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COVER STORY

25 ON THE RIGHT TRACK: RALEIGH'S STATION SQUARE.
Story by Ellen Grissett.
Photography by Rick Alexander.
A sadly "remuddled" 19th century train station in downtown Raleigh was brought back to life by architects at Reg Narmour/The Architectural Group, who then decided to move into the station themselves.

FEATURE

5 1986 NCAIA DESIGN AWARDS.
This year's awards, announced at the NCAIA Winter Convention, honor a wide variety of projects. Some of the winners are a winery, an all-suite hotel and a condominium.

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16 DRAWING BOARD.

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The annual winter convention of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects was held at Hilton Head, S.C., February 7-9.

During the convention, the 1986 NCAIA Design Awards were presented and participants had the opportunity to view the numerous entries. Judges for this year’s competition were Lee Copeland, dean of the School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania, and Denise Scott Brown and George Qualls, both architects in private practice in the Philadelphia area.

The judges made these comments concerning the NCAIA Design Award entries: “The submissions as a group echo the enormous variety and plurality characterizing the architectural scene today. Projects ranged from an early modern residence to corporate architecture to historicism. Most were carefully conceived and serious. Fewer had verve and exuberance . . . There was a strong concern for setting, respect for terrain and the natural environment and for historic urban contexts.”

Don Lee, head of the NCAIA Winter Convention committee, estimates that about 200 people from across the state attended the meeting at Hilton Head. “The theme of the convention was ‘Government Affairs,’ and so we had a number of seminars addressing the relationship between government and architects in terms of design. Out of those seminars, several issues arose, which we will be studying at future meetings,” Lee says.

Among the issues raised were insurance; single versus multiple contracts with the state; port reform; and the NCAIA licensing statute.

Finally, of course, convention participants had the opportunity to socialize with fellow architects and relax a little. “I think everyone had a good time,” Lee says.
Project:
Condominium
Raleigh, N.C.

Architect:
David Furman/Architecture

Owner:
Martin Development Group

General Contractor:
Strickland/Martin Inc.

Photographer:
Rick Alexander; Larry Harwell, Aerial Photography.

Judges' Comments:
"Good place for living — human scale, feels like home. Works well on site, especially with the mature trees. Court spaces and corridor/breezeway successful. Has a richness of texture and character without being too affected."

Architect's Synopsis:
The highest density was accomplished by tightly clustering units and stacking them three levels with interior courtyard spaces, leaving useable green spaces. Units are attached in various ways and at various elevations, creating building forms sensitive to the residential surroundings. The central courtyards are designed to accommodate entrances to all units and create a sense of community for the residents . . . Derived from interpreting elements from the surrounding residential community into more contemporary forms. Cedar shingles and detailing such as stucco banding at the third level, keystones, bay windows, corner brackets, picket rails, round windows and wrought-iron gates allow the development to be a compatible, non-intrusive part of the neighborhood.
Project:
Corporate Headquarters
Charlotte, N.C.

Architect:
Clark Tribble Harris & Li Architects PA

Owner:
CTHL Properties

General Contractor:
D.L. Rogers Construction Co. Inc.

Photographer:
Gordon H. Schenck Jr.

Judges’ Comments:
“We have judged the interior only and did not have the advantage of seeing the exterior . . . tour de force that comes off. Has verve—could be a Bill Blass showroom. Vistas into the atrium through rooms quite successful. The way light comes from the top well conceived and executed. Detailing crisp and consistent. Imbalance between front public area and back work areas: strong image in front, mundane in back.”

Architect’s Synopsis:
This 44,000-square-foot headquarters for an architectural firm is a renovated two-story warehouse and dispatch office for a trucking company. The nondescript, boxy building, originally built in 1947, had no exterior windows and had been built directly on the lot line. Given these conditions—and a very tight budget—the architects elected to create a lively, light-filled atrium building with a clear organizational system focused around the atrium.

