

July—August 1983

# NORTH CAROLINA ARCHITECT

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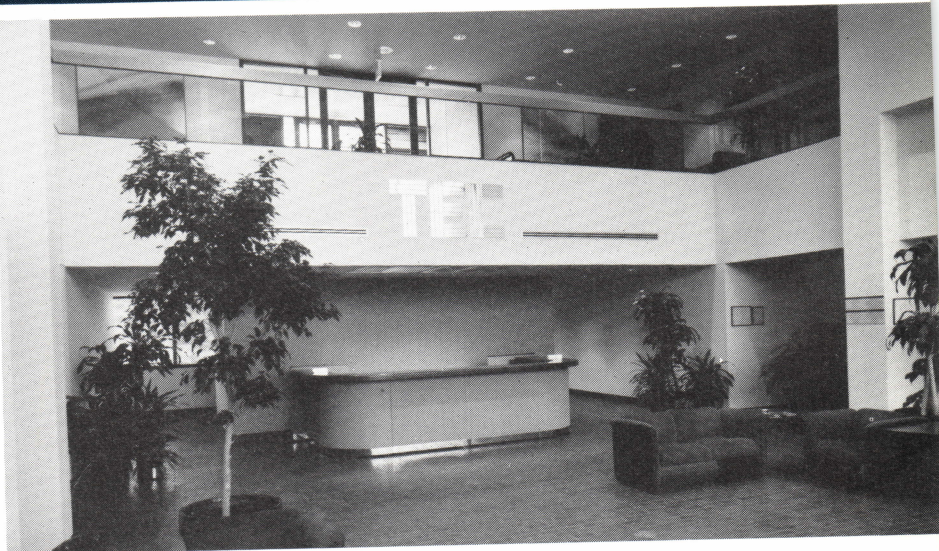
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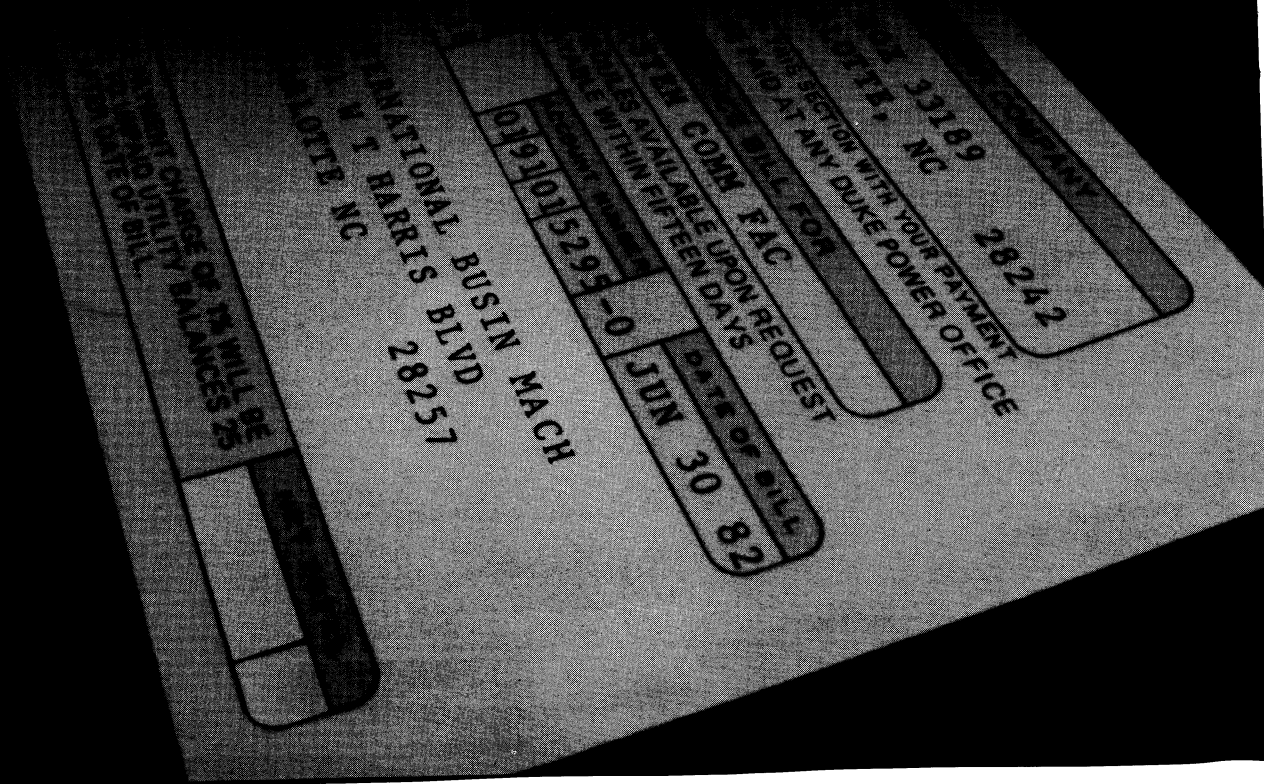
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# NORTH CAROLINA ARCHITECT

Volume 31, No. 2  
July-August, 1983

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*Cover Photography by Rick Alexander*



Dear Reader:

The talents of North Carolina architects can be seen in houses on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to hospitals on the coast of the Caribbean Sea.

This, the second issue of the new North Carolina Architect, takes you both places.

Our feature on coastal architecture highlights some unique residences at the Outer Banks and other places along the state's coast. The area may provide architects an opportunity to design striking residences in a breathtaking setting, but it also presents many challenges not found elsewhere.

The trip to the U.S. Virgin Islands takes you to St. Thomas Hospital, a project just finished by a major Charlotte architectural and engineering firm that is building quite a reputation in hospital design. The firm's business is growing so quickly that it was forced to move into a new office building. The building's designer says it was the hardest job he's ever had for a reason that may not be particularly surprising to many people.

This issue also features a story about a fondly remembered North Carolina architect who found time to design approximately 500 buildings while also serving as a Benedictine monk and Catholic priest. The story is written by Paschal Baumstein, a Benedictine monk with a number of architectural articles to his credit.

Finally, our Off the Drawing Board section tells you about three architects who've found happiness and personal satisfaction by developing practices away from the state's largest cities. The one thing they say they've not found in small towns is a lot of money.

The entire staff of North Carolina Architect hopes you enjoy this issue. If you have comments, questions or story ideas, please don't hesitate to call or write.

Sincerely,

*Whitney Shaw*

Whitney Shaw  
Publisher/Editor



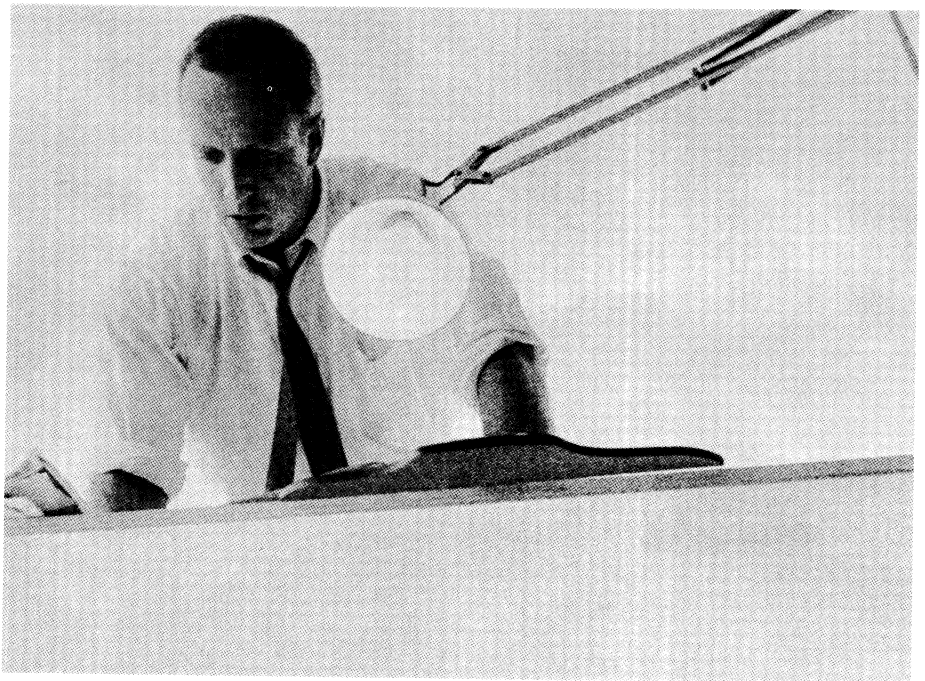
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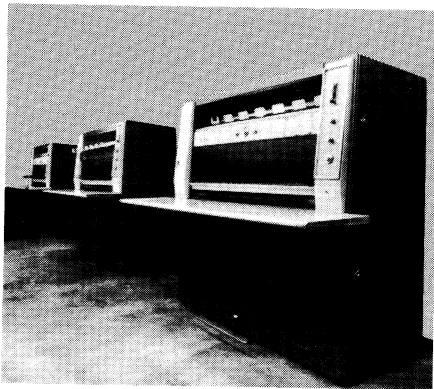
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# COASTAL







# ARCHITECTURE

**G**erald Quick remembers a recent project in Morehead City fondly because it showed that small ideas can often solve big problems.

Quick's task was to design a compact but architecturally unique residence on the coast of North Carolina, an environment that can be—at once—both beautiful and difficult.

"Mother Nature is very tough," says Quick, president of Raleigh-based Quick Associates.

"What you can do in Charlotte and Raleigh and places like that is very different from what you can do on the coast. Materials that would be normal some places, you wouldn't dream of using at the coast."

Architects seem to be nearly unanimous in their feelings about coastal North Carolina architecture: It can be invigorating, fun and satisfying, but it can also be fraught with unique challenges and problems of all types and sizes.

*Figure Eight Island residence (left and above) by Charlotte architect Hal Tribble.  
(Photos by Joann Sieburg-Baker)*

Many say that beach houses provide an opportunity to break away from more traditional residential design as well as a chance to experiment with building materials that may not be used as often elsewhere.

Because of the importance of making beach residences blend with their surroundings, many architects say they devote special attention to things like exterior sidings, which are made of wood almost without exception at the beach. The goal, says Charlotte architect Hal Tribble, is to make a beach home become part of its environment. It can be a difficult task.

Many in the profession say they also find a unique kind of satisfaction in planning and designing structures that will likely have to withstand the fury of nature at some point. Wind, water and heat create special problems.

