fill it up. It's just incredible.

King: It really is. You're turning that street into something really nice. As a matter of fact, we need that street badly ...

Lord: We sure do. That's the liveliest street in Asheville.

King: This is Lexington Avenue, which is the farmers' market and the winos' place and everything else. But they have businesses there that you can't find anywhere else in Asheville. You can buy things there that you can't buy anywhere else. There's a definite need for that street and what he's doing to a portion of it is upgrading it — and, you know, you can upgrade them too much if

you're not careful. You can get them to the point where the things that are native move out. But you're not doing that.

Reid: I find myself involved in things that are so far from architecture I sometimes wonder. I find myself in the shops of merchants along the way talking to them about what we're doing and what we're hoping to have happen and trying to convince them to get into group advertising to sell the whole street, Lexington Avenue, as this very unique place and trying to assure them that we're trying to do anything to run them out or try to take extra advantage of the traffic. We want to be just one more part of that.

Architect: We've talked a lot about planning and downtown and the strips and all these things. But I'd like to talk some about some more specific buildings in Asheville that are good.

King: I think the most outstanding building here, and I hate to be jumping the gun but it just springs to mind, is the (St. Lawrence) Catholic Church here. The most fascinating building, if you go through that and look at the structure of it, how it was built. And, you know, if you just say this is the largest unsupported tile dome in the world, that's a lot. That's just a small part of that building. The floors are constructed of a series of arches. The crawl space — you look under that and there are the most beautiful arches. And the stairs, especially the stair that's unfinished going up one of those towers to the belfry.

Lord: The tile — you go up above the dome and kick that thing with your heel, if you get enough nerve to crawl up on it, boom! It's like a drum-head.

King: But that's the most fascinating, structurally. Architecturally, but especially structurally.

Boggs: I would venture the thought that (at SARC) we are going to be meeting at, in a way, the most significant building the town had. I don't think there are many other existing — Grove Park Inn — you wouldn't find that one anyplace else that you know of, would you? And again, a non-architect type person was responsible for the contribution.



Lord: What's fascinating is that sealing wax roof that melts and drips down. That's a marvelous thing. Why'd he do that?

Boggs: It's reinforced concrete.

King: We tore into it one time. It's got hairpins in it — it's got anything they could find of steel, threw it in there.

Bridges: Did you mean old buildings or new buildings or both?

Architect: I was thinking mostly of new buildings.

Bridges: Well, I think Bill Moore's Unitarian Church is a nice little building. If you've ever been inside, it's a very pleasant space. And that's really all it is, is a church chapel right now.

Boggs: When I mentioned the Grove Park Inn, I was trying to think of something really significant, and I think that I would categorize that we have a group of buildings that work well and are good architectural solutions to a problem. But none of them is significant past what any other community would be expected to be able to absorb.

Reid: I think, in terms of downtown development, the bank on the park, where the decision to give some room in front of the bank is, I think, a good example of the kinds of things that could be done in the downtown area.

King: Well, we were fortunate in that the former bank burned. That helped a lot. (laughter) We could start from scratch. It wasn't too large a chore to convince the president of the bank that he should set it back, but he certainly thought a while, thinking of the square footage he might be losing to move the building back 32 feet from the street. They paid dearly for that land.

Boggs: It's interesting we haven't talked about the Tunnel Road shopping mall, which is a typical shopping mall. It was done by an out of town architect and yet it claims the distinction, in my view, of having — you've been cloistered in a shopping situation, you emerge from it and you're walking out into the grandest situated parking lot in this area and maybe in America. And from there you see the whole panorama of mountains around us.

King: Well, that's pure acci-

dent, just like the accident of birth. Now, that wasn't planned, you know damn well.

Boggs: If it were, it didn't take maximum advantage, didn't make an end out of all this marvelously situated parking lot. But at any rate, we've got a shopping center that's neither grander nor less grand than most shopping centers and yet it does have this other feature that is not possessed of anyplace else.

Cort: Back to your question about other buildings in the area. I think that the MAHEC Center is very good, this building that spans Biltmore Avenue. It certainly would be classified as a significant response.

Reid: Yeah, that building is very interesting, that the solution include a bridge across. I mean, that's a very symbolic thing, too. That's a very graphic demonstration, almost like a billboard that says, "We cooperate." And I think it's an interesting building from that point of view.

Bridges: In terms of development projects, I think the Crowfields condominiums out on Hendersonville Road is a good project.

Boggs: It's a nice little condominium. I'll take one more crack at an architectural suggestion. The Federal Building...

Reid: Oh, yes, that's wonderful. The Grove Arcade.

Lord: I think from an exterior standpoint, the building that currently houses the Pack Library, is an attractive period piece. They did a nice job on the outside. It's strictly mad on the inside. But it's a nice little — it looks like a bank. It's a nice little building on the outside.

Cort: I think also Bert's vocational building at Asheville High is a very good response to site and setting.

Boggs: Well, the whole Asheville High campus is an interesting project.

King: The original building, the library is nice.

Lord: It's amazing how many things have gotten built in connection around that thing, isn't it?

Boggs: Well, on a late summer afternoon, just wander out to the practice field they've got out there when they've got a myriad of athletic activities — soccer, football practice and stuff going on, and the sun has just gone down behind the hill and here, you've got this green fingernail. It's just an idyllic place. The sounds come back in a nice way. Nobody ever intended this stuff to happen.

Bridges: Tony, Stewart Rogers says you might be able to tell us something about Black Mountain College? Is that a Breuer Building? Or is that a Gropius building?