Principals’ offices and conference rooms face the atrium via quarter barrel glass block walls; main circulation corridors surround offices and conference rooms; design and production bays and other administrative areas are at the perimeter of this concentric system. Balconies overlook the atrium on all four sides.
Project:
All-Suite Hotel
Charlotte, N.C.

Architect:
Clark Tribble Harris & Li
Architects PA

Owner:
Guest Quarters Development Corp.

General Contractor:
L.P. Cox Co. Inc.

Photographer:
Gordon H. Schenck Jr.

Judges' Comments:
"Has presence—strong, consistent image. No more refined than it has to be. Particularly successful exterior, courtyard and terrace. Good balance between repetitive and unique elements. Transcends standard cookie-cutter approach found in similar buildings. Flashy, best of that type. Change the sign."

Architect's Synopsis:
Site of hotel is adjacent to a major regional shopping mall in a rapidly growing, office-retailing district.

The solution entailed creating a three-story building distinctly residential in scale in elevation and detail. The facade was conceived as a unified whole to distinguish it from other multifamily structures in the area. . . In contrast to virtually every other building in this suburban area, the hotel was built close to the street, with parking hidden from view in the rear. Eliminating parking in front and surrounding the white building with extensive and varied landscaping provided the prominence desired by the client, while evoking the residential luxury image.
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Project: Corporate Headquarters  
Charlotte, N.C.

Architect: Clark Tribble Harris & Li Architects PA

Owner: Rexham Corp.

General Contractor: Laxton Construction Co.

Photographer: Rick Alexander

Judges' Comments: “Very well detailed and consistent. Achieves a level of humanity—especially in entrance area. Relates well to the site. Successful landscaping.”

Architect's Synopsis: A 50,000-square-foot corporate headquarters for an international packing manufacturer... located in a sprawling suburban office/retailing area. A buffer of long-leaf pines and hardwoods insulates the building from the busy heavily traveled thoroughfare it faces. Employee and visitor entrances are in the rear. Parking is segregated from the building by curving walkways and green areas, emphasizing the parklike atmosphere. A stepped rear facade was employed to provide a certain rhythm and to allow as much perimeter as possible to maximize corner offices and views of the site. In keeping with the “corporate democracy” philosophy of the client, a 140-foot-long skylight running the length of the building provides sunlight for those without perimeter offices. The skylight also serves as an organizational element, a spine along which office functions are organized.
Project:  
Private Residence  
Charlotte, N.C.

Architect  
Meyer-Greeson Architecture/Interior Design

Owner:  
Dr. Philip Hess

General Contractor:  
F. L. Blalock Development Co.

Photographer:  
Joann Seiberg-Baker

Judges’ Comments:  
“Sits very handsomely in its setting. Massing conveys a strong presence as seems to be the architect’s intent. Submersion of detailing reinforces presence of mass - serious almost to the point of lacking grace. Processional interior organization excellent - refined interior spaces (those shown, main rooms missing in presentation) and detailing. Design seems to be the beginning of an interesting journey by the architects.”

Architect’s Synopsis:  
Plan for 8,000-square-foot residence called for traditional living and dining spaces, library, kitchen and breakfast room, master suite, four additional bedrooms and ancillary spaces. Five-acre wooded site. The entrance drive winds up and through a park-like setting to an auto court, which overlooks a deep ravine and creek. The solidity of the massive brick exterior belies a light interior with skylights and large glass areas. The structured open plan allows traffic and space to flow easily. A central gallery provides access to all major living spaces and stairway.
Project:
Commercial Rehabilitation
Asheville, N.C.

Architect:
Padgett & Freeman Architects

Owner:
William A. V. Cecil

General Contractor:
Haywood Contracting Co.