Tribble faced those considerations recently while designing a 3,000-square-foot house at Figure Eight Island near Wilmington. Throughout the design and construction phases, Tribble kept the forces of nature in mind.

For example, the roof was installed in a manner that minimizes possible wind damage. And the house—like most along the coast of North Carolina—was built on pilings eight to ten feet above ground. Raising a residence off the ground reduces the likelihood it will be damaged extensively by standing water or flooding.

Flooding can be a particular problem after a hurricane or other severe storm has actually passed because the wind often shifts and the storm tide returns to the sea, damaging many of the buildings in its path.

Raising a house can also make it a more comfortable place to live, architects say, because cross-ventilation increases significantly.

"One of the things you try to achieve is a lot of ventilation," Quick says. "Even though most of these places have air conditioning, I think most people would like to use it only as a last resort."

Tribble, Quick and others say that nature isn't the only force that must be reckoned with during the design and construction of beach houses. There's also the maze of federal, state and local





regulations detailing what can—and can't—be done.

Tribble says those regulations range from the Coastal Area Management Act, which provides federal protection of beaches, to local and state building codes to design requirements that must be met for a house to be eligible for flood insurance to the standards individual developers and resorts set.

At least partly because of the soaring price of beach property, many developers are imposing design standards controlling the type residence that can be built.

At Figure Eight Island, for example, plans must be submitted to a design review committee. The development has standards for landscaping, building materials, building height, design, set-back and similar things.

Most architects say they have no problem working with such standards if they are fair and well planned. But many in the state **do** wish that construction standards and codes would be made stronger at the beach. Others say the codes are satisfactory, but they argue tougher enforcement is needed.

"There's been an awful lot of

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*Timberlake residence (left) and Lyon residence (right)  
by Wilmington architect Ligon Flynn.*

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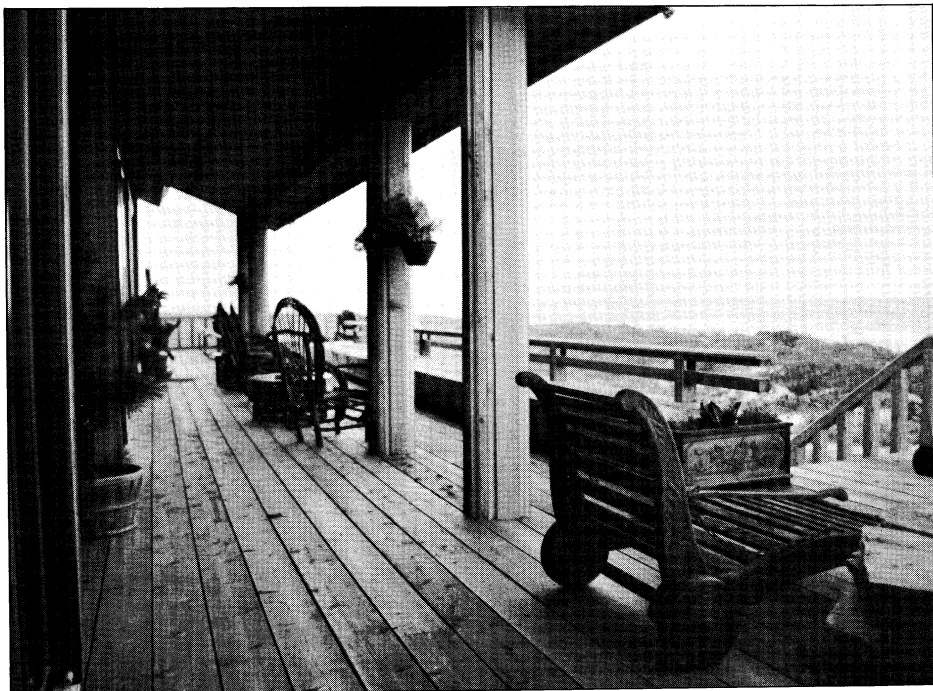
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construction at the coast since the last really severe weather," says one architect. "You've got more people out there than ever before. The damage from a really severe storm could be greater than we've ever seen. We've all just got to be aware of the situation and do our best to offset as much as we can."

of materials as the client can afford," he says. "If you don't, you'll just have to replace things eventually."

He says sliding glass doors, windows and exterior light fixtures can be particularly important areas.

Special care must be taken, he says, to guarantee that water can't penetrate the



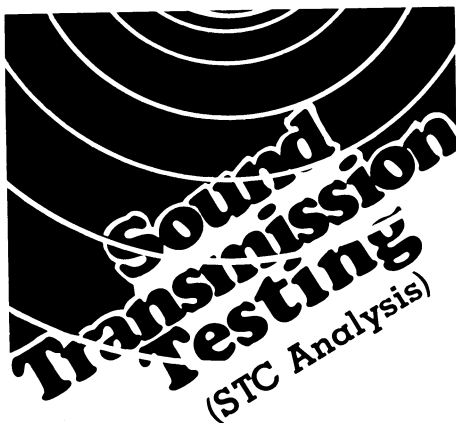
Good design and quality construction can help tremendously, he adds.

Whether there's a storm or not, Raleigh's Quick says the choice of building materials is crucial.

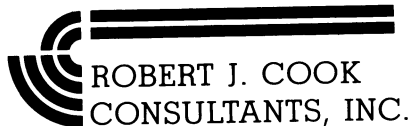
"You just have to use as good a quality

exterior of the house.

"Most of these structures at the coast are occupied on weekends and for limited periods of time during the year," Quick says. "That means you have to design and build something that can be secured and



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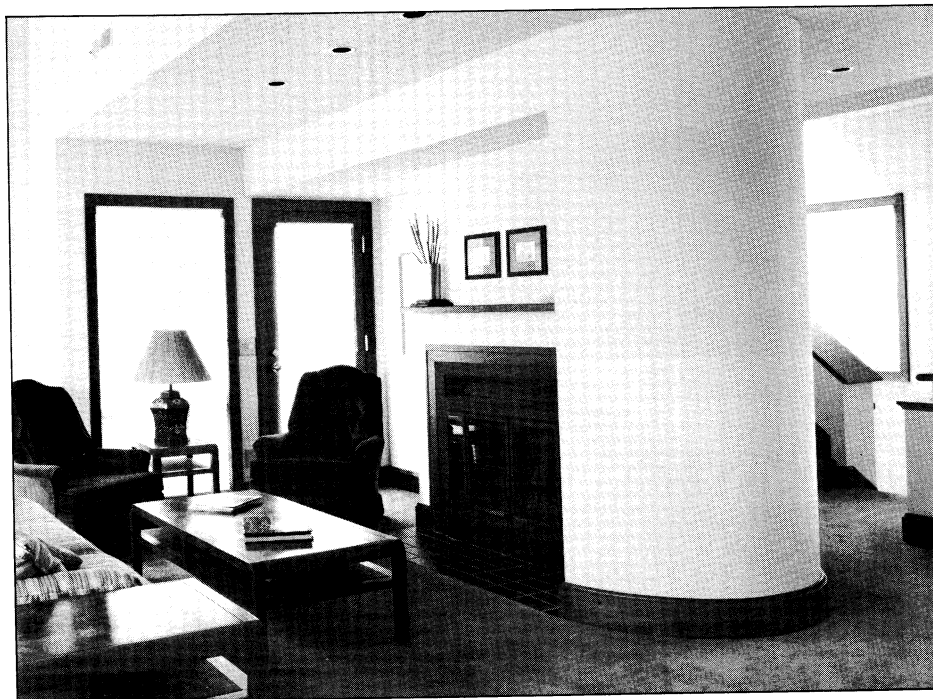


Photo by Joann Sieburg Baker



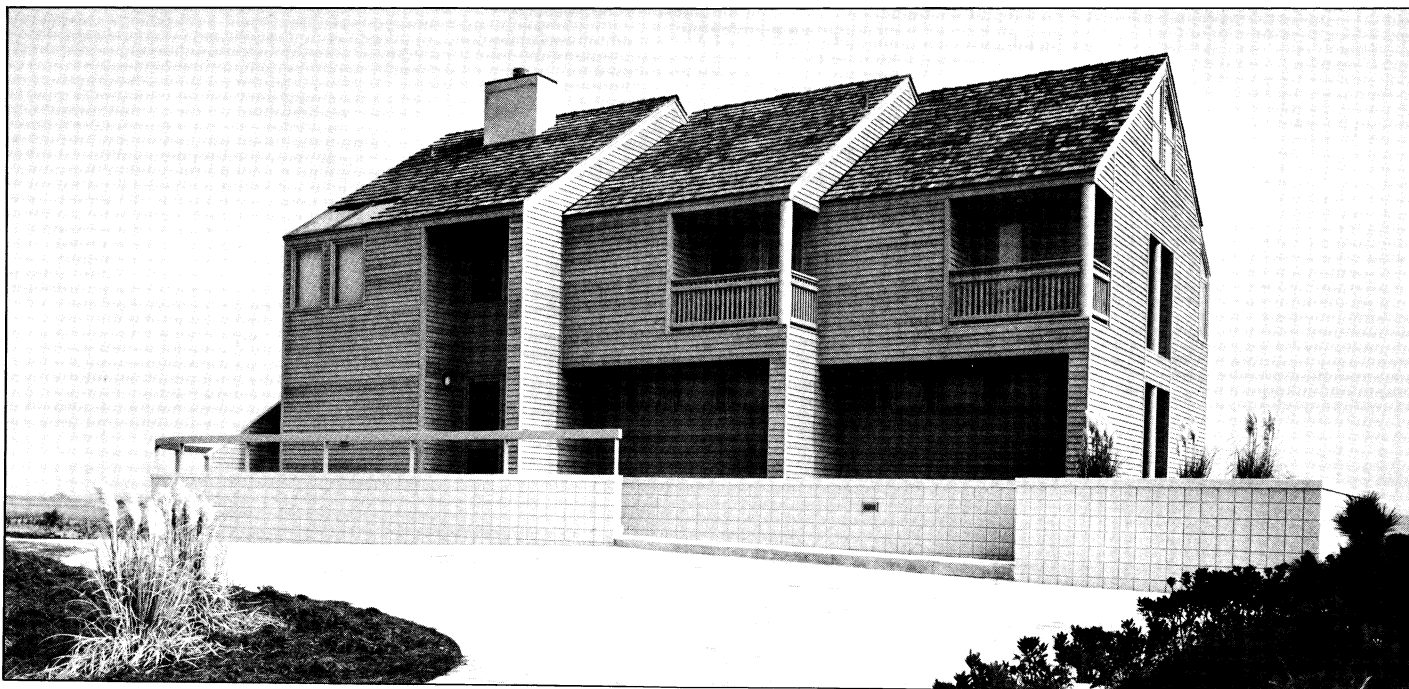


Photo by Joann Sieburg-Baker

protected. Ease of cleaning and maintenance are important, too."