Lord: What, the thing that sticks out across the swamp?

King: Breuer designed it and students built it.

Lord: No, a man Cooper built it.

King: You just busted a big balloon.

Lord: Gropius and Breuer were in partnership and together they made a magnificent sketch for the whole college and that thing over there doesn't have anything to do with it. I was out there when it was being built. I remember seeing the students, male and female, carrying one creek pebble at the time and dumping it into some concrete. And these were footings for the thing. They rigged up some sort of homemade pile driver to drive some locust posts into the ground.

Architect: Did the Black Mountain people have any affect on this area at all architecturally?

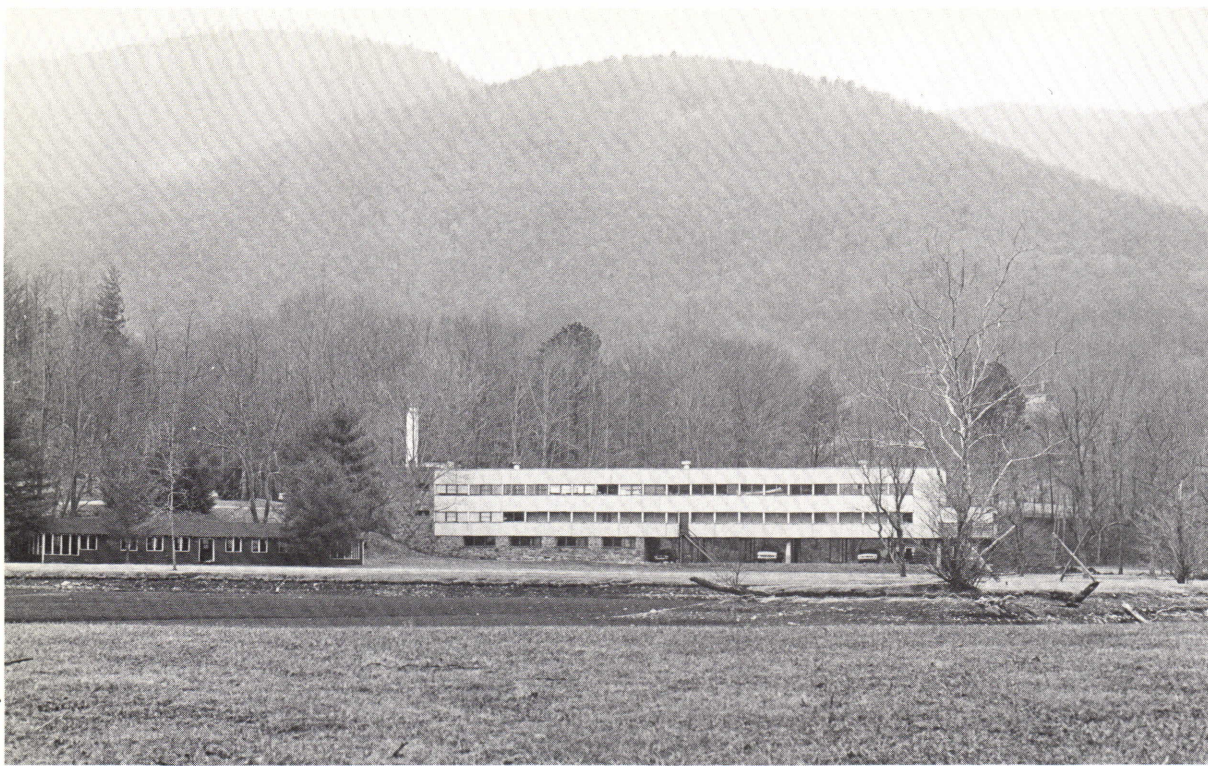
King: Most people wouldn't have anything to do with them.

Architect: Well, Breuer did that house dor Dr. Weizenblatt.

Lord: I supervised that. I wrote specifications. That was '39 or '40.

Architect: What were the circumstances around Breuer doing the Weizenblatt house? Was he at Black Mountain at that point?

Lord: That's where Dr. Weizenblatt would have made



Opposite, top:
Tunnel Road
shopping mall

Opposite, bot-
tom: Crowfields
Condominiums

Left: studies
building, Black
Mountain
College

Below: Weizen-
blatt House by
Marcel Breuer

contact with him. He was an awfully nice fellow. He came down here, I was president of the Chapter somewhere along then, and I remember we staged a meeting up in the old Pisgah Inn. It was the old wooden Pisgah Inn. And he came up there and he talked and he brought a slide projector and their generating system was only running at half mast for some reason so his projector bulb would only light up halfway so we had a few dim pictures of what Mr. Breuer was doing. But he was just this nice, boyish, pleasant boyish fellow. You see, he had not long gotten out from under Hitler's thumb and so I guess the up qualities of this were still with him.

Boggs: The spirit of what I was saying was that I don't think the current architecture is going to be singular. It's not worth really going long distances to see as something particularly different from what they would see someplace else. But if you're going by it, stop and take a look. They have good features and if good architecture is creating a reasonably good building unself-consciously to do its job, these buildings do their job. The little Ford agency that Bert's done and the bank of John's down in Biltmore, all of them generally contribute to a general nice place. But no great lions of things that would be expected to be published widely.

Architect: So maybe it comes back to what we were talking about in the first place, about what makes Asheville Asheville. It may not be individual great buildings but the mountains and the way the whole thing works together.

Boggs: It's interesting that we've hardly mentioned Biltmore House.

King: Well, I think that almost goes without saying.

Architect: And it's such an exception to the city.