Photographer:
The Biltmore Co.; Aerial Photography Services; John Warner

Judges' Comments:
"Outstanding historic structure designed by Richard Morris Hunt and landscaped by Frederick Law Olmsted. It can teach all of us about scale relationships . . . Sensitively restored and site development excellent. Addition of elements complements historic aspects without compromising or attempting to improve the original."

Architect's Synopsis:
The project is a turn-of-the-century daily complex adapted to the production of quality wines. In the new site development and landscaping, an attempt was made to reflect Olmsted's initial ideas. As the focal point of the complex, the old clocktower was restored. Underneath the main level . . . tunnels originally used for removal of manure from the barns above . . . are now used for the aging of champagne. The three main milking barns were converted into bottling areas and a tasting room. To accommodate the thousands of visitors who enjoy the estate on busy days, a new addition for reception and sales was created. This addition replaced an office/house that was not a part of Hunt's plan. On tour, the public is given meaningful visibility of a state-of-the-art winery without interfering with the wine production.
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Award Winner:

Project:
Headquarters Building
Raleigh, N.C.

Architect:
Clearscapes Architecture

Owner:
N.C. Beer Wholesalers Association

General Contractor:
Gryphon Construction

Photographer:
Kelly Cross, Steven D. Schuster

Judges’ Comments:
“Successful solution to the requirements of a historical district: Refined, nicely crafted detailing, subtle use of color. On edge of being too referential. The goal should be to bow to the historic context, but (also) contribute something new through stronger scale, contrast in detail, bolder or pronounced juxtaposition of parts (i.e. modular grid windows could have been less subtle, surprisingly big).”

Architect’s Synopsis:
First new commercial construction completed since Oakwood became designated as a National Historic District . . . the first project of its type to come before the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission and fall under the guidelines of the “Standards for New Construction in Early Raleigh Neighborhoods.” The new building draws lines and proportions from its immediate context, the simple Victorian frame residence next door. But in its resolution, the building employs contemporary details to subtly communicate to its neighborhood that it is not another turn-of-the-century residence.
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Excavation work on the new Two First Union Center, a 34-story office tower in uptown Charlotte, has begun, with occupancy expected by mid-1987.

The tower is named after its principal tenant, First Union National Bank, which will occupy seven floors of the building. The development is a joint venture of the Trammell Crow Co. of Dallas, TX., and Norfolk Southern Corp. of Norfolk, VA. Architect is JPK Architects Inc. of Dallas. J. A. Jones Construction Co., founded in Charlotte in 1890, is the project builder. The company constructed the first First Union facility in the downtown Charlotte area in the early 1970s.

Plans call for a series of stepped sections leading to a glass-enclosed vault. Exterior materials will be alternating bands of reddish granite imported from Finland and silver reflective glass.

When completed, the 1.2-million-square-foot office building will include retail banking facilities, retail shops, restaurants and a 1,050-car parking garage, all with access to Charlotte's existing overstreet mall system.

**ARCO Awards Two Prizes**

Pritchard Paint & Glass Co. of Charlotte, which erects and installs glass/aluminum commercial construction projects, recently received awards in two categories from ARCO Building Products at its 10th annual Amerlite Environmental Awards Program.

The project winning in the Monumental Curtain Wall category was One Nashville Place in Nashville, TN., which features an Amerlite CWT 550 Curtain Wall system glazed with LOF Ventran glass designed by the architectural firm Morris/Aubry of Houston, TX. Winning the Remodeling category was the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. facility in Charlotte, which features an Amerlite PBS 383 curtain wall system designed by Clark Tribble Harris and Li Architects of Charlotte.

**Veterans Memorial Competition Open**

Entries are now being received in a competition to design a memorial to honor Americans—particularly North Carolinians—who served in the Vietnam War.

The competition is sponsored by the North Carolina Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program and the Brick Association of North Carolina, with coordination provided by the North Carolina State University School of Design in Raleigh and the Sawtooth Center for Visual Design in Winston-Salem. The project is made possible in part by grants from the North Carolina Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

A first prize of $5,000, a second prize of $2,500 and a third prize of $1,000 will be awarded. The memorial will be constructed on a site near the center of North Carolina at the I-85 interchange near Lexington.