In many cases, owners of beach houses are looking for a lifestyle that is different

from what they have in their primary residence, architects say.

"When you go to the beach, you want things to be more relaxed," Quick says.

"People still want the amenities like telephones, color television and all the appliances, but they're usually seeking a house that is less formal."

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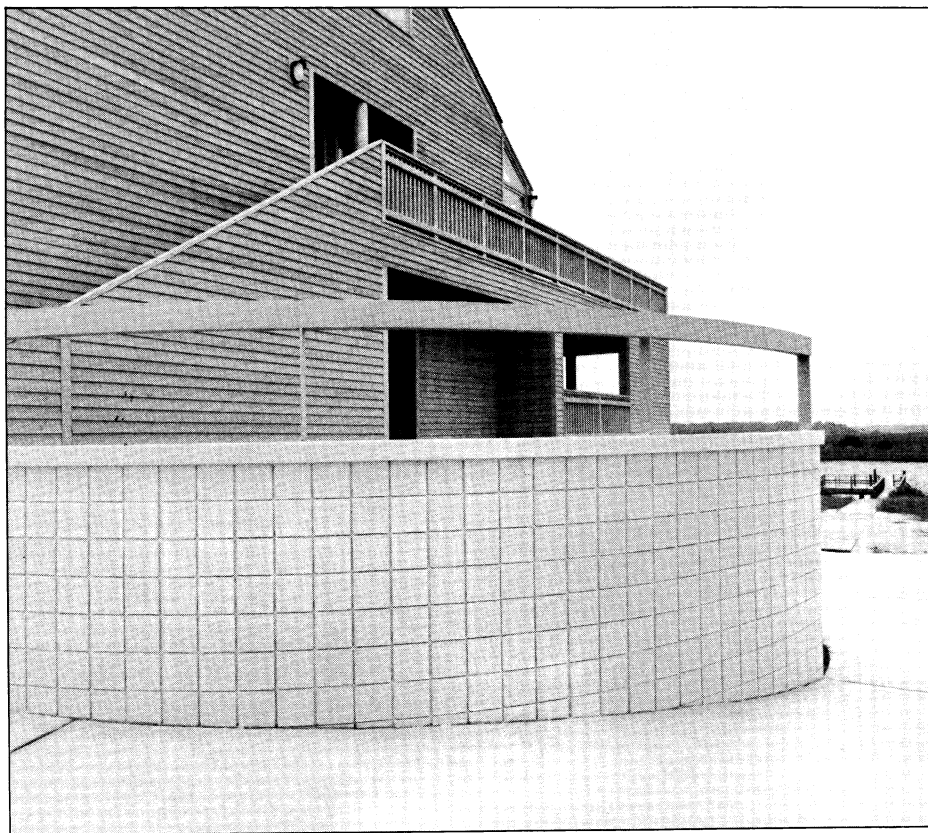
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One good technique, Tribble says, is using a common area combining the living room, kitchen and dining areas in a manner that allows for conversation and socializing between "rooms".

"Nobody wants to be left out," he explains. "But we also put a lot of nooks and crannies into these common areas so individuals can get away if they want."

Another common design feature, says Wilmington architect Ligon Flynn, is to put the primary living areas—kitchen, dining, master bedroom and more formal living room—on the second floor.

In addition, architects say it's important to use decks extensively to maximize the traffic flow from the inside of the house to the outside and vice versa.

Tribble says the design of the just completed Figure Eight home is a "blend between informal and formal to make it a real year-round residence."

Beach houses should be "bright, light and cheerful with as much glass as possible," says Quick, who used just those features in the Morehead City house, which is located on Bogue Sound.

Unique half- and quarter-circle windows provide views to the sound from the house, which has already been added to three times.

"It's a good example of a house that was started on a modest scale and then expanded," Quick says.

That expansion was actually the construction of a separate, smaller cottage, which is now used as a guest house.

The "little" house has 300 square feet of space; the "big" house has 600 square feet of space.

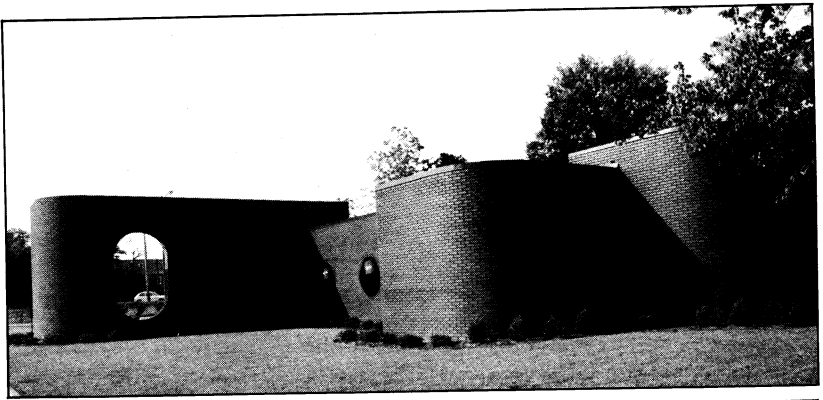
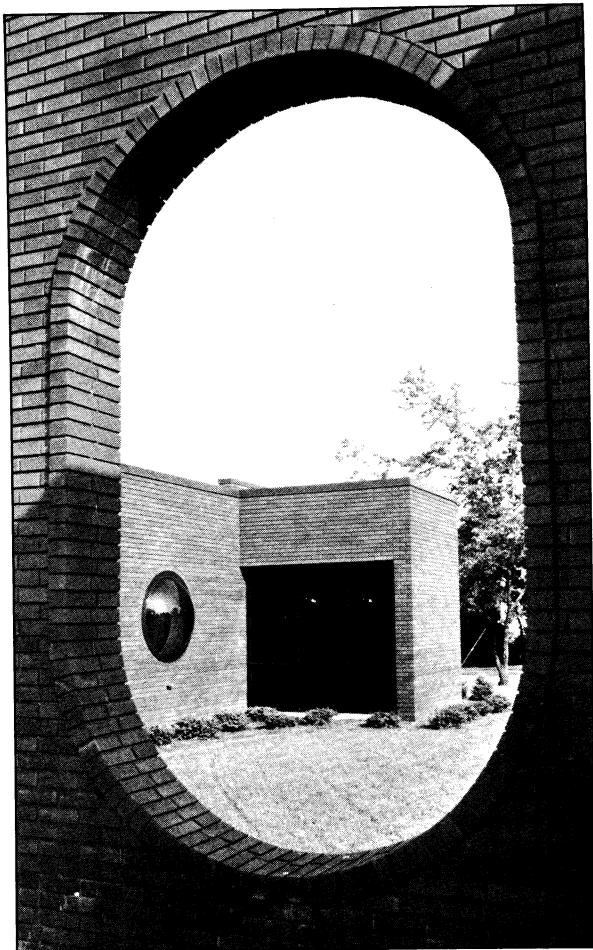
"The original intention was to use that first, bigger house as a guest cottage with the primary house being built later," Quick says. "What the owners found out after using it a year was that they didn't need anything bigger so they built a smaller guest cottage."

The two buildings are connected by an angled deck. Quick says the most recent addition, which was just completed, features a glass connector or solarium between the buildings.

Quick says the entire job has been particularly enjoyable because it allowed the development of a fresh environment, even though he says the client started out wanting something fairly traditional.

"When you can do that, it's fun," Quick says. "And it's also satisfying when you can do something that becomes part of its surroundings."





