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Original Construction: 1848
Addition: 1985
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North Carolina's Changing Skylines

The state's five largest cities are taking on new shape as high-rise towers go up in Charlotte, Raleigh, Greensboro, Winston-Salem and Durham to proclaim a taller, progressive future.

A Close Association

North Carolina architects are translating the designs of out-of-state architects into steel, glass, stone and concrete—taking on much of the responsibility but enjoying little of the glory.

An Illusory Business

Model builders, plying their offbeat craft, help test building designs, put new structures into context, sell leases and recreate history—whatever can be scaled to fit.

The Charlotte Plaza with its dark fingers is a guidepost on the city skyline.

Cover: Sun glances off the First Union Tower in Charlotte, which now tops the skyline at 42 stories. Photo by Rick Alexander.
North Carolina’s Changing Skylines

Skylines are a city’s signature. They identify and they reveal.

Who has clout in the city? Look at the name on the silhouette in the sky. Which way to the important address? Follow the distinctive shape to its elegant lobby. A skyline office building can express a company’s image and build a company’s profit.

While North Carolina is not, overall, an urban state, its urban centers are growing taller. The five largest cities, each with a population over 100,000, are enjoying a surge of interest in downtown development.

High-rise office towers are not only reshaping the skylines. They are taking the center cities in new directions. New buildings are addressing the street as well as the sky—with landscaped public plazas, welcoming lobbies, restaurants and shops. Developers and architects are talking of master-planned urban complexes that link office space with parking garages, residential units, parks, retail shops, theaters and other activities. And much of the new development is carried out through public/private partnerships, in which governments develop plazas, cultural arts facilities, parking garages and civic centers that tie in with privately developed hotels and office complexes. Buildings are connecting with one another and parking decks with covered walkways and skyways.

Charlotte

The Charlotte skyline is a bit like North Carolina weather. If you don’t like it, just wait a minute; it’ll change. Charlotteans are seeing so many new tall buildings go up these days they’ve begun giving nicknames. There’s Darth Vader (the smoky Charlotte Plaza) and the Radio (the new First Union Tower with its console-like top). Soon the Radio, now the city’s tallest building, will be overshadowed by the King, the NCNB Corporate Center, which will be topped with a glass crown.

In Charlotte, the old is giving way to the new in huge chunks. An entire block at the heart of the city’s uptown—a block that included Charlotte’s oldest commercial building, the Merchants and Farmers National Bank Building—was demolished to make way for a new 66-story NCNB Corporate Center complex that is taking the city to new limits.

Gateways

One important part of the Queen City’s progressive new image is the $11 million Gateway Center, designed by Clark Tribble Harris and Li of Charlotte for Bissell Companies and NCNB Development Corp. This 10-story office tower, which opened last fall, marks the entrance to uptown Charlotte from I-77 on Trade Street, establishing an important first impression. The tower is the focal point of a master-planned urban complex that eventually will have landscaped areas with man-made lakes and residential units, as well as retail shops and restaurants, hotel and office buildings.

Clark Tribble Harris and Li used a pre-cast concrete exterior on Gateway Center that looks like limestone. A cylindrical prow lends architectural distinction to the building and commands for it a distinctive spot on the skyline. The corner site lent itself to a triangle-shaped design with large continuous spaces for large office users on the bottom five floors, each of which have 45,000 square feet. The building also has 30,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor. An interior courtyard will have large planters and a cascading waterfall.

Next to the office tower is a “Com pri,” a 186-room European-style hotel, also designed by Clark Tribble Harris and Li.

Gateway was planned for easy access to the center city without the concerns of heavy traffic. A free shuttle runs the six blocks from the building to The Square at Trade and Tryon.

Forming another gateway to the center city from the east on Independence Boulevard is the 400,000-square-foot Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center. The 14-story, $32-million building dedicated in May was designed by J.N. Pease Associates of Charlotte and is part of a 60-acre government complex that the firm has been involved in planning for 25 years. In addition to the Government Center, Pease has designed Marshall Park, a 1,030-car parking structure, the 1,000-square-foot Mecklenburg County Criminal Courts Building to be completed next year and the Mecklenburg County
Above: Gateway Center, left, and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, right, (photo by Gordon Schenck) serve as gateways to Charlotte's uptown. Right: The lobby of the First Union Tower glistens with marble and glass. Photo by Rick Alexander. Skyline photo, opposite page, by Mark Fortenberry.

Count Intake Center to be finished this summer.

The Government Center includes administrative and computer facilities, food services areas and a 250-seat Meeting Chamber. The building is a triangular tower covered in Spanish Rose granite that is situated to catch the angles of the sun and to create a strong image in the growing skyline.

The plaza is an integral part of the design, filling the triangle that's formed by the building's footprint. Trees are placed to reinforce the geometrical pattern, with benches and fountains located to complement a major work of art commissioned as part of the fountain design.

The Meeting Chamber is in the lower triangle, an area created by bisecting the large triangle. Wired like a television studio for complete electronic communication, the chamber is visible from the roadway and plaza and has entrances on all three sides to create the image of an open and accessible government seat.

**First Union Tower**

Now Charlotte's tallest building—for a brief time only—First Union Tower was built by the same team that did the 25-story Charlotte Plaza, which opened in 1981: JPJ Architects of Dallas in association with FWA Group of Charlotte. This 42-story, $120-million tower has 1.1 million square feet, a $10-million plaza and an underground parking deck for 1,200 cars.

The building has a series of stepped sections leading to a glass enclosed vault at the top (the radio-console shape) and is sheathed in alternating bands of red granite, imported from Finland, and glass. The massive lobby has arched entrances and is finished in marble and brass.

First Union Tower was developed by Trammell Crowe Co. and later picked up by Childress Klein Properties Inc., a new company formed by two former Trammell Crowe partners, Fred Klein and J. Donald Childress.