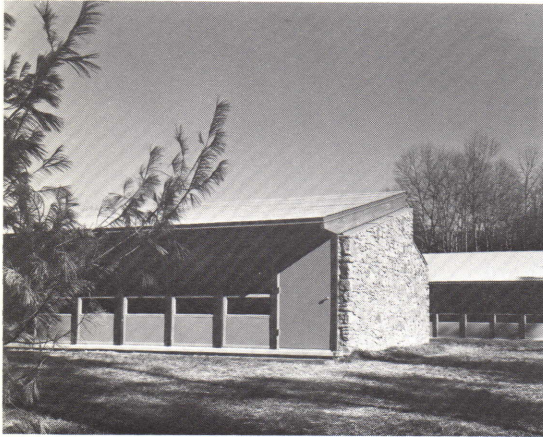
Boggs: The other thing is that we are a community of exporting architects. The community exports architecture more than it imports it — even though we've talked about the intrusions of the factory buildings and the like. But architects from this city do basically all the architecture in a 16 county region up here and to find a lot of the product of their work, you would go to the college campuses that surround the area, all of which are not apt to be found by people visiting during this convention.

Bridges: Most of the architects that I have known that came here to visit us or on vacation from somewhere else seem to have gotten the biggest kick out of just riding around and looking at the different styles of houses that you find, particularly in the north end and out in the Biltmore area. And it doesn't take long. ■

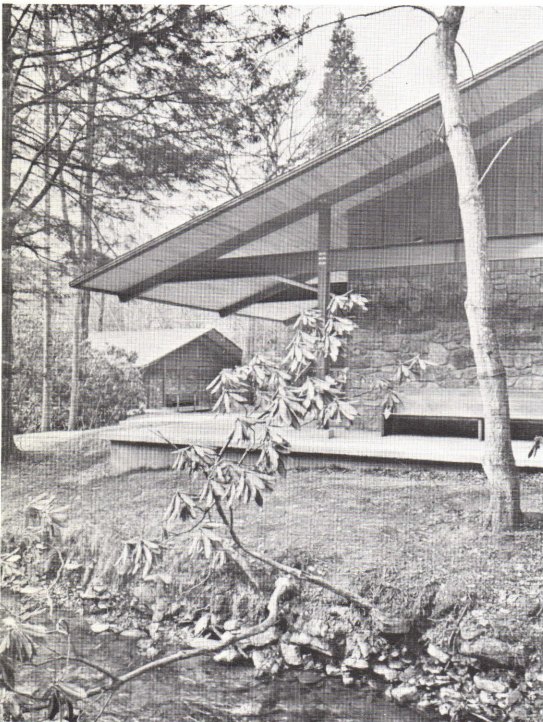


Winners

A portfolio of architecture in and around Asheville from the NCAIA's annual design competition



Left: Asheville Country Day School, J. Bertram King with Charles M. Sappenfield, Honor Award 1959



Left: Commercial center for Presbyterian Conference Center, Montreal, Six Associates, Award of Merit, 1965



Left: rest area building, Biltmore Estate, William O. Moore, Award of Merit, 1968

Above: Hyman Dave Residence, Charles M. Sappenfield, Honor Award, 1964

Right: Museum of the Cherokee Indian, Cherokee, Six Associates, Honor Award, 1977

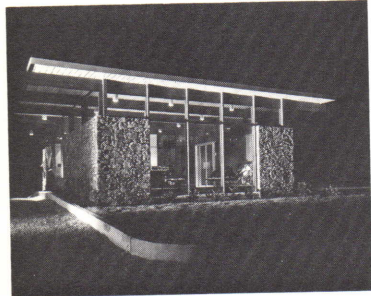
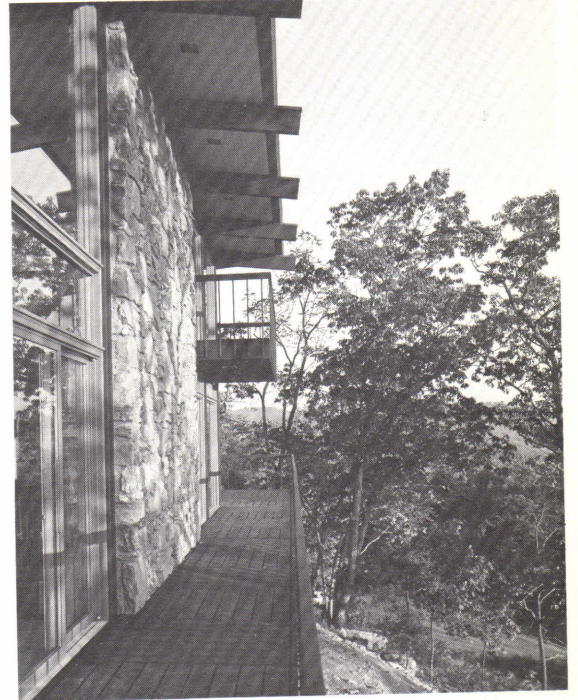


Left: Unitarian Universalist Church, Moore-Robinson, Award of Merit, 1975





Right: Gumpert Residence, Charles M. Sappenfield, Award of Merit, 1965



Left: Bank of Asheville, Candler, J. Bertram King, Award of Merit 1960

Above: Occupational Building, Asheville High School, J. Bertram King, Award of Merit 1971

Right: Warren Wilson College Chapel, Swannanoa, J. Bertram King with Charles Sappenfield, Honor Award 1968



Right: Deerfield Condominiums, Jackson, Padgett, Freeman, Honor Award, 1977



Houses

On the mountainside, a quiet retreat for North Carolina's chief executive



JoAnn Sieburg-Baker



In Raleigh, the Executive Mansion is a redbrick pile of Victoriana, with elaborately turned and sawn woodwork, chandeliers, formal rooms, a grand staircase — the height of late nineteenth century official elegance. The Asheville counterpart, however, is called a "residence," not a "mansion," and it serves as a quiet, informal rest-stop for the Governor on the road, as a retreat from the pressures of government and politics and as a setting for receptions and social occasions both official and private. For the residence serves the community of Asheville as well as the Governor and is open to use by private clubs and other organizations. This year, for

example, the Governor's Office estimates 10,000 people, from local Boy Scouts to attendees at a national parks and recreation conference will use the house and grounds for meetings, receptions and other activities.