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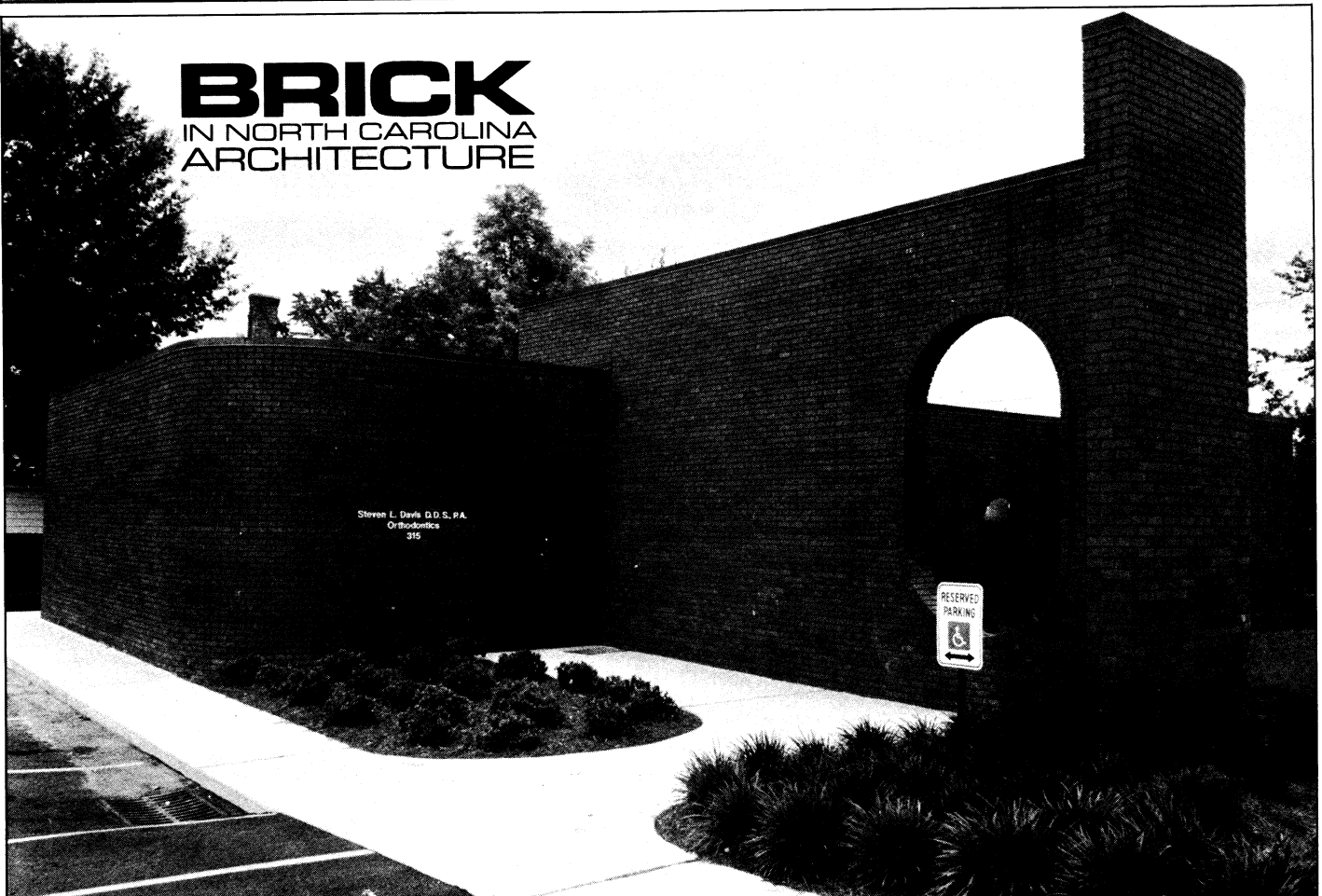
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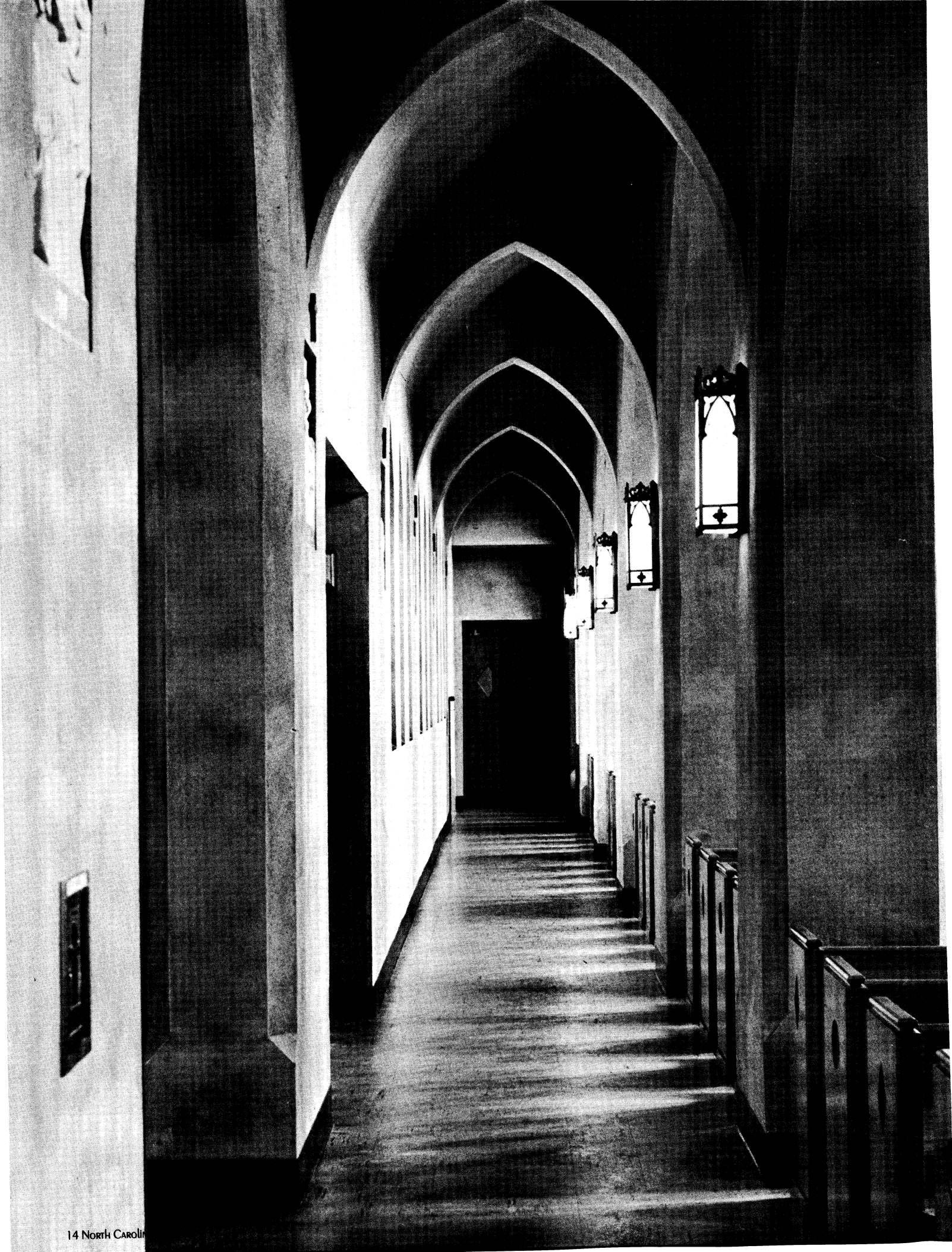
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*Belmont gymnasium*

# A DIVINE PRACTICE

*For more than 60 years, a North Carolina priest was both a Benedictine monk and a nationally recognized architect.*

**E**ven today, 20 years after his death, Michael McNerney stands as one of North Carolina's most unique and most accomplished architects.

In an architectural career spanning more than 60 years, McNerney designed more than 500 buildings, including 27 hospitals, 100 major churches and 100 smaller churches, 200 schools and institutions, 18 convents and 10 gyms. Many are still in use.

But McNerney was also a Benedictine monk and Catholic priest.

Born in 1877, McNerney became interested in buildings when he started working with his father, a stone contractor in Pennsylvania. When he was 15, McNerney became an apprentice architect; eight years later, he was named a partner in the firm.

At about the same time, though, McNerney moved to Belmont, where he

entered Saint Mary's College, which was later renamed Belmont Abbey College. His talents as an architect were quickly put to work when the College Building at Belmont burned, destroying all but the brick shell. McNerney volunteered to stay at school during the summer to help rebuild the structure.

And even though it was clear that a lucrative career in architecture was on the horizon, McNerney decided to enter the Benedictine monastery at Saint Mary's College in 1902, taking the name Michael, his father's name. Four years later, he received permission to commit himself for life to the monastery.

During his first four years in religious life, he had completed most of his seminary work, designed a small school, worked on the monastery farm, served as a prefect in the college, directed the senior study hall, served as disciplinarian and as advisor to the baseball team.



*Father Michael McNerney*

*By Paschal Baumstein*

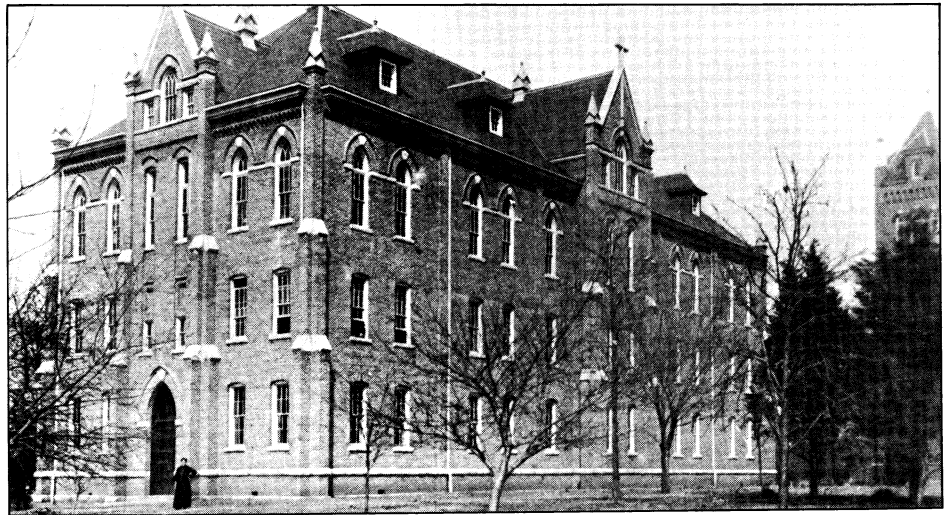


Even before the time of his solemn profession, plans were unveiled for a new building by Father Michael at Saint Mary's. The single structure was to reflect the Abbey's commitment to educating a young man's body and spirit as well as his mind, and McNerney had to express these values within the limits of his struggling college's extremely modest budget.

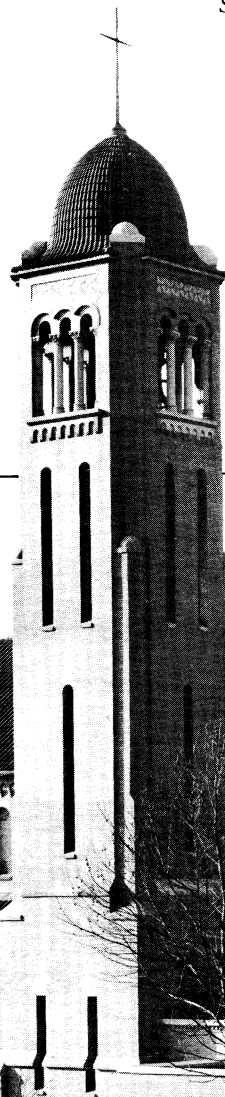
He accomplished his task in a three-story, German Gothic Revival (or, as he called it, "American Benedictine") brick building that housed a gymnasium, rehearsal hall, music studios, classrooms, darkroom, billiards facilities and, on the top level, a grand dramatic hall seating 300.

Construction on Saint Leo Hall, as it would be named, had been started in February 1906, and its form was dominating Belmont's south campus even as McNerney was in the Abbey Church at center-campus committing himself to a lifetime as a Benedictine monk. Until his death in 1963, these two features—religious life and architecture—were his passions.