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Project: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
Architect and Engineer: J.N. Pease Associates, Charlotte
Client: City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County
Construction Manager: Metric Constructors, Inc., Charlotte
General Contractor: Algernon Blair, Montgomery, Ala.
Landscape Design: Arnold Associates, Princeton, N.J.

Project: First Union Tower
Architect: JPJ Architects, Dallas
Associate Architect: FWA Group, Charlotte
General Contractor: J.A. Jones Construction Co., Charlotte
Mechanical Engineer: Blum Consulting Engineers, Dallas
Structural Engineer: Nagler Pitt and Merritt Inc., Dallas

**Charlotte Plaza**

Located in the heart of uptown on South College Street, directly across from the civic center, the 27-story Charlotte Plaza is sheathed in reflective glass and mirrors, double-paned to provide an insulated envelope for energy efficiency. Designed by JPJ Ar-
The Square

The intersection of Tryon and Trade streets is the city's historical crossroads, its highest point physically and, as the center of trade, its spiritual axis.

Interstate Tower, designed by the nationally acclaimed firm of Kohn, Pederson & Fox in association with Odell Associates of Charlotte for Faison Associates, is near the southwest corner of the intersection, at the heart of intense new development in Charlotte—all of it coming within a five-year span.

The 32-story building is an imposing, classical design of limestone, granite and marble that sits next to a 12,000-square-foot city park. It is a

Project: Interstate Tower
Design Architect: Kohn, Pederson & Fox
Associate Architect: Odell Associates, Charlotte
Client: Faison Associates
highly articulated building that retains some of the more ornate facade work and cornice lines of older buildings.

The building rises to a series of steps that ends in a bronze and stainless steel metal dome, which accommodates the Charlotte City Club.

Retail space and a lobby at the pedestrian level are topped by eight levels of parking, then the office space above.

The city's biggest development by far is the $300-million NCNB Corporate Center designed by the renowned Cesar Pelli & Associates, with HKS of Dallas, for The Square. The complex, to be completed in 1992, includes 220 stories of NCNB office tower, which will rise nearly 220 stories taller than any existing building, and the complex—a hotel, a performing arts center and a retail area to be called Founders Hall.

The Tower will face Tryon Street, in the center of the block. Founders Hall will be directly behind it. To one side is the hotel and to the other the performing arts center, with a large 2,100-square-foot theater and a small 450-square-foot theater, rehearsal halls and state-of-the-art theater accessories. The theater is being designed in association with Middleton, McMillan, Architects, Inc. of Charlotte.

The building will sit opposite the old NCNB 40-story tower, which was the tallest building in North Carolina and South Carolina until the First Union Building was completed last year.

Carillon

The old Hotel Charlotte was imploded in November to make way for Carillon, an urban mixed-use development that is to include 530,000 square feet of office space in a 23-story building. In phase two of the project, the office tower will be joined by a 19-story hotel with 220 all-suite hotel rooms, the top six floors of which will be luxury residential condominiums selling from $250,000 to $600,000. The hotel will be connected with the office tower by a corridor containing a restaurant and retail shops. The project will occupy three-fourths of the city block bounded by West Trade, South Poplar, Church and West Fourth streets, one block from The Square.

In the past five years, the investment in downtown Raleigh in public, private and cooperative projects totals about $350 million. The figure includes parks and streetscape improvements, the renovation of a number of downtown buildings for office, retail and arts spaces and the development of residential projects. It also includes a surge of state government building, including plans for new museums of history and natural sciences and new Education and Revenue Department buildings. While much of the investment in Raleigh has been in historic places and buildings, it also includes some office towers and public buildings that will change the look of the city's skyline.

The Civic Center Complex

When the Fayetteville Street Mall was completed in 1976 and the 362-room Radisson Plaza Hotel was built in 1982 by the Canadian-based York-Hannover Development Company, the City of Raleigh made two pieces of land available flanking a Civic Center Plaza. It selected a proposal of York-Hannover to complete a Civic Center Complex with two office towers that, along with the high-rise CP&L Building and the 17-story Radisson, would define the plaza. The developer planned a parking garage under the plaza, while the city developed the plaza itself and retained air rights to it.

One Hannover Square, with 17 stories and 406,000 square feet of office space, was completed on the west side of the complex in 1986. A plain building, it was intended primarily as a background building to define the civic center space.
Construction has just begun on Two Hannover Square, which will soar 10 stories higher and present a more distinctive silhouette than the other buildings in the complex. Designed by Gruzen Samton Steinglass of New York, and being built in association with Haskins, Rice, Savage & Pearce, P.A., of Raleigh, the building is intended to provide the primary visual focus in the complex. It is 27 stories tall and has 470,000 square feet.

Of a rose-colored cast stone and polished granite, the building has a stepped shape that reinforces the vertical rise and provides architectural detailing on all sides of the building. The steps lead to a reflective metal cap, intended, says W. Tobin Savage, principal in charge, to serve as a figurative beacon to downtown Raleigh.

The pedestrian level of the building will include retail shops. Hotel meeting rooms at the intermediate level will be connected with a skylighted galleria to the Radisson. The 600-space parking deck beneath the Plaza connects the hotel, the two office buildings and the Civic Center. The investment in the three York-Hannover projects is about $140 million in private funds.

The completion of this complex will be marked also by an extensive $10 million renovation of the historic 1932 Memorial Auditorium, by Haskins, Rice, Savage & Pearce, scheduled for completion late this year.

The city's tallest buildings are now concentrated at the south end of the mall, but that is about to change. Southwind Development Co., which has purchased more than half of the 100 block of the mall, plans a 27-story First Union Tower for that block nearest the Capitol. The architect for the building, now in the design stage, is Stevens and Wilkinson Inc. of Atlanta.