The memorial may be in the form of sculpture, architecture, landscape architecture or a combination. For more infor-
mation about the competition, write to Design Competition, North Carolina Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program Inc., P.O. Box 11706, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27106. The final date for submissions is May 9, with the jury decision announced on May 19.

Firm Opens Columbia Office

Little & Associates of Charlotte has opened an office in Columbia, S.C. The firm, which has 75 staff members and is 26 years old, has appointed Ed Hancock head of the new office, which is located at the Palmetto Center Office Tower, Main Street, Suite M-120, Columbia, S.C. 29201.

Firm Opens In Myrtle Beach

Mullinax Wash Architects PA of Charlotte has opened an office at Myrtle Beach, S.C. The office will offer a full range of services, including engineering, design, project management and computer-aided drafting (CADD). Quarters will be in a two-story building designed by Mullinax Wash for primary tenant Chicora Development Corp. Mullinax Wash, which has its headquarters in the United Carolina Bank Building in uptown Charlotte, was founded in 1982 by Tom Mullinax Jr. and Rich Wash.

Art Gallery Chooses Site

Renovation on a building in the Moore Square Historic District in downtown Raleigh has begun. The site was chosen by the City Art Gallery for its new home, with opening scheduled for later in 1986. The building, originally constructed in 1940 as a parcel post facility, was chosen for its suitability as gallery space and its location opposite Moore Square in an area being revitalized. The new gallery will contain nearly 7,800 feet, 5,000 of which will be reserved for exhibitions. Interior renovations are being underwritten by a $40,000 grant from Northern Telecom Inc. Architect for the project is Norma DeCamp Burns of Burnstudio of Raleigh. Richard Ridley of Ridley & Associates in Washing-
ton, D.C. is working on the building's facade design and other general construction, with Inland Construction Co. of Raleigh as general contractor.

The City Gallery, founded in 1983, is a non-profit space for national and regional traveling exhibitions of objects of contemporary art and design, and for public arts projects.

**Triangle Development Competition Opens**

The Triangle J Council of Governments has opened its 1986 Triangle Development Awards competition for entries.

The competition is open to projects completed between 1981 and 1986 located in Chatham, Durham, Johnston, Lee, Orange and Wake counties. Land development projects that started on-the-ground construction during those years are also eligible. Awards will be made in four categories: residential (10 or more units); commercial; institutional; and large-scale land development projects.

Builders, architects, owners and other development team members may submit projects. Completed applications must reach the jury by 5 p.m. on Friday, June 6. Awards will be announced at the Council of Government's annual meeting in October.

For more information, write to the Triangle J Council of Governments, P.O. Box 12276, 100 Park Drive, Research Triangle Park, N.C. 27709 or call (919) 549-0551.

**Carley Capital Begins Two Projects**

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held in mid-January for Marketplace, a joint venture by the city of Charlotte and Carley Capital Group of Madison, Wisc., and Washington, D.C.

The project, an uptown retail and parking complex scheduled to open in the second quarter of 1987, has been designed by John Frenchman and Associates Inc. of Boston, Mass. Marketplace will contain 120,000 square feet of leasable space, including the adaptive reuse of the old Carolina Theatre, and 200,000 square feet of parking on six levels. Location for the project will be the block bounded by Tryon, College, 5th and 6th streets.

Scheduled for inclusion in Marketplace are a "fresh market" on the first floor, retail and specialty shops, restaurants and fast-food
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vendors. An overstreet bridge will connect Marketplace to Belk Department Store and the Overstreet Mall, while another entrance will provide immediate access to the Tryon Street Mall.

Ceremonies were also held recently for another project by Carley Capital Group, the University Place Hilton Hotel in Charlotte’s University City.