A few years earlier, Rome had named McNerney's Abbot, Leo Haid, as the bishop of North Carolina, and from that appointment came the impetus for the younger monk's successful career in

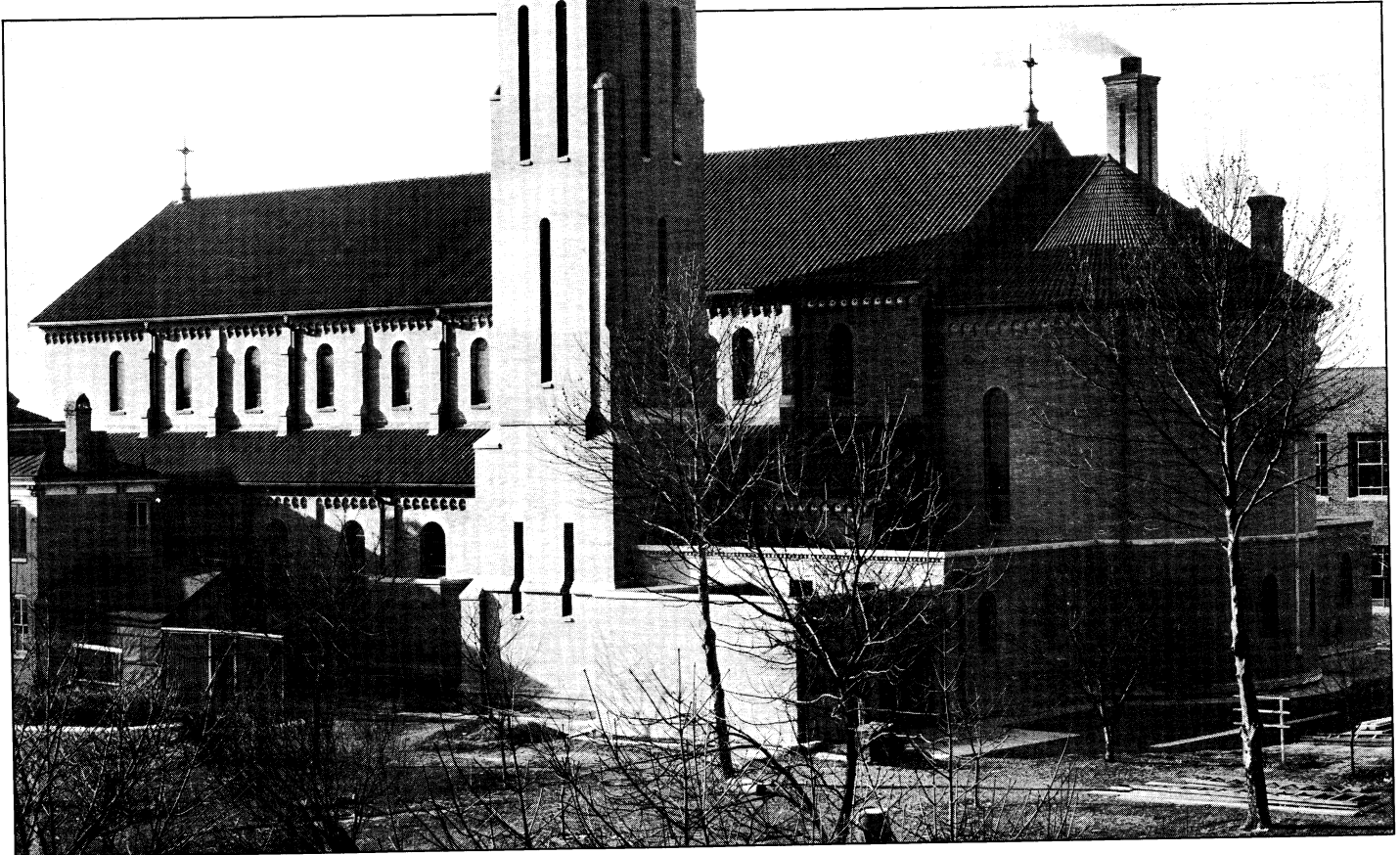


*Saint Leo Hall, Belmont*



*Saint Benedict Church,  
Baltimore*

design. An ambitious builder, Haid put McNerney's architectural talents to work throughout the state. There were churches, schools and rectories to be built, and as word spread, McNerney's designs began appearing in other states and eventually across the country. He designed churches, hospitals, barns, well-houses and schools; he taught mathematics and mechanical drawing in the college; he taught English, history and math in the preparatory school, and he was also a prefect in the schools. In addition, he served as a consultant on questions of ecclesiastical and hospital





architecture.

The priest-architect also branched into other types of design work. He conceived ornamentation, chalices, candle sticks, sanctuary lamps and similar furnishings for his buildings.

Throughout his career, McNerney insisted on supervising his construction activities personally. In 1937, for example, the architect could be found trying to keep an eye on projects in six different states at once. But his talents obviously paid off; his fees kept Belmont Abbey solvent during the Depression years.

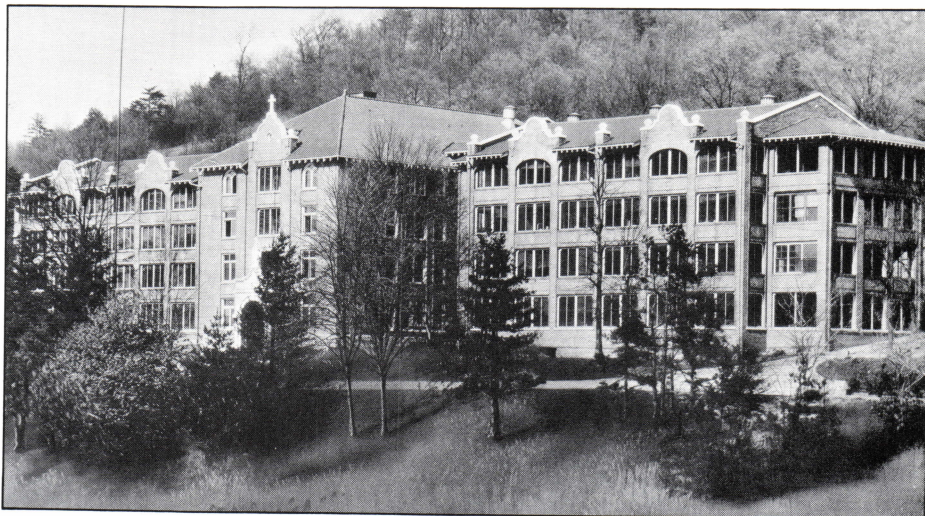
*Saint Joseph's Hospital, Asheville*

*Saint Peter's Rectory, McKeesport, Pa.*



Despite the imposing quantity of his work, Father Michael never sacrificed the creativity that first earned him professional recognition. His special gift was for lending beauty to simple box-like forms. Virtually all of Father Michael's work was designed to meet a minimal budget, so the architect developed a talent for embellishments in brick, in windows, in special roofs and doors. McNerney created a barn with gothic arches, a well-house with dormer windows, simple wooden churches with towers and borders. And he signed each structure with a long-shafted cross, sometimes conspicuous and sometimes hidden among the brick patterns. It was an anonymous signature speaking more of his other endeavors.

His work included major hospitals like Saint Joseph's in Asheville and institutions like the Catholic Orphanage in Nazareth, Pa., and parts of the Saint Stanislaus Orphanage in Naticoke, Pa. He designed the Cathedral Academy in Raleigh, Benedictine Military College in Richmond and Wheeling W. Va., Hospital Nursing School; his gymnasias were built in



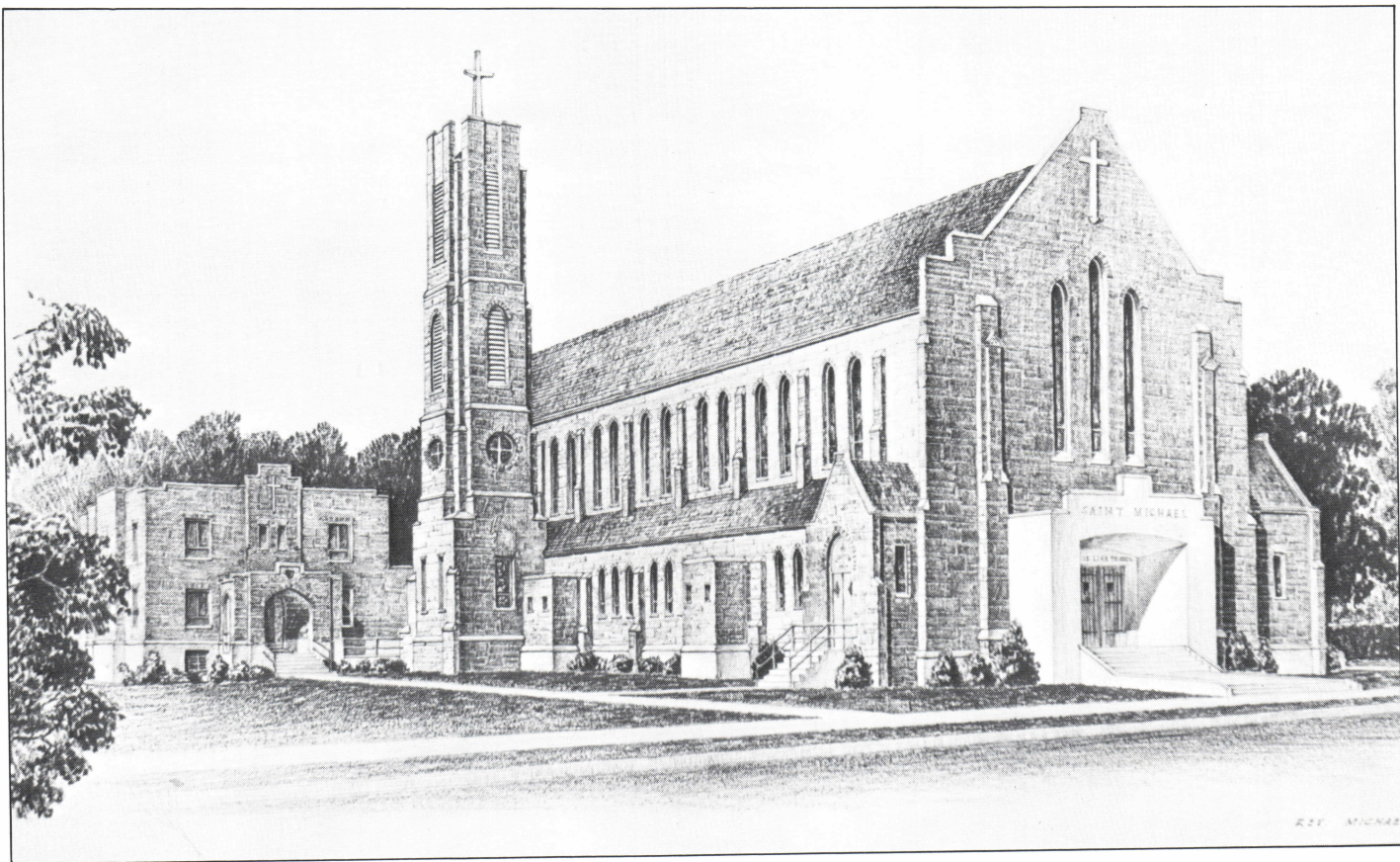

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*McInerney's rendering of Saint Michael Church*