Designed by Henry I. Gaines, AIA, of Asheville, and built as a private residence in 1946 on Beaucatcher Mountain above the city, the three bedroom single story house boasting a view of Mount Pisgah, became state property in 1964 after local community organizations spearheaded a drive to purchase and furnish the house for the Governor. Renovation and furnishing were by architect Charles Sappen-

field, now dean of the College of Architecture and Planning at Ball State University, but who at the time was practicing in Asheville.

Furnishings also were donated to the residence by area manufacturers and craftsmen, and in the intervening years a few items have been added: two new couches and two new televisions, storm windows, a gas grill, an awning over the patio. The yard, which initially was small (though the entire property totals 20 acres) has been extended to nearly seven acres of lawn. The residence remains, however, essentially unaltered since it became state property 14 years ago. ■

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Conservation

Asheville's most famous boarding house as the city's most famous son recalled it

"You Can't Go Home Again," wrote Asheville's most famous son, Thomas Wolfe. That may be true in life and fiction. But in historic preservation, maybe we can return after all. In 1975 and 1976, the state Division of Archives and History undertook a unique sort of restoration at the Thomas Wolfe Memorial, a state historic site in downtown Asheville. Working with Asheville architects Jackson, Padgett & Freeman (now Padgett & Freeman), the preservationists restored the author's boyhood home to its 1918 condition — a little shabby and not so well maintained as a result of Mrs. Wolfe's penny-pinching; a little abused by the boarders she took in. But that's the way things were. In 1977, the North Carolina Chapter AIA honored the restoration with a preservation award.

That's the story of the restoration. The story of the house, however, is best left to Thomas Wolfe, as he writes in these passages from **Look Home-Ward Angel**:

Thus, she began to think of Dixieland. It was situated five minutes from the public square, on a pleasant sloping middleclass street of small homes and boarding-houses. Dixieland was a big cheaply constructed frame house of eighteen or twenty drafty high-ceilinged rooms: it had a rambling, unplanned, gabular appearance, and was painted a dirty yellow. It had a pleasant green front yard, not deep but wide, bordered by a row of young deep-bodied maples: there was a sloping depth of one hundred and ninety feet, a frontage of one hundred and twenty.

Eliza's earning power the first few years at Dixieland had been injured by her illness. Now, however, she had recovered, and had paid off the last installment on the house... The property at this time was worth perhaps \$12,000... She had added a large sleeping porch upstairs, tacked on two rooms, a bath, and a hallway on one side, and extended a



Virgil Smithers

hallway, adding three bedrooms, two baths, and a watercloset, on the other. Downstairs she had widened the veranda, put in a large sun-parlor under the sleeping porch, knocked out the archway in the dining-room, which she prepared to use as a big bedroom in the slack season, scooped out a small pantry in which the family

was to eat, and added a tiny room beside the kitchen for her own occupancy.

The construction was after her own plans, and of the cheapest material: it never lost the smell of raw wood, cheap varnish, and flimsy rough plastering, but she had added eight or ten rooms at a cost of only \$3,000.

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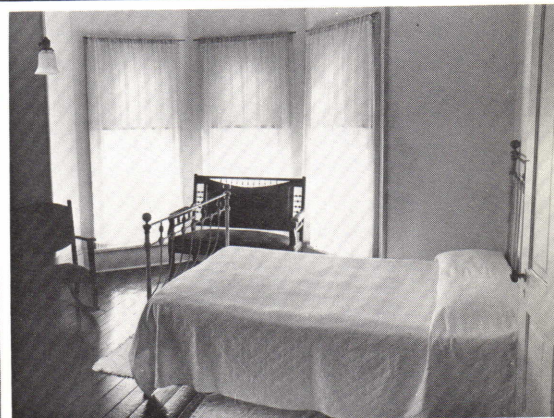
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He got up, and reeled out of the alien presences of light and warmth in the kitchen; he went out into the hall where a dim light burned and the high walls gave back their grave-damp chill. This, he thought, is the house.

He sat down upon the hard mission settle, and listened to the cold drip of silence.



A light burned dimly in the hall, evoking for him chill memories of damp and gloom. A warmer light burned in the parlor, painting the lowered shade of the tall window a warm and mellow orange.

"Ben's in that room upstairs," Luke whispered, "where the light is."

Eugene looked up with cold dry lips to the bleak front room upstairs, with its ugly Victorian bay-window. It was next to the sleeping porch ... The light in the sickroom burned grayly. ■

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Books

By Betty Lawrence

This brief listing of writings on the city of Asheville makes no attempts at being comprehensive, but contains works of general interest which should be available in major libraries across the state.

Buttitta, Anthony. **After the Good Gay Times.** New York: Viking Press. 1974. 173 p. Description of the author-bookseller's acquaintance with F. Scott Fitzgerald in Asheville in the depression summer of 1935.