The 12-story, 196,000-square-foot hotel will offer 250 rooms; lounge and bar; terrace dining on the edge of a 10-acre lake; an English pub-style restaurant and bar; and specialty shops. The hotel will be the first Hilton franchise in Charlotte and the first major hotel in the University City area.

Carley Capital Group is developer and manager of the hotel, which will cost around $24 million to build. Odell Architects is the design firm, with Omnia Design Inc. doing the interiors. Construction will be handled by McDevitt and Street.

The first phase of the Hilton will be completed in July 1987. Plans call for expanding the hotel to 400 rooms and linking the hotel to a planned conference center and regional mall (to be completed in 1991).

Annual Awards Program Coming

The third annual Triangle Architecture Awards Program has been announced by Spectator magazine.

Submissions will be accepted in three categories: commercial/public, residential and restoration/adaptive reuse. The competition is open to registered architects only, and they may submit as many entries as they like. Projects submitted must be located in Wake, Durham, or Chatham counties and must be complete as of the date of submission.

Judges for the awards program will be Robert Campbell, AIA, architecture critic for The Boston Globe; G. M. Kallman, FAIA, of Kallman, McKinnell & Wood of Boston and senior architecture professor at Harvard University; and Warren Schwartz, AIA, of Schwartz/Silver Architects, Boston. Judging will be May 7 in Boston; winners will be notified no later than May 16.

Deadline for entering the competition is May 2. For more information, including rules and guidelines for submission and where to pick up official entry forms,
architects should contact Spectator magazine, P.O. Box 12887, Raleigh, N.C. 27605 or call (919) 828-7393.

Survey Reveals Information Needs

Do architects frequently encounter problems or questions for which they can find no adequate resource materials?

Forty architects representing 36 different firms in the Triangle (Wake, Durham and Orange counties) area answered these and other questions as part of a survey conducted in December, 1985.

Eighty-two percent of those who responded were principals of their firms. Firm size ranged from less than 5 personnel (25 percent) to five to 10 (30 percent) 11 to 20 (15 percent) and 21 or more (30 percent).

The architects were asked how often they use major architectural periodicals for reference purposes. Fifty-eight percent responded that they use Architecture, Architectural Technology, North Carolina Architect, Progressive Architecture and

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The architects were asked about other information resources such as their use of academic libraries, the AIA library, their firm library and architects outside the firm. The range was from 87 percent who use their firm library every month to 95 percent who seldom or never use the AIA library. Also, a clear majority seldom or never use academic libraries or architects outside the firm.

However, the architects responding to the survey did believe that more information will be available more readily in the near future.

The survey was conducted by Terry W. Barrett as part of a graduate independent survey through the N.C. State University School of Design, where Barrett is a candidate for a master's in architecture. The above results were provided by Barrett.

**Names and Changes in N.C. Architecture**

J. Andrew Sykes is a new partner in the Chapel Hill firm Philip Szoostak Associates. He was formerly associate partner in a Winston-Salem firm and received his bachelor's in environmental design degree from N.C. State University.

Gantt/Huberman Architects, Charlotte, has appointed Renee Casali, AIA, and Timothy Ledgerwood, AIA, as project architects and Carol Strand project interior designer. Casali, a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill College of Architecture, was formerly with an architectural firm in Pennsylvania. Ledgerwood graduated from the University of Tennessee and was associated with Skidmore, Owings and Merrill in Houston, TX. Strand has degrees from Western Carolina University and UNC-Charlotte College of Architecture.
James R. Bogenberger, W. Layne Adams Jr. and Matthew D. Ziff have joined Winston-Salem-based Hammill-Walter Associates. Bogenberger received his master's in architecture degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, while Adams and Ziff both received master's degrees from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Jerry V. Ledwell, AIA, is a new member of Charlotte-based Peterson Associates. He graduated from N.C. State University and has 30 years of architectural experience in the Charlotte area, including 11 years in private practice.