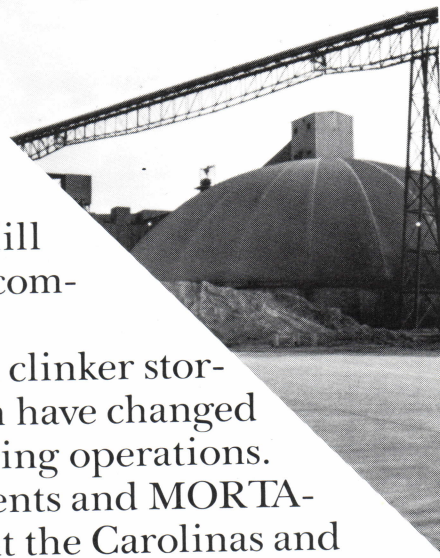
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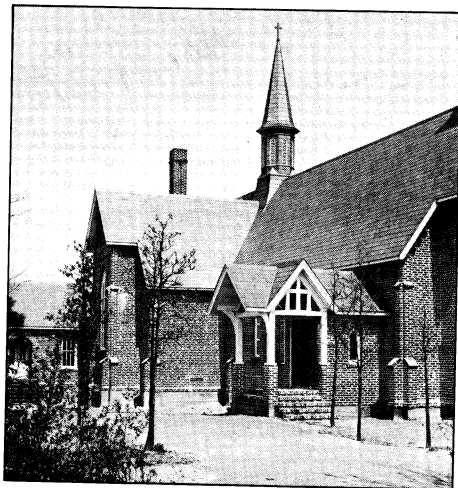
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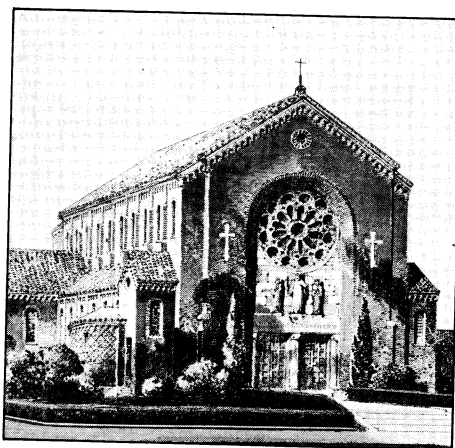
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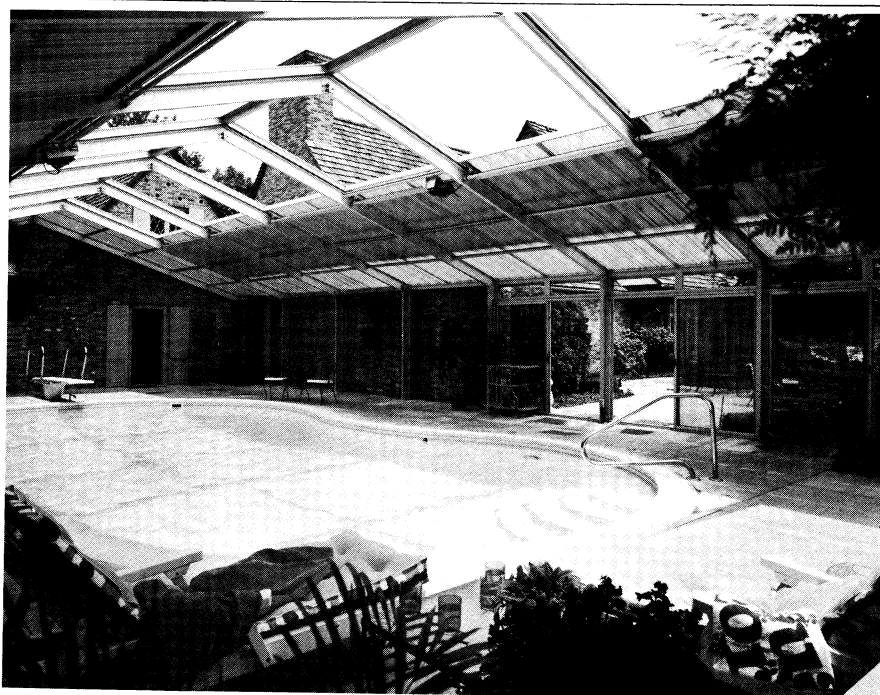
Belmont, Charleston, New York and elsewhere. His churches range from the magnificent Saint Benedict Church in Baltimore to the more severe and monumentally themed Saint Michael Church in Wheeling, and the much smaller Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Pinehurst.



The Reverend Father Michael McInerney died in March 1963 at Charlotte's Mercy Hospital. Ironically, he had designed the hospital's original complex of buildings, the nursing schools and the convent in which the hospital's Sisters lived. He was buried at Belmont Abbey, surrounded by the monuments of his art and spirit.



Paschal Baumstein is the archivist at Belmont Abbey and Belmont Abbey College. He is the author of numerous articles, including two other studies in architectural history associated with Michael McInerney. His most recent work in the field of architecture was a history of Belmont Abbey Cathedral published in the summer 1983 edition of *Crescat*.



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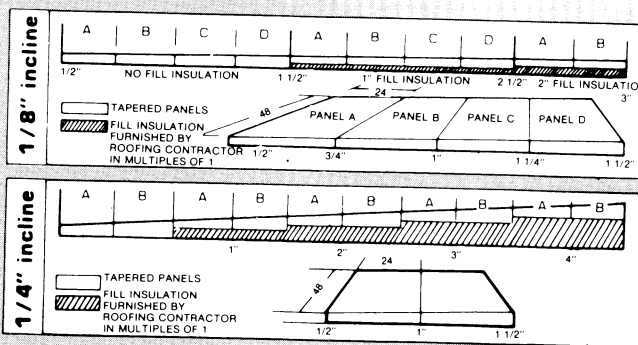
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# Off The Drawing Board

## FOR SOME, SMALLER IS BETTER

"You're almost like a country doctor," says Harry McGee. "People ask you a lot of questions and look to you for advice."

Like a number of architects in the state, McGee has found that he prefers practicing away from cities such as Charlotte, Raleigh, Asheville and Greensboro.

It means, he says, that he's never going to be rich, but the financial sacrifices are more than offset by what he feels is additional personal satisfaction.

"I'm happy where I am," says McGee, who is the only architect in Smithfield and Johnston County southeast of Raleigh. "I'm happy with the type business I've got. I get an opportunity to do most every type of project. I've done everything from hog pens to multi-million dollar facilities."

McGee, who started his career in Raleigh, says most of his business comes from eastern North Carolina, although some is from as far away as South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia.

Elizabeth City architect Noel Coltrane, like McGee, doesn't seek business from the region's major cities.

"I doubt if I will," says Coltrane. "The Tidewater area of Virginia and the Raleigh area are, I think, overblessed with architects."

Coltrane says he'd rather serve a smaller area and have an opportunity to build a diversified practice handling everything from "room additions to major facilities."

"My business is generally within 80 miles of Elizabeth City," says the former Greensboro architect. "It's from places like Murfreesboro, Williamston and the Outer Banks."

To be successful away from a major city, an architect must be especially self-sufficient since it can be expensive and time consuming to bring in consultants

from elsewhere, Coltrane says.

"If you have a diversified practice it means you do things related to architecture and construction like construction certification," he adds. "What you have to do is observe if there is a need for something and then determine if you can fill it."

Coltrane says he is "always getting inquiries about jobs" from other architects, but he hasn't hired anyone yet. In addition to himself, his practice employs a draftsman and secretary.

At the opposite end of the state from Coltrane, architect James Mitchell of Cashiers says the most important thing about developing a practice away from a major city is the opportunity to work in a pleasant environment.

"You can't really be interested in getting rich," he says. "You just have to be happy with your job, the community in which you live and your lifestyle."

Mitchell's practice revolves primarily around the design of single-family homes, golf villas, condominiums and apartments.

"You get most of your work by referral," he says. "My practice is mostly in the western part of the state from Toxaway to Highlands."

He says it hasn't been necessary to seek business in the state's major cities.

Before moving to Cashiers, Mitchell practiced in Asheville.

Like Coltrane and McGee, Mitchell says it takes a unique individual to be happy away from the major cities where the architectural firms are generally bigger, more profitable and likely to handle larger projects.

"You've got to love the area," Mitchell says. "I think the work environment is better for me, but it really takes a special person. You've got to be interested in the lifestyle of the area."

Mitchell says he too gets job inquiries from architects interested in building a practice away from the city, even though it will mean some difficulty gaining continual access to the type information important to the profession.

## J. N. PEASE PROMOTES 3

William Sanders has been elected a principal associate of J. N. Pease Associates, Charlotte and Research Triangle Park architecture, engineering and planning firm.

Sanders directs the firm's mechanical

engineering department.

In addition, architect Michael Doyné has been named a senior associate and William Clark Jr. was elected an associate.

## CONSTRUCTION STARTED ON CENTER by NEWMAN, CALLOWAY

Wachovia Bank & Trust Co. has started construction on its \$14 million West End Center designed by Newman, Calloway, Johnson, Winfree of Winston-Salem.

The architectural firm has used rounded edges, columns and recessed windows to soften the building's brick exterior.

The center, located between Fifth and Four-and-a-Half streets in the West End section of Winston-Salem, has 243,000 square feet of space on four floors.

It will house Wachovia Services Inc., the company's student loan servicing subsidiary, the Piedmont operations center and similar computer-related activities.

## VETERINARY SCHOOL by FEREBEE, WALTERS DEDICATED

The \$32 million North Carolina State University School of Veterinary Medicine is being prepared for its first full school year.

Designed by Ferebee, Walters & Associates of Charlotte and the Research Triangle Park, the school was dedicated recently in ceremonies attended by government and educational leaders.

The school houses approximately eight acres of classrooms, laboratories, research facilities, a teaching hospital, community clinic, animal wards, library, audiovisual center, cafeteria, lounge and other support facilities.

"It is really and truly a nice environment in which to come to work, and it does have a positive effect on all of us that do so every day," said Dr. Terrence Curtin during the dedication ceremonies. Curtin is the founding dean of the school.

Ferebee, Walters also completed work recently on The Verandas, a ten-unit



apartment complex on a one-sixth-acre site in Charlotte's Fourth Ward restoration area.

Among recent additions to the firm's staff are William Percival and David Plank in project direction and Mary Kathryn Noble in interior design and space planning.

## 25 ARCHITECTS ENTER DRAWING CONTEST

Approximately 25 architects have entered an architectural drawing contest being sponsored by Hodges/Gallery of Charlotte.

Contest coordinators don't know the exact number of works that will be judged because several architects are planning to submit more than one work.

Winners will be displayed in early October when Hodges/Taylor moves into a building being renovated in downtown Charlotte.