Langley, Joan and Wright. **Yesterday's Asheville.** Miami, Fla.: F. A. Seemann Publishing, Inc. 1975. 128 p. Brief but accurate text and numer-

ous historical photographs, engravings and drawings trace Asheville's history from first settlement to the early 1950's.

Reid, Christian [pseud.]. **"The Land of the Sky;" or, Adventures in Mountain By-Ways.** New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1876. 130 p. The first romantic novel to rhapsodize the city, this book played a part in the next decade's rapid growth.

Sondley, F. A. **A History of Buncombe County.** Asheville, N. C.: Advocate Printing Co. 1930. 2 Vol., 916 p. Reprinted in one volume by The Reprint Co., Spartanburg, S. C., 1977. The only major history of the county, this book contains much information on the exploration and early settlement thereof. Useful index.

Wolfe, Thomas. **Look Homeward, Angel.** New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1929. 626 p. The author's first and most famous book is the story of his youth spent in "Altamont," with a wealth of detail on the city and its people as he saw them.

Wolfe, Thomas. **You Can't Go Home Again.** New York: Harper & Brothers. 1940. 743 p. Large portions of the novel deal with the boom and bust of "Libya Hill" in the 1920's.

Young, Perry Deane. "Good-bye, Asheville." *Harpers* 250: 63-68. March 1975. Useful invective against careless planning in the city. ■

Betty Lawrence is curator of the North Carolina Room, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville.



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The Profession

South Atlantic Regional Convention of AIA: "New Dimensions in Design"

"New Dimensions in Design," the South Atlantic Regional Convention of AIA, Sept. 27 to 30 at the Grove Park Inn, Asheville, will examine architecture from the small, singular statement, the house, to design and its relationship to the city and the natural environment. Design theory, public awareness of architecture and early explorations into modern art and architecture at nearby Black Mountain College will complete a program that features such national figures as Charles Moore, architect and teacher; David Meeker, the new executive vice-president of national AIA; and Ehrman Mitchell, national AIA president-elect.

The convention program schedules lectures and AIA business meetings in the morning and leaves afternoons free for golf, tennis, touring Asheville and its architecture, a raft trip on the French Broad River — or other activities. Evenings will be social occasions, including the awards banquet and presentation of design awards.

Here's a more detailed summary of the convention:

Wednesday, September 27

Afternoon: registration, exhibitors set up, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia boards of directors meetings. Evening: cocktail party, buffet dinner, entertainment by Howard Hanger Trio.

Thursday, September 28

Morning: Charles Moore, FAIA, former professor of architecture and dean at Yale, now teaching architecture at UCLA, will speak about recent design trends and his design of houses. Chad Floyd, AIA, a member of Moore's Connecticut office, Moore, Grover, Harper, Architects, will speak about the office's urban revitalization project in Dayton, Ohio. Ben Williams, curator of art at the N. C. Museum of Art, will speak on the history of Black Mountain College and the college's influence on design. Afternoon and Evening: Bus trip to Camp Rockmont, site of Black Mountain College for recreation and a barbecue picnic supper.

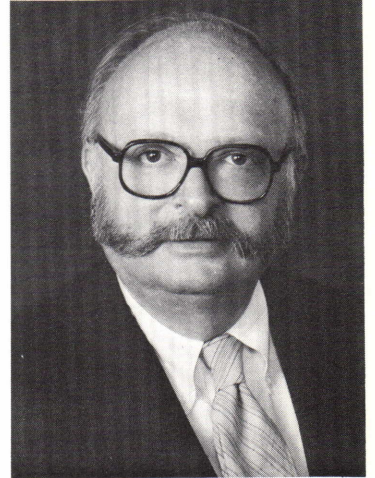
Friday, September 29

Morning: Robert Yares of Cranbrook Academy will speak on and present the Michigan AIA's public awareness project called "Design Michigan." Alistair Black of McDuffy Associates, Atlanta, Georgia, will speak on balancing the practice of architecture with the protection of the natural environment. Ehrman Mitchell, FAIA, president-elect of AIA, will present a program he calls

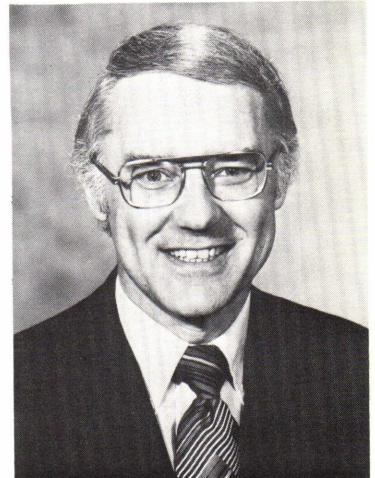
"Celebration of Architecture." Afternoon: A selection of organized activities: golf and tennis tournaments; tour of Biltmore House and Gardens; tour of Mount Pisgah; or a raft trip on the French Broad River. Evening: Cocktails and the Awards Banquet. Awards will be presented by jury chairman Henry N. Cobb, FAIA, a partner in I. M. Pei & Partners, New York. (Other jury members are Charles Gwathmey, AIA, of Gwathmey-Siegel, New York, and Gerald Allen, associate editor of *Architectural Record*, New York.)