Wake County Public Safety Center
A $52 million public safety center will join the Raleigh skyline with a tower that rises up to 17 stories out of the middle of the project. Located on two acres of land across from the county courthouse and a block west of the Fayetteville Street Mall, the project includes a 480-bed jail (the present jail houses 100), 300,000 square feet of county office space, an emergency medical area with room for eight ambulances and a three-story underground parking garage.

O'Brien/Atkins Associates, P.A., of Research Triangle Park, working with design consultant Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, P.C., of Washington, chose a pre-cast concrete exterior that picks up the light buff color of the Wake County Office Building across the street.

An overriding consideration in the design of the building, says project architect Kenn Gardner, was the cost of security—a figure that is far more significant over the life of the facility than the cost of the building. To minimize the number of guards required, each of the jail's five stories will have four double-stacked quadrants of cells coming off a central control center and dayroom. A tunnel connects the courthouse with the public safety center for the transfer of inmates.

Although designed to contain people, this public safety center does have a friendly public face, with a plaza facing Salisbury Street and a two-story atrium lobby with skylight.

The Wake County Public Safety Center is designed to fit in with the government complex in scale and color tone.
A Close Association

Bob Kellner of Odell Associates Inc. doesn’t like the title “associate architect,” because he doesn’t think it reflects the responsibility that goes with the job.

“The insinuation is that the associate is doing something less than the designer,” Kellner said. “More often than not, the associate architect really does quite a bit more of the work and has a higher amount of the fee dollars, depending on the capabilities of the design firm and how the contract is written.”

Odell Associates plays it both ways. In Greensboro, for instance, Odell designed and is fully responsible for the First Union Tower under construction. In Charlotte, the firm is the associate architect with design architects Kohn, Pederson & Fox on the Interstate Tower.

Often a client will turn to a well-known designer because his name lends prestige to the work, so the designer naturally gets top billing. But the associate architect also has influence on the design and shares much of the responsibility for making it happen.

A major project calls on the talents of a number of people—engineers, contractors, planners, as well as architects—and its success, ultimately, depends on a smoothly operating team. And the job of pulling the elements together generally falls to the associate architect.

“It requires a lot of teamwork, real cooperation to pull it off,” said W. Tobin Savage of Haskins, Rice, Savage & Pierce, P.A., the associate architects for Two Hannover Square in Raleigh, designed by Gruzen Samton Steinlass of New York.

“Our firm and local consultants have a similar responsibility for some of the design, all of the construction documents and all the construction administration of the project,” Savage said. “We provide liaison with local agencies and authorities, as necessary. The whole team works on a CAD system, and with the availability of the new fax machines we are in constant touch with each other.”

The Hannover project is partially fast-tracked, meaning that construction is begun before the building is completely designed. As one stage is under construction, the associate architect works with the contractor and the design team to complete the next stage.

“That’s where the local team comes into play a great deal,” Savage said. “Making this work just requires real good communications. If somebody forgets the fact that we are a team, that’s when the trouble arises.”

Harry Sherrill of The FWA Group, the associate architect for Charlotte Plaza and the First Union Tower in Charlotte, both designed by JPI Architects of Dallas, said an associate architect brings to the team an understanding of the local code. Because the state is in the early stages of high-rise construction, the codes governing it have been developed piecemeal, borrowing from several other established codes. That makes it difficult for out-of-state architects, Sherrill said.

The role of the associate architect can vary, depending on the contractual arrangement and the involvement of the particular players. “We really try to assimilate ourselves as part of the team,” Sherrill said. “We are involved in the day-to-day operations. Once construction starts, especially on the high-rise buildings, it is a constant involvement. On the Charlotte Plaza, we were doing a floor a week. At that rate, we started at 5 in the morning on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, with concrete placement and worked until 6 or 7 at night.”

The associate architect also is the person on hand to interpret design plans, review shop drawings, select materials, sign off on jobs and approve changes and applications for payment. Sherrill said.

Kellner said that some architectural firms work better in association than others. “The national design firms that have done a great deal of association are quite good at it. Their understanding of the roles is more clear,” he said. “If you snap a line between the two roles, it is less successful than if you have overlap on both sides.”

Kellner likens an architectural project to a symphony. Like a musical composition, the best designs really come from a singular mind or a small group of people, but it takes a collective effort to pull it off.

“One person writes the music, but to make it work takes an orchestra,” Kellner said. “And to make all the pieces of the orchestra come together at the right time in the right way, it takes a conductor.”

Increasingly, North Carolina architects are cast in the role of associate architects, as clients capitalize on the high visibility and marketability that a name like Cesar Pelli can bestow on a project.

While some are concerned that rich regional influences are neglected when out-of-state designers are brought in, Kellner said he believes the capabilities of architects transcend local boundaries.

“We are problem-solvers,” he said. “You don’t have to live somewhere your whole life to understand the social context. . . . Many times an outsider’s fresh look at something reveals something the insider has overlooked.

“It’s like the out-of-town developer who finds a great piece of land that, for any number of reasons, has been overlooked by local people for years. He buys it and puts up a wonderful project. The local people had so many reasons not to do something that they didn’t see the reason to do it.”
The Greensboro skyline looks like the city’s been overtaken by giant metal birds. Higher than the existing buildings, three large cranes mark the points of change in the shape of the city.

In addition to three new office towers, which will become the city’s tallest buildings, an $8-million cultural arts center is being formed from a renovation involving five old and one new buildings; it will include indoor and outdoor performing areas and a sculpture garden. The Greensboro Historical Museum is getting a $2.2-million face lift and new wing. And a city-funded human services complex is being formed from two old buildings linked with a gable. In addition, the city is spending $2 million in streetscape improvements and is building two new parking decks, a 433-space garage for $3.2 million at Church and Mebane streets that connects through an open galleria to the cultural arts center and a 1,276-car deck for $9 million at Elm and Bellemeade streets.