Judging begins August 15. Gerald Allen, architect and former associate editor of *Architectural Record*, will judge the entries.

## MISTRI NAMED VICE PRESIDENT by WOLF ASSOCIATES

Adi Mistri has been named vice president of Wolf Associates.

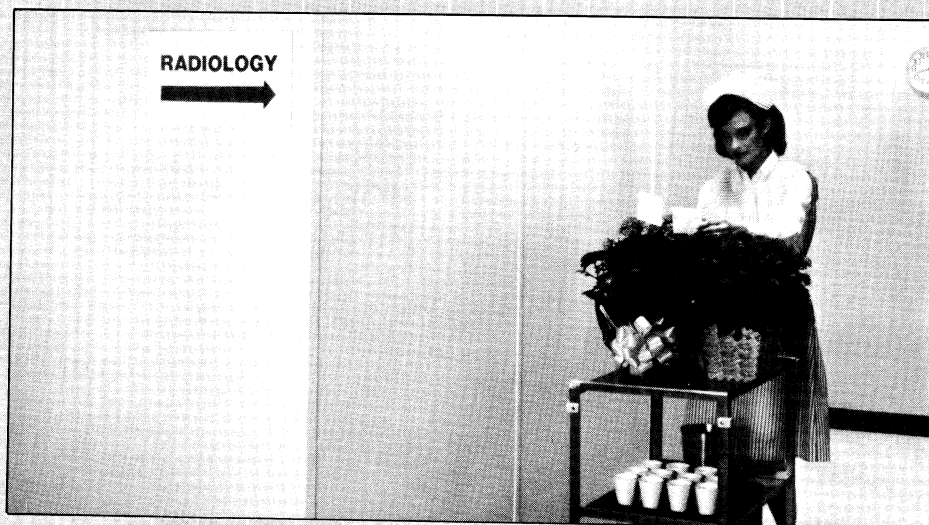
Mistri, a graduate of the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia and the University of Bombay, has been a key participant in several of the firm's major projects, including the Mecklenburg County Courthouse, which recently won an Honor Award from the American Institute of Architects, the addition to the North Carolina State University School of Design and projects for the United States Office of Foreign Buildings.

## CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES To REBOUND SHARPLY

Construction activity in the state's 44 largest cities and towns was up substantially in the first four months of 1983.

The number of construction

## GOLD BOND INTRODUCES NEW WALL PRODUCT



North Carolina-based Gold Bond Building Products, a division of National Gypsum, has introduced a new wall product designed to withstand abuse in high traffic areas.

The product is designed to be used in places like hospitals, restaurants, schools, hotels, transportation centers and similar

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The product comes in four colors—champagne, safari, honeysuckle and pewter gray.

authorizations increased to 12,874 from 9,531 in the first four months of 1982, a 35.1 percent gain.

The construction value rose to \$419.9 million from \$298.9 million, an increase of 40.5 percent.

Officials of the state department of labor said residential construction increased 88.8 percent, indicating renewed confidence in the economy and lower mortgage rates. Non-residential construction moved up 8 percent, and additions and alterations gained 6.4 percent.

April figures were up as well, with authorizations for 3,626 new construction projects issued, an increase of 24 percent from April 1982.

Raleigh led the way in April with authorizations totaling \$23.3 million. Charlotte was next at \$22.8 million, followed by Greensboro, Winston-Salem and Durham. Cary, Chapel Hill and High Point issued authorizations worth more than \$3 million, and Asheville, Goldsboro, Greenville, Hickory, Jacksonville and Rocky Mount passed \$2 million in April.

The figures are the latest available.

## ARCHITECT LEADING MANTEO'S PREPARATIONS TO HOST WORLD

Preservation architect John Wilson IV is playing a leading role in preparing Manteo to host the world next year.

Wilson is also mayor of the Outer Banks town that will be the site of the 400th anniversary of the first English settlement in America.

The ceremonies will start next April in Plymouth, England, where the first English expedition to America departed in 1584. The three-year ceremony will begin in Manteo July 13, 1984.

To mark the occasion—and to prepare for an estimated 5,000 tourists per day—Manteo is embarking on significant restoration of its waterfront. The development will include a 48-room inn, 35 residential units and approximately 20,000 square feet of retail space, Wilson says. A third phase with additional retail and residential development may be added later.

Total development is expected to top \$8 million in Manteo, a town of approximately 900.



Wilson, a preservation specialist with Bahr, Parker and Wilson Associates in Washington, D.C., has also been active in the restoration of several historic structures on the Outer Banks, including the Currituck Lighthouse Keeper's house and Caffey's Inlet Life Saving Station.

For his preservation work on the Outer Banks, Wilson, 31, was awarded the Honor Award of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1981.

## NCAIA to Hold SUMMER MEETING

The North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects will hold its summer meeting in Wrightsville Beach, August 18-21.

One highlight of the meeting, to be held at the Blockade Runner Hotel, will be a seminar on image enhancement led by David Reynolds of Burroughs Wellcome Co. There will also be a variety of dinners, cocktail parties and sporting activities, as well as a bus tour of historic Wilmington for spouses.

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In addition, there will be a Saturday morning session on landscape and architecture led by Susan and Mac Little of Raleigh and an afternoon session the same day led by Dr. Jay Klompmaker of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on pricing and marketing professional services.

## CHAPTER TO ELECT OFFICERS FOR 1984

The nominating committee of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects has completed its 1984 slate of officers and directors.

Nominations are:

H. Clay Taylor, III, president. He is with Shawcroft-Taylor of Raleigh.

Thomas Turner Jr. of ADEP in Charlotte, president-elect.

Donald Johnson of Newman, Calloway, Johnson, Winfree in Winston-Salem, secretary.

Don Lee of Dellinger & Lee Associates in Charlotte, treasurer.

Directors nominated to serve through 1984 include Robert Earnhardt, a Guilford County consultant, and Henry Johnston of Wilmington, who has his own firm.

Directors nominated to serve through 1984-85 are John Rogers Jr. of Six Associates in Asheville, Sam Snowdon Jr. of Jordan, Snowdon & McVicker in Laurinburg and William O'Brien of O'Brien/Atkins Associates in Chapel Hill.

The election will be held at the chapter's summer meeting in Wrightsville Beach, August 20.

## FUND ESTABLISHED TO HONOR KAMPHOEFNERS

An educational, non-profit foundation has been formed as a tribute to Henry Kamphoefner's dedication to architectural education.

Kamphoefner founded the School of Design at North Carolina State University and served as its dean for 25 years.

The Henry and Mabel Kamphoefner Fund for Recognition of Excellence in Architecture "will annually provide financial support to individuals, programs and institutions which have significantly improved or have shown the potential to improve the quality of architecture."

The Fund's trustees plan a design

competition for students and recent graduates of the state's architecture schools, a design awards program recognizing outstanding architectural projects in progress by North Carolina architects, fellowship grants for student travel and study programs, cash awards for best fifth-year thesis projects at North Carolina State and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and gifts of major architectural portfolios to the libraries of N.C. State and UNCC.

In addition, the fund expects to support an address by a major architectural figure at the March 1984 meeting of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Rebecca Mentz of Pittsboro, a graduate student at NCSU, won a \$1,200 student development fellowship for a study tour of piazzas in six Italian cities. An \$800 fellowship was awarded to Lindsay Danial of Charlotte, a rising fifth-year student at UNCC, for research into new marketplaces in historic urban districts.

Craig Deal of Raleigh and Wanda Elrod, each a May graduate, won \$250 cash awards for best fifth-year thesis project.

Deal designed a town hall for Mint Hill, and Elrod's thesis was a civic center for Anderson, S.C.

The fund was created as an educational trust through donations by the Kamphoefners.

Henry Kamphoefner has received several honorary degrees, Fellowship in the American Institute of Architects, the ACSA/AIA Joint Award for Lasting Achievement in Architectural Education and the North Carolina Award, the state's highest honor.

Additional information about the Kamphoefner Fund can be obtained by writing its trustees at P. O. Box 12583, Raleigh, N.C. 27605.

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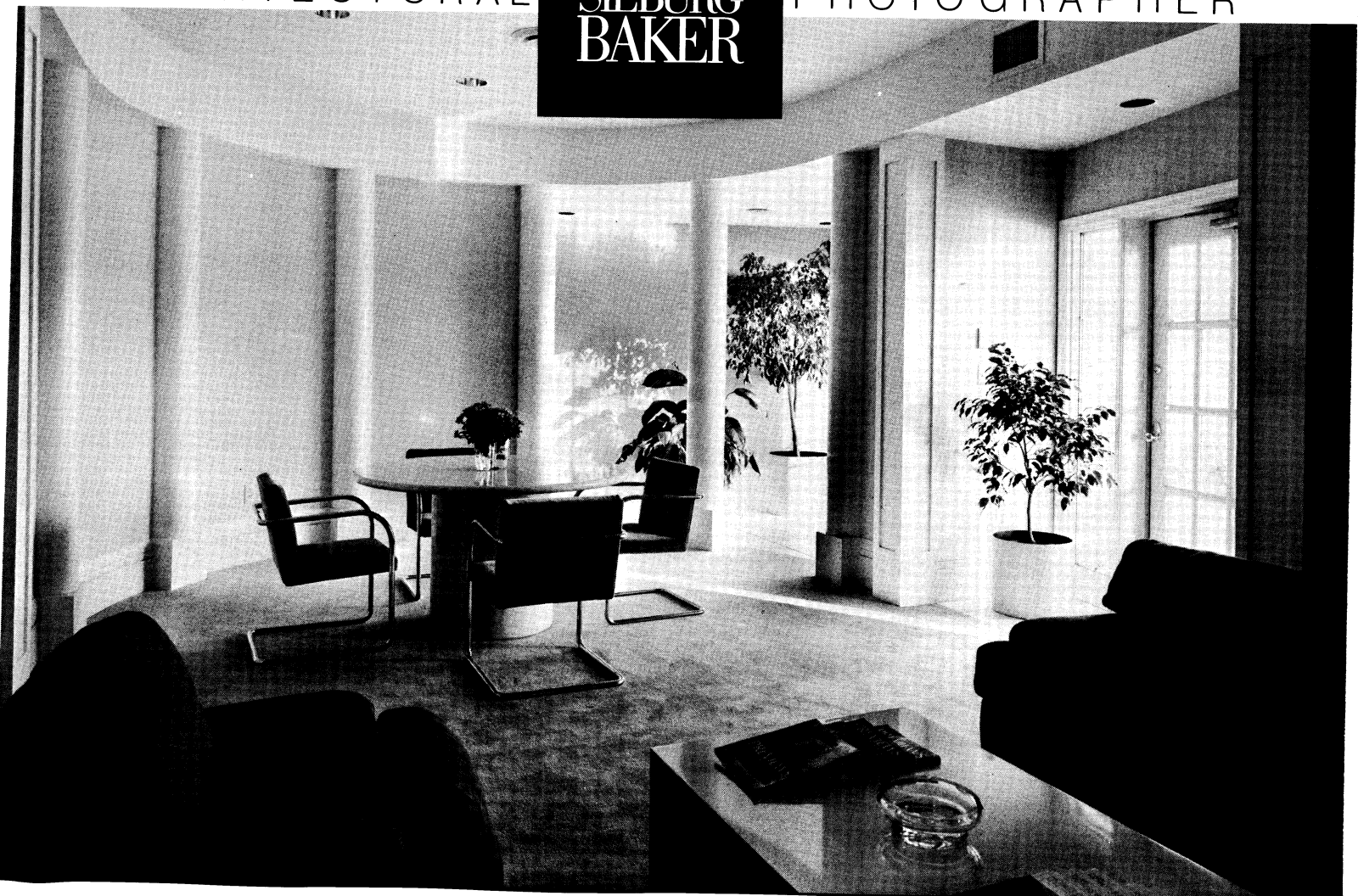