Saturday, September 30

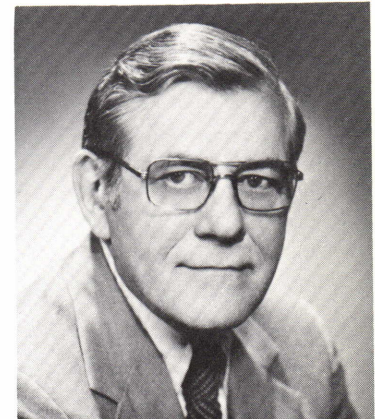
Morning: State component meetings for North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. Questions and answers with national AIA officers and directors: Harold Tarlton, AIA, South Atlantic Region Director (South Carolina); Michael Newman, AIA, South Atlantic Region Director (North Carolina); and David Meeker, FAIA. Meeker who before joining the staff of AIA was Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development of HUD (the highest position in government held by an architect since Thomas Jefferson) also will speak on design. Convention adjourns. ■



Charles Moore, FAIA



David Meeker, FAIA



Ehrman Mitchell, FAIA

The Arts

In recent years, a rapid growth for all the arts in Asheville

By April Sauer

As someone recently pointed out, Asheville is the geographic center of art activity in one-third of the State of North Carolina. Though small by some standards, this city of over 63,000 people supports its own regional museum (which recently qualified as an affiliate gallery of the N. C. Museum of Art in Raleigh), a symphony orchestra, two civic ballet companies, a Shakespearean troupe, a community theater and a community concert association. It is also headquarters for the Western North Carolina Arts

one person directing it, and only seven art majors were enrolled."

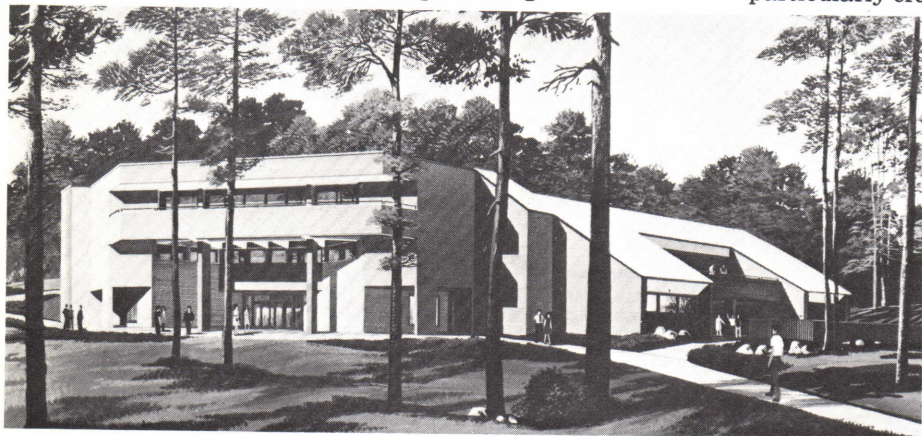
Now? A new fine arts building is almost ready, "the university has an enrollment of 47 art majors, and the department has expanded to three full-time and four part-time people," he added.

Cooke continued, illustrating the growth the arts had taken in the last 11 years. "The Asheville Art Museum is now housed in permanent quarters and producing artists have

community and to share knowledge and experience within the group." Jernigan added that one of the association's important functions is to inform members of juried shows and to organize their own exhibitions. When asked about the cultural atmosphere of Asheville, the printmaker responded that "Perhaps the arts has become more fashionable, but people are learning art does exist here. More and more artists are coming to Asheville — and staying." Jernigan added that "artists, particularly crafts-people,

tributed to the attraction. Or perhaps it's simply the sentinel mountains working their magic, drawing artists along with people from every other walk of life. But for the first time in their city's history, the municipal government is taking measures to encourage this positive artistic atmosphere.

In August of 1977 the City Council created the Asheville Revitalization Commission (ARC), which has adopted the goal of helping residents and business build a more livable city. As the ARC's 300-page report states, the primary goal is to have a downtown pleasant for shopping, working and playing, a place where people *want* to go rather than *have* to go. And the integration of art with public space is receiving a large share of the ARC's attention.



Rendering of arts building, UNC-Asheville, by J. Bertram King, currently under construction

Coalition and a nationally renowned crafts association, the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild. This, in addition to a children's theater, a new dance studio, a newly-organized crafts group — and the long-standing Asheville Civic Arts Council. However, none of these arts groups sprang up overnight.

"When I came to Asheville in 1967, there were no exhibiting galleries, few local producing artists that I was aware of and the Asheville Art Museum was on the eleventh floor of the Northwestern Bank Building." The speaker is artist S. Tucker Cooke, assistant professor of art and chairman of the Department of Art at UNC-Asheville. "In fact," Cooke pointed out, "UNC-A's art department had

multiplied enormously. There are three or four art supply stores, two functioning art studios, with rental space available, and two galleries." Cooke emphasized the importance of studio and gallery space. "When I came here, there was literally no place to show my work. These galleries offer much-needed exposure to area artists — and are apparently thriving." Cooke added, "There's also a new group of active, working artists, many making national reputations."

Printmaker David Jernigan, president of the year-old Asheville Artists' association, spoke about the goals of the 35-member group. "The Association was founded to keep communication open between the members and the

travel a lot and they tend to 'talk-up' Asheville."

"The area is very conducive to creativity," said native Ashevillean, artist Linda Nichols. Saralyn Spradling, a painter and 13-year resident concurred. "The natural beauty here has brought people who not only appreciate the mountains but the artistic creativity as well." Mrs. Spradling felt that a strong support system existed in the community of growing artists who are serious about their work, who consider their art their lives.