All these projects have pulled together to give downtown Greensboro new focus, possibly even shifting its center a few blocks to the north, where most of the new development is taking place.

First Union Tower

The First Union Tower, with 21 stories, finishes out a block bordered by Bellemeade, Greene, Elm and Lindsay streets with the work of Odell Associates of Charlotte. Odell designed the Southern Life Center, with 10 stories, and the Sheraton Hotel, with 11 stories, which take up the rest of the block.

Quite different from the other buildings, the $42 million office tower emphasizes its vertical lines with three pairs of masts consisting of punched-window elements clad in stone rising to the top floor. The heavy masts stand in sharp relief against glass curtain walls which end in a metal triangular cap.

The building was designed to avoid trendy detailing and to suggest instead economy of means, strength and timelessness, according to designers William Ernest and Steve Oxley of Odell. It

Project: First Union Tower, Greensboro
Architect: Odell Associates, Charlotte
Developer: Cousins Properties Inc., Atlanta
Owner: North Greene Street Associates, a limited partnership consisting of Cousins Properties Inc. and a partnership in which Greensboro developer/contractor H. Michael Weaver is the general partner.
General Contractor: Holder Construction Co., Atlanta

The building will be linked by covered walkways to a 750-car parking garage and to the adjacent Sheraton Hotel. A plaza ties together all three of the buildings in the block.

Renaissance Plaza

This $30 million, 19-story office tower at the southeastern corner of North Elm and Bellemeade streets will have 303,000 square feet and a 320-space parking deck. The building was positioned at a 45-degree angle to the corner it sits on, allowing for outdoor plazas that relate to the new cultural arts complex across the street, said Wesley Wong of HKS Inc. of Dallas, the architectural firm that designed the building.

The front of the building features a number of bay windows or corner offices with a view down Elm Street. The other facades are of reflective bronze glass, horizontally banded with polished Loyal Valley granites. The building has a three-story base and is stepped back at the 16th and 29th floors to create balconies. The first two levels will have restaurants facing onto the plaza, possibly with outdoor

Three new buildings transform Greensboro’s downtown: First Union Tower, left; Renaissance Plaza, right; and Jefferson-Pilot Building, opposite page. Skyline photo, at top of page, by Joseph Rodriguez.
seating. The two-story lobby is flanked by fountains.

The parking garage is finished in the same granite as the building, and the front is masked by a trapezoidal structure, the site for a restaurant. The building, which will be finished in late August, will house the regional headquarters for Wachovia Bank & Trust, United Guaranty Corp., several law firms and others. The project was developed by Richardson Corporation of Greensboro and Capital Associates of Raleigh. It is owned by Irving Partners, a partnership of Richardson Corp., Capital Associates, United Guaranty Corp., and Greensboro attorney Sidney Stern.

**Jefferson-Pilot Building**

A 20-story tower, this building owned by Jefferson Pilot Corporation backs up to the old Jefferson Standard building with only a foot of space in between. Architects Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart and Associates have repeated the vertical lines and arches of the old Romanesque Revival-style building and picked up significant horizontal lines. The new building's pre-cast concrete exterior is nearly an exact match for the granite on the old building. At the point at which the old building ends, the new tower steps back and tapers to a pointed roof.

This $40-million tower, including a 600- to 800-space parking garage, has 750,000 square feet of office space.

The new building has a three-story rotunda lobby, with a cafeteria on the third level that overlooks the lobby and connects with the old building.

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**Winston-Salem**

Winston-Salem probably has the best-known skyline in North Carolina, passed by tens of thousands of travelers from within and outside the state every day on Interstate 40. It includes one of the state's first skyscrapers, the 20-story R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company tower, with its Empire State Building shape and its lighted beacon on top. Now the view is dominated by a blue glass tower that was designed with the interstate in mind to carve a new entrance to the city.

**Triad Park**

A 1960s urban renewal project cleared about 8.8 acres of land formerly built up in dilapidated warehouses and commercial buildings in downtown Winston-Salem.

In 1983, the city adopted a plan presented by the Webb Companies of Lexington, Ky., to develop this “superblock” into a lively urban complex that would serve as a gateway into the city from the interstate. The developer, Dudley Webb, argued that a dramatic building was required to change public perception of this property, which for decades has served only as level parking lots. The first building, Webb said, had to make a symbolic statement, an announcement that the center of the city was shifting. He called for a building with “pizzazz.”

Walter Robbs Callahan & Pierce of Winston-Salem (formerly Hammill-Walter Associates), with consulting architect Sherman Carter Barnhart of Lexington, Ky., responded with a 19-story, eight-sided monolith with a reflective glass and faceted façade. The $14-million building with 270,000 square feet was completed in 1986. One Triad Park has three exterior glass elevators that overlook downtown, a two-story lobby with a fountain pool and skylights, and Italian marble at the entrance.
The project includes a 600-car underground parking deck topped with a plaza that connects to a lower level by means of a 60-by-18-foot cascading waterfall. The upper level has a 60-by-120-foot reflecting pool surrounded by landscaped walkways, while the lower level features water steps and a large open lawn.

The building was designed to address the interstate and to market the building,” Callahan said. “It was designed to symbolically change the entrance to the city.”

But the building and plaza were not intended to stand alone, Callahan noted. Groundbreaking for Triad Park West, the second phase in the Webb Companies development, is set for this fall. This project is intended to add critical mass and animation to Triad Park. Also under way is a city-funded Strollway, a pedestrian and trolley system linking historic Old Salem with the Winston-Salem business district, along the eastern edge of Triad Park West.