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# ENTHUSIASTIC SPECIALISTS

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*A Charlotte architectural and engineering firm creates a national reputation in hospital design.*

**A**lmost from the start, it was clear that St. Thomas Hospital was not going to be a typical project for The Freeman-White Associates.

Not only was the Virgin Islands' hospital a long way from the architectural and engineering firm's Charlotte headquarters, just finding out about the project was a unique stroke of luck.

While vacationing in St. Thomas roughly five years ago, a young Freeman-White architect read a newspaper story about plans to build a new hospital. A short time later, the firm sent information about its skills and qualifications to government officials in the U.S. Virgin Islands and waited for some sort of response. A year later, Freeman-White was invited to compete against 36 firms from throughout the country that also specialize in health care facilities.

Winning such an intense competition was but another step in the development of Freeman-White as one of the country's leading firms in the design and planning of hospitals.

Nearly all of the firm's business is related to health care. Of more than 100 jobs on an April project list, fewer than five were in other areas, and one of those was the firm's own office building.

With that specialization has come the type of expertise that can open doors far beyond North Carolina.

"We're emerging as a national firm and not just as one in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee and West Virginia," says Freeman-White's Jack Bennett, vice president for building design.

"I'd say we're among about 12 firms recognized nationally in health care."

Such a reputation does not develop overnight. Freeman-White has been focusing its talents on health care facilities for nearly 40 years, and it now employs 70 to 75 professionals in offices in

*Photography by Rick Alexander*



*Florence, S.C.'s McLeod Regional Medical Center at dusk (left) and glass-sheathed exterior of Lexington Memorial Hospital (above).*



Charlotte, Tampa and Columbia.

Freeman-White has done extensive work on N.C. Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill, Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, Richland Memorial Hospital in Columbia, S.C., the Veterans Administration Hospital in Salisbury and Pitt County Memorial Hospital in Greenville.

The design of an increasing number of hospitals and medical facilities is going to firms specializing in the field, largely because codes governing such projects are complex, strict and constantly changing.

"The majority of our architects and engineers have spent their entire career in health care," says Bev Freeman, the firm's president. "We hire people with backgrounds in every area and not just with hospital and health care training, although that certainly helps. One thing we do ask is if hospitals and health care is what someone wants to do professionally. That is important."

And while Freeman-White principals stress the advantage of specialization, they also admit there are dangers a firm must try to avoid.

Bennett says when a firm specializes in a particular field, it often forgets to continue developing unique designs and new ideas. The tendency, he says, is to treat every project the same, drawing design ideas from previous jobs.

Freeman-White has been able to avoid that trap, Bennett says, although it "does use components from one project when they meet the criteria of another job."

"Not one of our health care facilities looks the same as another," Bennett adds. "That's because no two of our clients have the same needs."

special equipment used to diagnose and treat patients, nursing stations, operating rooms and similar areas.

After those needs have been evaluated,



*Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Greenville, N.C.*

When Freeman-White begins a hospital project, it turns first to an assessment of the facility's "internal" needs—the number and types of rooms, places for

the interior of the hospital is designed.

"Then you make sure it all flows efficiently," says Bennett. "Finally, you design the outside to make sure it is an



*McLeod Regional Medical Center, Florence, S.C.*



aesthetically pleasing facility.”

The process can take years. Freeman-White started work on a master plan for Richland Memorial three years ago, and

consideration for more than 15 years.

“We’ve designed all of our facilities so that any expansion that may be needed can be done without interrupting the

special care areas—intensive care and coronary care—being especially flexible.

Even though Freeman-White approaches each project individually, it’s not afraid to repeat ideas that work or to refine previous ideas to meet a new demand.

Greenville’s 556-bed Pitt County Memorial Hospital provides some examples. Designed as a four-story building since the ground in the area was poor, Pitt Memorial features central nursing stations at the heart of a “snowflake” of rooms. By using this approach, Freeman-White was able to put 48 beds within 32 feet of a nursing station. The layout allows nurses to offer better, more constant care and attention since it is easier to monitor activities in several rooms at once.

Freeman-White used a similar idea in Lexington Memorial Hospital, which was completed last September. The hospital’s intensive care unit features a nursing station in the middle of a semi-circle of beds, allowing nurses and doctors to see the faces of all patients at once.

The Lexington hospital was designed as a one-story building since the facility treats a large number of people on an out-patient basis.

Freeman says paying attention to such local needs is important.

The St. Thomas hospital was designed, for example, with the knowledge that the residents using the facility would rather sleep with the windows of their rooms open instead of using air conditioning. Bennett says the building was designed to allow maximum air movement and circulation.

One thing Freeman-White had a difficult time planning for on the St. Thomas project was the need to use local labor. Bennett estimates construction costs ran 40 percent higher than they would have elsewhere, at least partly because laborers are given approximately 35 legal holidays a year. The task was made even more difficult by the project’s exceptionally tight budget.

Even so, Freeman, the firm’s president, says the project proves one point, at least.

“This is an architectural firm enthusiastic about specialization. That’s how we got the Virgin Islands job.”

It’s also been important to the firm’s growth beyond the Carolinas. Freeman says the Florida market, served by an office in Tampa, is especially promising. ●



*Lobby of Pitt County Memorial Hospital.*

the master plan for Pitt County’s hospital is still being expanded, 18 years after it was first drawn. In Chapel Hill, parts of N.C. Memorial Hospital have been under

existing structure,” says Bennett.

The McLeod Regional Medical Center in Florence, S.C., for example, was designed for rapid expansion, with the



*St. Thomas Hospital, U.S. Virgin Islands*



# TOUGHEST CLIENT

*Designing an office for 70 architects is far from simple.*

*Photography by Rick Alexander*

**T**he hardest job Jack Bennett has ever approached was designing his firm's office building.

"That's because the client consisted of 70 architects," says the vice president of The Freeman-White Associates Inc.

The results of Bennett's efforts are far from ordinary. Located in suburban Charlotte in an area more known for office and industrial parks, Freeman-White's new headquarters has been designed with the same efficiency the firm seeks in its other work.

Perhaps the most striking feature is a large room housing nearly 70 architects, engineers and designers. Each has his or her own work space, but there are private offices only for the firm's top executives.

Bennett says the open work space increases communication between people working on the same or similar projects. The result, he says, is increased productivity.

When the firm announced it was moving from downtown Charlotte, Bennett says a number of employees complained. Since the building opened in December, however, there have been no complaints.

Freeman-White considered moving its interior design business, Omnia Design, from downtown Charlotte as well but abandoned that plan when it became clear the firm's architects and engineers would need all of the new office space.

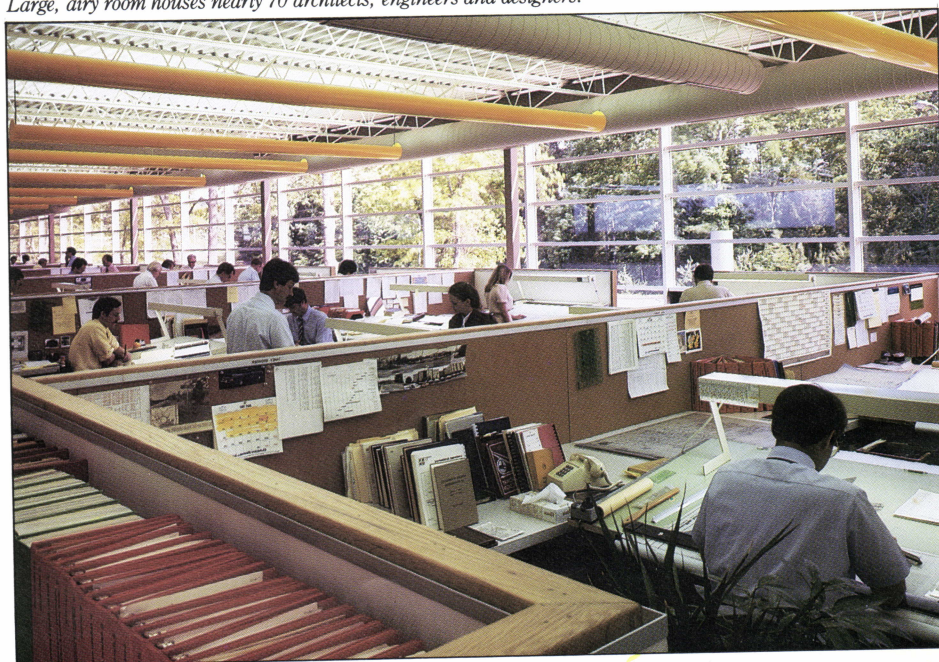
Part of the new office building has been devoted to the firm's computer-aided drafting system, which was installed in July.

Freeman-White traces its development to 1892, when Charles C. Hook opened an office. At the time, Hook was the only architect in the state, and he later became the first licensed architect in the state. The firm has been practicing continuously since 1892 and became Freeman-White when Walter Hook, son of the founder, died in 1963.

Since 1946, the firm has concentrated almost exclusively on the design of hospitals and related medical care facilities.



*Freeman-White's recently opened headquarters features walls of glass overlooking wooded area. Large, airy room houses nearly 70 architects, engineers and designers.*





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