There does appear to be a growing "colony" of artists, and this factor tends to attract other artists. Perhaps the heritage of crafts and mountain music has con-

"I define art as more than just paintings, sculpture and the like. It's texture, form, sensations, color, shapes and space," states ARC Director, Richard Thornton. "Rather than trying to create large, impersonal space," he continued, "we hope to find lost small space." Although the ARC's endeavor is to keep things on a smaller, more humanistic scale (kiosks scattered about the city are one of the commission's proposals), Thornton felt that the city could act as a stage for larger, more formal art as well, such as murals, fountains and sculpture. He also had a special feeling for alley-ways. "They can be a form of art," he said. "I like to create surprises — and alley-ways can contribute to this by lending visual, artistic impact."

When Thornton talked about the commission's goals for the city, he stressed the fact that

Asheville — like most cities — is comprised of many dissimilar communities ("Unique Villages," as the ARC calls them) and that integration without a loss of individuality was an important factor to be dealt with. "Each 'village' could have an artistic focal point, a 'trademark,' that relates in some way to the activities there."

Perhaps it is this growing awareness of the importance of art and its place in daily life which is placing Asheville on the artistic map. At any rate, when residents, arts organizations, artists groups, businesses and municipal government begin tuning-in to one another, when a city begins tapping into that bank of talent which exists in any community — then they all have only beauty to harvest from their efforts.

This is a discovery which Asheville is earnestly trying to turn into a reality. ■

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April Sauer is former editor of *The Arts Journal*, a monthly publication on the arts in Asheville and the surrounding region.



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Index to Advertisers

- 40 Andco
- 42 Asbestos Fabricators
- 39 Binnings Building Products
- 3 Borden Brick
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- 8 Cant Strip Manufacturing
- 2 Carolina Asphalt Pavement Association
- 42 Carolina Builders
- 6 Carolina Power and Light
- 38 David Hall Associates
- 39 A. P. Hubbard Wholesale Lumber
- 6 Gifford-Hill
- 45 Greensboro Redevelopment Commission
- 41 Law Engineering
- 8 Martin Marietta
- 40 Ezra Meir
- 41 National Mastercraft
- 45 Professional Directory
- 9 Sanford Brick
- 9 Santee Portland Cement Corp.
- 47 Southern Engineering
- 45 J. Weiland

Critique

The search for pleasure and health made Asheville sophisticated and cosmopolitan

By Henry Irven Gaines, AIA

Many old timers in Asheville often remark that our law-makers in Raleigh consider the Catawba River to our east to be the western boundary of the state. Especially in our earlier years — before the railroad came in the 1880's through five tunnels from the east and a five per cent grade up Saluda Mountain from the south — our isolation made Asheville a bit different from the other areas of North Carolina.

Probably the oldest reason, however, for Asheville being different from her sister cities in the state is our terrain. We travel by winding our way up one hill, pausing on a limited plateau and descending down the other side to a narrow valley. And we repeat this many times before reaching our destination. We even name our streets Valley Street, Mountain Street, Summit Avenue and Edgemont Road.

Normally, in planning, architects consider prevailing winds and the travel of the sun. Asheville planners consider the contours of the site and "The View." And "The View" often becomes the predominating factor.

Many North Carolina towns and cities grew up with, or on account of, an industrial complex. Asheville grew up with, or on account of, man's seeking for pleasure and health. All over America in the early 1800's, it became fashionable to spend the summer at "The Springs." Western North Carolina has Warm Springs, Sulphur Springs, Hot Springs and many other springs. These springs may have contained curative ingredients, but the main attraction was pleasure and romance. (It was about this time that Asheville's adjoining mountain received the romantic name "Beau-

catcher Mountain.") In 1886, on a hill about 125 feet above the town square, Battery Park Hotel was erected to accommodate these pleasure seeking tourists.

So tourism became Asheville's industry where cotton, textiles or tobacco manufacturing became her sister cities' industries.

In 1888 Dr. Karl von Ruck established the community's first real planned sanitarium for the treatment of throat and lung diseases. The German physician could have established his Winyah Sanitarium anywhere in the world, and when he chose Asheville, the little city received wide publicity and was established as one of the world's centers for the treatment of lung diseases.

So the Battery Park Hotel was taking care of pleasure and Winyah Sanitarium was taking care of health. These two assets brought many people from many different places far away from Asheville. It often has been said that many of Asheville's citizens came to stay for two weeks, two months, two years — and stayed permanently.

So Asheville became North Carolina's really cosmopolitan city. Mixing these different people from many different locations with the native mountain people produced a rather unique citizen.

George Vanderbilt, about 1890, stood on the veranda of the Battery Park Hotel and "The View" snared him. Entranced with the verdant green mountains seen through the lazy smoky haze, he determined to purchase all the available land that he could see from the veranda to Mount Pisgah and on that land build America's finest

chateau. Asheville received magnificent benefits from this decision, from the Biltmore School of Forestry to the Biltmore Dairy. Even now, we would never think of having guests for Sunday dinner without serving Biltmore Ice Cream for dessert.

Then around 1910 Dr. E. W. Grove from St. Louis was bitten by "The View" from the side of Sunset Mountain and thereon he decided to build America's finest resort hotel. Dr. Grove was no architect. Neither did he have one working for him. But the resulting Grove Park Inn is a building just as startling and innovative as Frank Lloyd Wright's originals.

Many famous and well-known visitors came to the inn. At the completion of Biltmore House, George Vanderbilt brought many art treasures and many artists to the community.

So Asheville became not only a cosmopolitan city but a sophisticated city as well.

George Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate nurseries and greenhouses produced the many exotic and rare plants to which we have become accustomed and his School of Forestry contributed many magnificent trees. Dr. Grove planted sycamore trees on both sides of the streets in his Grove Park residential area which adjoins the inn. So on Edwin Place, Gertrude Place,

Evelyn Place and Katherine Place, streets Dr. Grove named after his children, we now drive through a tunnel of overhead leaves.

While other North Carolina cities have had their ups and downs, Asheville suffered two major disasters which the other cities escaped. One was the flood of 1916. The other was the boom and explosion of the 1920's and '30's. The flood did mighty physical damage, but the people working together repaired it. The financial explosion did greater damage. It not only destroyed money values but it injured confidence and trust beyond reconciliation for an entire generation. Our little city was torn asunder. Confidence in one another was replaced with suspicion. Card games ceased after husbands warned wives against playing with enemies. Taxes were unpaid. The county and city defaulted on bonds. Legal suits and counter suits clogged the courts.

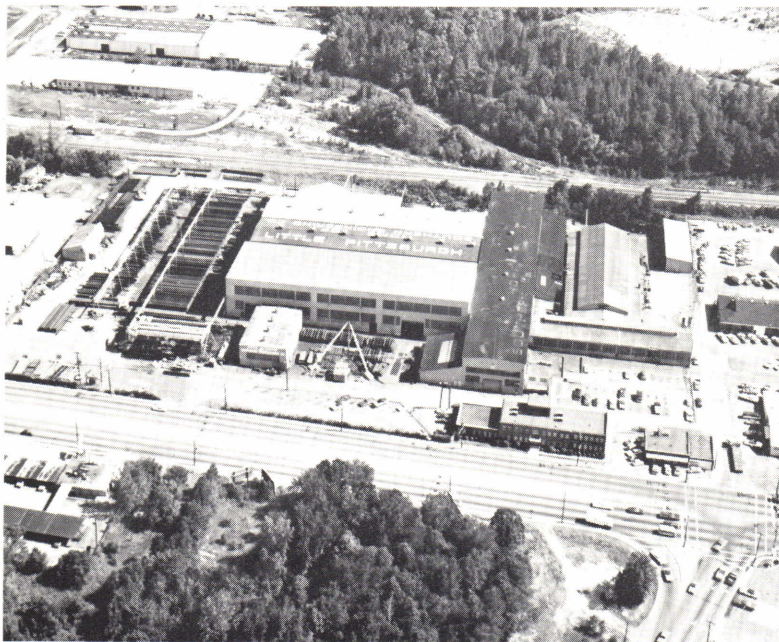
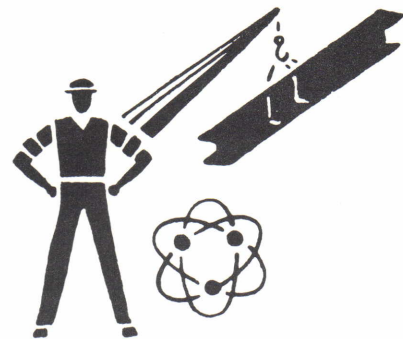
A tourist paused at a traffic light in Pack Square and, pointing to Gov. Zebulon Vance's tall granite obelisk, asked the policeman, "Whose monument is that?" The cop answered, "It's ours." And, indeed, it is ours. In 1976, the defaulted bonds were paid off.

Asheville's citizens, like our mountains, are rugged and steadfast and somehow we put it all together again. ■

HENRY GAINES

Henry Irven Gaines, now retired, was one of the founders of the Asheville architectural firm Six Associates. His book *Kings Maelum* tells the story of his years practicing architecture in Asheville.

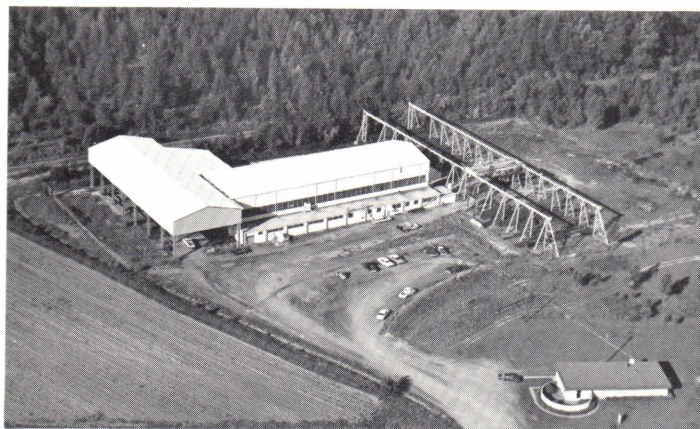
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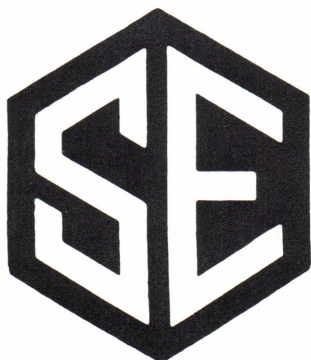


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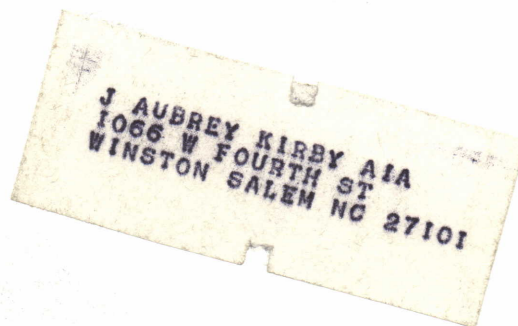


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