The new building will have a five-story office base covering virtually all of its 1.5 acre site. Rising from that will be an additional nine-story office tower and possibly, at a later time, a four-story residential tower. The new building will have two street levels of retail space, both along the Strollway and Cherry Street, supported by underground parking, and should enliven what once was an abandoned area of Winston-Salem’s downtown.

North Carolina’s fifth city is growing up—fast. What was a square of dilapidated commercial buildings has been turned into a $24 million downtown civic center complex. A new office tower, with its twin still to come, now dominates the skyline. And the site of an old cotton mill is being turned into a major office tower, plazas and market places.

The civic center/hotel complex is a public/private venture designed by Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart & Associates of Atlanta. The 191-room hotel is connected with atriums to the 70,000-square-foot convention center. In the same square, the Durham Arts Council and Carolina Theater are getting a $13-million renovation and expansion and a large public plaza.

Durham Centre

Across Morgan Street from the busy civic center complex is Durham’s tallest building, a 15-story office tower, with 20,000 square feet per floor, developed as part of a $32-million office complex in a joint venture of The Webb Companies of Lexington, Ky., and Franklin Wittenberg of Durham.

Clark Tribble Harris & Li, Archi-
projects, of Charlotte designed Durham Centre as a twin-tower complex, with one tower presenting a mirror image of the other. The first of the two 15-story towers was completed last year.

The complex is built on two blocks that span a street that was closed for the project. The first tower, with 220,000 square feet, serves as the corporate offices of Peoples Security Life Insurance Co., whose name now graces the skyline just below the building's steel pyramid-shaped top, which is softly lit at night.

The color of the red granite from Finland used at the plaza is repeated in pre-cast panels at the upper levels, forming seamless horizontal bands with the deep blue glass. The core tower is of reflective glass. Inside, a lobby atrium picks up the geometric pattern of the roof design and the exterior colors in a polished red granite floor, cherry paneled walls and stainless steel accents. Several floors have landscaped garden terraces.

The tower sits on a three-level, 800-car parking garage that is city owned and operated. It is topped with a plaza with intricate paving patterns and fountains and pools. The architects dressed up the parking garage by using the same pre-cast panels on it as are used on the building and by flanking the Morgan Street side with two three-story belvedere towers and a waterfall cascading onto the street.

Erwin Square

Just west of downtown Durham, the 10-story First Union Plaza office tower, with a two-story wing and a three-level parking deck, is going up as the first phase in an extensive mixed-use development on 37 acres of land. The office tower is to be completed by the end of this year, the first of four towers planned for the site.

The proposal by Seched Development Corp. calls for a total of 1.5 million square feet of housing, retail and office space overlooking the Durham Freeway, with liberal use of plazas and fountains.

The site is contiguous to the 10 acres of land already developed into 250,000 square feet of office, retail and residential space that includes the original Erwin Cotton Mills.

The master plan includes four 10-story office and hotel towers in all, linked with two-story buildings for retail shops and residential units. Throughout, there are large landscaped plazas with fountains.

Designed by the Atlanta architectural firm of Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart and Associates, which also did the Omni and the Civic Center, the buildings in the plan have a rose-beige Italian granite facade and classic lines with pointed arches. They are intended to blend with the historic buildings of nearby Duke University and renovated Ninth Street retail shops. The landscape design is being done by Edward D. Stone Associates of Durham, one of the tenants of the office tower.

Durham Centre took Durham's skyline to new heights. Photo of Durham skyline, opposite page, is by John Elkins Photography.

A site plan of Erwin Square, a mixed-use development near downtown that is to include four 10-story office towers.
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An Illusory Business

"Plastics," urged the man at the cocktail party honoring Dustin Hoffman's graduation in the movie "The Graduate." "The future is plastics."

Rebecca Fuller of Winston-Salem, owner of RAF Models and Displays, is reminded of that scene when she considers the curvy path her career has taken from a fine arts education in sculpture to making toy pieces at Mattel to building architectural models. Plastics paved her way.

Plastics allow, for instance, to make models sturdy enough to acquaint the blind with the shapes and details of the historic bath houses in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

What's new in model building today includes synthetic materials, high-tech methodologies and equipment and an array of new tricks and devices. It includes new ways to put models to use. But the most important tool in this small-scale industry is adaptability—an ability to come up with the solutions the market demands.

And a market that supports major new construction in all the major cities of the state is a healthy one for model builders.

"A lot of economic growth has helped the whole industry," says Mark Cole of Noah's Studios in Charlotte. "And we sort of live and die with the whole industry."

While there still is a place for the paper models architects use to try out their designs—models that can be readily snipped and trimmed—model builders say they more often find themselves working for the developer these days than for the architect.

"At our place," said Cole, who has a degree in architecture from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, "a lot of the models are for developers who are trying to create an image of a project they are developing that has not yet been built. From this, they can sell space in their buildings to tenants. It's a powerful marketing tool."

Because the needs of the client dictate what kind of model is built, Noah's markets its product accordingly. Typically, said Michael Verruto, one of Noah's founders, the architect orders up the model and bills the developer for it. The model then becomes the developer's property, but it may or may not fit his needs.

Models range in price from $1,000 to $100,000, depending on size, the degree of detail and a number of other factors. Noah's marketing approach is to get in on a project at the beginning and to sell both the architect and the developer a package of models that meet the needs of each—possibly several small paper models for the architect during the design phases and a full-scale detailed model for the developer to use as a marketing tool.

"That way people aren't paying me to do something on a $50,000 machine unless that machine is doing something special," Verruto said.

As a marketing tool, the more realistic the model, the better. "These are high image models, with lots of detail," said Linda Pass, a free-lance model builder in Winston-Salem. Pass, who has a degree in industrial design and served an apprenticeship with a Dallas model-builder, said she works almost exclusively in plastics. "It's more durable. You can finish it in a way that you can't even tell how you made it."