Chapel Hill-based O'Brien/Atkins Associates has named Ernest R. Bessent, AIA; James W. Mason, AIA; and Kenneth C. Mayer Jr., AIA, firm associates. Bessent, with O'Brien/Atkins since 1977, is a graduate of Auburn University. Mason joined the firm in 1982 as a senior designer and holds an undergraduate architecture degree from Carnegie-Mellon and his master's from the University of California at Berkeley. Mayer, a project...
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CORRECTION:
The January/February 1986 issue of North Carolina Architect inadvertently deleted some updated information about N.C. State University School of Design. The bachelor of architecture degree phased out in 1972 was actually reestablished in 1982 "after several years of debate and planning." Also, the same program received renewed accreditation during 1985.
On the Right Track: Raleigh's Station Square

The architects who brought Raleigh's 19th century train station back to life liked the results so much they moved in themselves.

By Ellen Grisett
Photography by Rick Alexander

It's one thing for an architect to finish a project and feel that he has satisfied his client's needs. But it's unusual when the architect is so satisfied with the project that he decides to move into it himself.

That's exactly what happened when Charlotte-based Reg Narmour/The Architectural Group PA finished the renovation and "adaptive reuse" of a 60,000-square-foot, 19th century train station in downtown Raleigh. "We liked the space so much," says Gary Cline, managing partner of the firm's Raleigh office, "that we decided to occupy a downstairs office suite ourselves."

RN/TAG originally became involved in the Station Square project, as it is now called, in mid-1984 when White Oak Properties and the law firm of Graham & James—joint owners of the old train station—asked the firm to submit renovation drawings. The owners wanted office spaces for themselves on the 10,000-square-foot second floor and space developed downstairs for leasing to other companies.

Accordingly, RN/TAG drew up plans for a property management suite and a law office. The firm faced a number of challenges from the outset, however.

"This used to be a beautiful train station," says Cline, "but like other stations of that era, it later underwent what could be called 'remuddling' when the city put some of its offices in the building and other uses were made of it. The brick was veneered over two times, a beautiful tower was torn down, and additions over the years had changed the whole exterior look of the station."

Also, before the first two offices could be completed, the remainder of the building had to be redone to meet building and safety codes, which meant working on a number of areas within the structure at one time. And Graham & James and White Oak wanted to move in by early 1985, less than a year from the time RN/TAG was consulted about the project.

The architects decided that a fast-track approach to the renovation was called for,
Cline says that exterior changes are not as extensive as all parties involved would have liked. “We came up with a really elaborate plan, but we had to compromise,” he says. “The clients had a limited budget—$3.5 million, which included the purchase price of the building plus all outfitting of the building, interior and exterior—and really wanted more money spent on the interior rather than the exterior. So we made what changes we could basically using only paint, glass and awnings.”

While the expense of returning the train station to its original glory was too much to swallow at the time, RN/TAG has managed to impart a fresh yet still historical flavor to the exterior. The bulk of the building is minimized by the moth-gray paint that now covers the exterior. New large-paneled, floor-to-ceiling windows brighten the front of Station Square; other windows have been reglazed. The curve of the rust-red awning that stretches over the front of the building is repeated in the half-moon window over the main entrance. A smaller awning also accentuates the building’s second front entrance, which leads directly into a hallway punctuated by a dramatic staircase. During downstairs renovations, this second stairway was the only approach to the second-floor offices (there is now additional access through the primary front door), and RN/TAG’s treatment of the space needed to be strong enough to give the upstairs offices a downstairs identity. The soaring staircase both meets safety requirements for an additional fire exit, and conveys a sense of the second-floor’s importance to the first-floor visitor.

RN/TAG also handled interior design of the two second-floor offices, which feature oak columns and trim, a widespread use of curves (in bulkheads, walls and furniture) and a freestanding elevator that divides the reception area from the waiting area and also acts as a sculptural focal point for the suites.