One of the most fully utilized models she has made, she said, was for an
unbuilt subdivision. Her model of the site shows each lot in relation to streets, hills, woods, neighbors. The model has been in the developer's office for three years. As a lot is sold, a sold sign goes on the model. When a house goes up on the real lot, one is added to the model.

A model she built for the Greensboro Historical Museum has been used to raise funds for the museum's renovation and addition.

Eddie DeRhodes, the E of ESP Model Builders of Charlotte, said his company has worked on several jobs with artists, putting models of their sculptures into a context that helps others see how it will actually look on the site. They also have been asked to do legal models, site models to be taken into court to help settle disputes.

DeRhodes launched ESP just eight months ago with partners Steven Assante and Pat Gillon. All three had worked for Clark Tribble Harris and Li, where DeRhodes ran the model shop. "We knew each other's special talents and skills and ability to work together," he said. All three have degrees in architecture.

Bill Cotton, an owner with Ed Allen of Scale Model and Display Studio in Raleigh, agrees that realism is in. "We see the trend as going away from the stylized. It's easier to sell if it's a small version of the real thing."

Beach condos are more appealing if there is surf in the picture, so Cotton said there is a constant effort to improve the ways of making surf that is realistic—say with a mix of glue and tiny glass bubbles.

Models also sell ideas. A model by Scale Model and Display of proposed renovations for Memorial Auditorium in Raleigh helped convince people the design would work. The architects, Haskins, Rice, Savage & Pearce, knew they would meet some resistance, Cotton said, because the design called for a new facade on the historic building. People who showed up for a public hearing to oppose the plan, however, ended up supporting it when they saw that it left the old facade intact and repeated its architectural elements in the new one.

Fuller's work with the Hot Springs...
Above: A model of the renovated Memorial Auditorium by Scale Model and Display Studios helped sell the project. Right: ESP Models shows The Moorings, a condominium complex on Lake Norman.

so small that five split rails equal the diameter of a toothpick.

An artist, not a scientist, Fuller said she calls a cooperative chemist at Ciba-Geigy when she wants to know about the properties of a synthetic and how to work with it.

“Real often, I end up doing things I haven’t done before,” she said. “All this experience has given me is that I know how to fix things when they screw up. It’s not that things always go right.”

That’s the very essence of model building, says Mike Verruto of Noah’s.

“Technology for model builders across the country is doing something wrong and it works,” he said, “cutting broom sticks to get columns.”

Take photochemical milling. What that is, basically, is taking a computer technology whereby acid is used to eat away from a picture to get a computer circuit and putting it to work making tiny hand-rails and trees.

“It’s extremely challenging,” DeRhodes said. “It’s still design work to me. We are still having to work out problems the architect has come up with. We are still in the profession, still in the design industry. And I enjoy it more than being on a drafting board.”

bath houses calls for building models that can be handled—and not carefully. The U.S. Park Service wanted tactile models for the park office that were accurate and realistic but sturdy enough to allow blind people to feel them. One is a geological model showing how the continent folds to form fault lines and hot springs. Others are of the intricately detailed bath houses, one of which has an Indian head over a door that on the model is the size of the end of a thumb.

Since attached details would come loose with repeated handling, Fuller had to cast the entire mold, once the details were in place, in a durable plastic—“the same stuff Cuisinart’s made of. It doesn’t shatter when it drops.”

For an exhibit at historic Bethabara near Winston-Salem, Fuller had to delve into diaries and old maps to figure out the dimensions of the early settlement. For the model, she found tiny figures from Germany—a woman hanging up clothes with folds in them, people working in the fields—and built a balsa wood split rail fence
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Character Building

It would be hard to guess which of the buildings going up today will be standing 50 or 100 years from now. Who can imagine which structures could rally a public cry for preservation if threatened with implosion?

Across the state, there are buildings that a person can, with confidence, expect to see 50 years from now. These are buildings that influence the design of new buildings going up around them. These are buildings that have endured.

Here is a look at three buildings that may be called timeless.

The North Carolina State Capitol, Raleigh

In 1840, when the Commissioners for Rebuilding the Capitol completed their job, they wrote a prophetic report:

"It will remain for Centuries, an object of just & becoming pride, as a noble monument of the taste & liberality of the present generation."

Today, a century and a half later, this Greek Revival structure still houses the Governor’s office and greets about 120,000 visitors a year. And many find no argument with the commissioners’ extravagant praise so long ago that this is a building "which for solidity & beauty of material, uniform faithfulness of execution, and for Architectural design, is not surpassed, if indeed equalled, by any building in the Union."

The building is cross-shaped, centering on a domed rotunda where the wings join. The exterior walls are of gneiss, a form of granite that was quarried in southeastern Raleigh and hauled to the site on the horse-drawn Experimental Rail Road. The interior walls are of stone and brick. The massive, original wooden truss system still carries the roof.

Its architectural history is far less stable than the building has proved to be.

William Nichols, Jr., who had designed an extensive renovation and expansion of the Capitol in 1820, was pressed back into duty after the building was destroyed by fire in 1831. Nichols was responsible for many of the architectural features associated with an American state house—the portico, dome, rotunda and legislative chambers in balanced wings. He repeated the design in four other state houses himself, and his work was copied by others.

But on the rebuilding, Nichols was succeeded by Ithiel Town and Alexander Jackson Davis of New York, one of the nation’s principal architectural firms. This firm was stuck with Nichols’ basic design but transformed it by adding porticos on the east and west front. David Paton, a builder from Edinburgh, Scotland, had been hired as construction superintendent on the Capitol and, in 1835, was named the architect. He moved the Supreme Court Room and the State Library Room from the second to the third floor, added public galleries in the legislative chambers and introduced the galleried opening between the first and second levels of the rotunda.

The Capitol was completed finally in 1840, one of the last buildings to be built by human hand and animal strength. It cost a staggering $533,000 at a time when the state’s yearly tax revenues were no more than $150,000.

The new Museum of History under construction across Edenton Street from the Capitol will repeat its vertical and horizontal lines in a contemporary building. A proposal for a 27-story First Union Tower on the Fayetteville Street Mall just south of the Capitol includes extensive studies of shadows to demonstrate it will not keep this North Carolina showpiece in the dark. At the same time, plans for a monument to war veterans that would dominate the north entrance were approved initially with barely a murmur but are now under assault. (See story, page 24.)

The R.J. Reynolds Building, Winston-Salem

When this building turned 50 years old in 1979, it got a birthday card from the Empire State Building that said, "Happy Birthday, Dad."

For the architectural firm of Shreve and Lamb of New York, the 22-story Reynolds Building was a scale model of sorts for the Empire State Building, which was built two years later. It has the same sharply vertical lines, rising in stepbacks to a tower—a design feature seen in several office towers under construction in the state today.

Completed in 1929 at a cost of $2.7 million, the building was Winston-Salem’s first skyscraper and the tallest building between Richmond and Atlanta. It was not eclipsed in Winston-Salem until 1965, when the 30-story Wachovia Building was built.
The design utilized a revolutionary new technique called curtain wall construction, in which a stone facing is hung on a steel frame that bears the building's load. It was an early expression of a new freedom in architecture that could take buildings to unlimited heights. The building featured massive doors and intricate grill work, marble, fanciful gold and silver "smoke rings" on the entry ceiling, nickel-silver elevator doors and patterned terrazzo and marble flooring.

In 1982, Walter Robbs Callahan & Pierce Architects (then Hammill-Walter Associates) did an interpretive restoration of the building's art deco lobby and street facade that won several national awards. The lobby was redesigned to create a large reception and waiting area and an exhibition hall where historical exhibits of the company and period art exhibits are housed. In 1987, the firm completed renovations of the executive levels for the tobacco company, floors 10, 18, 19 and 20.

In connection with the lobby renovation, Walter Robbs Callahan & Pierce designed Reynolds Plaza, a 16-story office building that is connected to the historic building by a gallery and outdoor plaza. The client specified that the building was not to be taller than the older building. The new building picks up the color of the tower's limestone facade in pre-cast concrete and repeats the vertical window treatment.

Although other buildings have grown up around it, the Reynolds tower, softly lighted at night, remains one of the state's most familiar landmarks, a building symbolically connected to its city.

The Jefferson Standard Building, Greensboro

When it opened in 1923, it was described in a brochure as "Italian Renaissance style with a touch of the Roman classic period to lend additional dignity." Today it's regarded as a well-preserved example of the Romanesque Revival architecture that was popular in the high-rolling 1920s, with elements of art deco. Throughout the years, the 17-story home office of the old Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Co. has served as the centerpiece of downtown Greensboro and gained in stature as the building to which other downtown structures must relate.

The building was designed by architect Charles Hartman of the New York firm of Warren and Wetmore. He had worked 10 years on Grand Central Station. But he moved to Greensboro at the bidding of Julian Price, the president of Jefferson Standard, to design the new headquarters. He died in 1978 in Greensboro, at the age of 88.

The intricate details of the skyscraper's facade were hand carved by craftsmen out of terra cotta on granite. Built at a time when less was not enough, it features elegant interior details such as hand-laid marble tiles, brass doorknobs bearing the JSL monogram, a paneled board room, large black-and-white marble squares on the lobby floor, Rosetta marble walls, and wooden elevator doors bearing a silhouette of Thomas Jefferson.

Preceding by several years the R.J. Reynolds Tower, this skyscraper rising 215 feet high was a bold reach. It was designated a national landmark in 1976 and described as "an exotic combination of classical, Romanesque, gothic and art deco elements." It remained the city's tallest building for 66 years, until recent construction, including the rise of its sister building, eclipsed it.

The old Jefferson Building was built for $2.5 million. The new companion building, with a parking garage that repeats the arches of the buildings, will cost $40 million.

The new Jefferson-Pilot Building, its name reflecting the company's merger with Pilot Life in 1986, sits back to back with the old, connected on the upper and lower floors with hallways. At 330 feet, or 20 stories, this building will share the tip of the Greensboro skyline with two other new buildings. But it will retain the arches and graceful lines of its predecessor in its facade of pre-cast concrete.

The lines of the old Jefferson Standard Building in Greensboro are being recast in new materials for the new Jefferson-Pilot Building.

The R.J. Reynolds tower, a symbol of tobacco's dominant role in Winston-Salem. Right: 1982 renovations to the lobby. Photo by Otto Baitz.
Monumental Concerns

When the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated $150,000 in matching funds for a memorial to Vietnam veterans to be placed on the grounds of the Capitol, it anticipated the desires of other veterans and set aside $450,000 to memorialize the veterans of World War I, World War II and Korea.

Some folks in Raleigh are now wondering if the legislature created a monster or just a monstrous monument. The veterans of the three wars pooled their resources and gained legislative approval for a single monument to be placed on the Capitol grounds with the approval of a Veterans' Memorial Commission. The proposal that got the nod is a 42-foot-high obelisk that would reach up to the sills of the third-story windows of the Capitol. Since then, objections to the plan have ranged from its height and placement at the north entrance to the Capitol to its cliched and outdated design.

In mid-May, the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects found that the monument is strikingly similar to one in Budapest, Hungary, that commemorates the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in 1945. Both are obelisks bearing a female figure in a flowing gown holding a palm frond over her head. The bases of both hold a semi-circle of flagpoles. The chief difference is that the Budapest monument is more than 100 feet taller.

The artist, Richard Amlung of Bear Creek in Chatham County, says he has never seen the Budapest monument and that any similarities are purely coincidental.