Graham & James and White Oak Properties moved into their new offices as scheduled, in January of 1985. Then the principals of RN/TAG took another look at the space downstairs and decided to take that project on themselves—for themselves.

Reg Narmour, head of the 70-person firm, says the move to Station Square was a logical one for his Raleigh office. “We had definitely outgrown the space we already had,” he says. “Plus, we liked the offices we’d already done, we liked the fact that the building had ample parking, and we liked downtown Raleigh.”

Again, the firm faced some major challenges in designing its own quarters, which measure 5,000 square feet (a court reporting firm occupies a small portion of the first floor, while yet another 3,000 square feet behind is unoccupied). The main entrance for the building needed to be larger and more dramatic, while still complementing the smaller secondary entrance. All renovation plans had to accommodate a massive wall that intersected the space near the back (the wall marked the spot where trains once pulled to a stop at the station). And there was a crying need for more light within the first-floor offices.

The owners of the building were “very accommodating of our needs for the space,” says Cline. “They agreed that we could install a big skylight and flares in the back, where the design room would be located. While many architects make their entries and executive offices very impressive for visitors and clients, then tend to ignore the back areas, we wanted both front and back to have equal design importance.”

The skylight, which extends to measure 20 by 20, does indeed bring a wealth
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of sunlight into the large design room to the rear of RN/TAG's space. The cordovan, cream and gray tones used in this room and others in the office harmonize with the colors used upstairs but are purposefully more dramatic, as befitting a company whose purpose is design and coloration. Again, some of the same elements used on the second floor are used in RN/TAG's offices—curved walls, oak columns—but there are also some subtle differences: for example, the natural oak trim on the second floor is painted downstairs.

Narmour estimates the total cost of gutting the 5,000-square-foot suite, then outfitting it to fit his firm's needs, to be "about $200,000."

The "new" quarters in Raleigh may be an indication of where Reg Narmour's heart actually lies: His firm is about to move its Charlotte headquarters from the newer SouthPark Mall area to a suite in the Commerce Center building downtown, built in 1958 and newly renovated. Narmour chuckles when asked if he prefers old to new buildings for this firm's offices.

"It looks that way, doesn't it? We do have a new office in Tampa, Fla.—new as in new construction—but yes, our Alexandria, Va. office is in a renovated munitions warehouse. And the Commerce Center is almost 30 years old."

He adds, "Maybe one reason why we're attracted to buildings like Station Square and Commerce Center is that they give us the opportunity to put some flair into our space, something a little different."

Not that RN/TAG is opposed to new construction. Some of the firm's recent projects include Bentley Oaks, a single-family detached residence development in suburban Charlotte; a multifamily development called Vineyard Point on Lake Norman; Wainright Professional Center office condominiums in Raleigh and Fairwinds, a cluster-home project in Cary.

Still, renovation and adaptive reuse seem to be challenges that Reg Narmour and his firm enjoy meeting. Drawings for one such project in the state—a farmer's market/retail shop complex in Fayetteville's old train station—were recently completed. An office building, BayView, built in 1958 in a busy section of Fort Lauderdale, is being adapted to current needs and uses by the firm. And space planning/interior design for older buildings is becoming one of RN/TAG's specialties.

Reg Narmour says he likes the direction in which his firm is moving. "Bigness was not my goal when I started this in 1974, but we've been lucky," he says. "After all, the year I set up the firm, we hit the recession—I'd have to have been lucky to last through that! But we've had good growth, consistent growth, since 1976. We've doubled our sales several times, we've opened three new offices—all autonomous—and our average project now runs about $7 million."

Still, he says, "To me, the most important thing is that most of our customers are repeat customers. We are proud of the fact that Martin Development, Paragon and Roland Gammon—who's head of White Oak Properties, the company that commissioned Station Square—have liked what we've done and come back to us for more work."

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