Leaders of the NCAIA, however, hold that the resemblance between the two designs, coincidental or not, provides still another reason for the legislature to take a fresh look at a memorial that may prove to be a monumental mistake.

The NCAIA Executive Committee issued a statement calling for a new competition in which a program, design, size and site are more clarified. The NCAIA also suggested that a jury composed of architects, landscape architects, planners, and historians join the present jury of veterans.
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An Open Letter to Russell Baker

John Erwin Ramsay, FAIA, the founder of Ramsay Associates of Salisbury, has designed and managed projects encompassing hundreds of thousands of square feet over a 40-year period. He is past president of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards; served 10 years, six as president, of the North Carolina Board of Architecture; served on the Educational Testing Services' Committee on Examinations for framing national examinations for architectural registration; and is a past president of the NCAIA.

By John Erwin Ramsay

Why do the architects of our Forested Acres Centers and Vast Eyesore Malls never pause in their woodland slaughters long enough to say, “If we leave a dozen of these fine old shade trees standing, I’ll bet they’ll keep enough sun off this asphalt to hold the temperature under 120 at the height of the drought season”? This led to other questions. For instance, why do Americans hate lawyers so much when architects are doing far more than lawyers can to make the country unlivable?

Another instance: You can make a good case that a high percentage of lawyers are doing worthwhile service to the country, but who can name three architects who, if hanged, would be a loss to the public?

—Russell Baker
July 23, 1988

Shortly after Russell Baker published this column, John Erwin Ramsay, FAIA, of Salisbury, wrote Baker, asking him to reconsider his attack. After waiting several months for a reply and receiving none, he offers this condensed version of his correspondence in the hope “that not only Mr. Baker will benefit from its content.”

Share your thoughts on subjects architectural or remotely related. Send manuscripts (800 words or less), your photograph and a brief biography to North Carolina Architecture, AIA Tower, 115 W. Morgan St., Raleigh, N.C. 27601.

Mr. Russell Baker
The New York Times
229 W. 43rd St.
New York, N.Y. 10036

Dear Mr. Baker:

Since returning from World War II, I have, in fat years and lean, met a payroll and all other business obligations without pay checks from larger firms, industry or government. I probably have planted, or been responsible for planting, far more trees than I have been required to remove for buildings—including the design of parking lots with shade trees, shrubbery and perennials. All the architects that I know make a supreme effort to save every tree they can.

How many trees have you planted, Mr. Baker? How many trees have the printing industries planted to compensate for the millions in pulp wood that go into the newprint that carries your column?

There seem to be some things that you and many others do not understand about architecture. I shall attempt to clarify a few.

An architect is the rare artist who seldom has the opportunity to paint his picture the way he would like. The reason? There are others with a hand on his brush.

First among the others is the building developer, who operates with profit foremost in priority, under the new Golden Rule: “He who has the gold makes the rule.”

Second is the owner who, much too often, has million-dollar ideas and a half-million or less to build, aided and abetted by the national economy and by the banker who wants more to loan the money that the architect gets in fees.

Third are the unlicensed people who are allowed to nip away at architectural practice without knowledge or training. “There is hardly anything in this world that some man cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper,” John Ruskin once noted, “and the people who consider price alone are this man’s lawful prey.”

Fourth is the engineer, who may be qualified to build tunnels, bridges, highways, hydroelectric plants and the like for the housing of machines. He should not, however, stretch his qualifications to house people and to the design of church, apartments, stores, trading centers, residences, etc.

There is the architect who, as his own worst enemy, becomes so hungry that he prostitutes his profession by placing greater value on profit than on the basic professional principle—his obligation to serve the consumer’s best interest ahead of profit. Fortunately, most well-educated architects who find the profession unprofitable conclude that selling building products or other endeavors are more rewarding than working under the
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MILESTONES
William Stewart Rogers, a founder, past president and chairman of the board of Six Associates Inc. in Asheville, died Feb. 19 at the age of 82. A native of Wilmington, Rogers was a graduate of Duke and Harvard Universities and held a master's degree in architecture.

Rogers retired from Six Associates in 1977, where he had been principal in charge of design and construction of numerous buildings at Duke University, UNC-Asheville and installations for the Corps of Engineers at Fort Bragg and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base. In Asheville, his projects included industrial plants for Gerber, Square D, Kearfott, Taylor Instruments, United Merchants & Manufacturers, Asheville Airport and its terminal building, Fullerton Wing at Memorial Mission Hospital and Buncombe County Social Services Building.

IN THE WORKS
Clark Tribble Harris & Li of Charlotte was selected as architect by NCNB Real Estate Fund for the 125,000-square-foot, six-story Center Oak Building in Oakhill Business Park in Charlotte; by the Board of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County for the Sharon Regional Branch Library in Morrocroft; by Binswanger Southern for interior and exterior renovation of the 20-year-old, 15-story Wachovia Building in Greensboro; by Gulf + Western for major renovation of Madison Square Garden in New York City; for revitalization of the downtown mall area by the City of Spartanburg, S.C.

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John Knight Architecture of Charlotte will serve as architect and interior designer for a new 1,300-square-foot store for Taylor Richards & Conger, formerly King Bostrom, a men's clothing store at Specialty Shops on the Park. The firm also was named architect of record for the interior design of the new Dilworth City Grill.

The FWA Group of Charlotte will provide architecture, interior architecture and graphic design services for the clubhouse at Laurel Creek Country Club, a private golf and executive recreational club in historic Moores- town, N.J. The 48,000-square-foot clubhouse will be on a heavily wooded track overlooking an 18-hole golf course designed by professional golfer Arnold Palmer and his firm, Palmer Course Design Company.

Architects Tidson Associates, Inc., of Raleigh will work in association with North Hills Inc. to provide space planning and interior design for the newly completed Weston I, which is located in the Weston PUD of Cary. Weston I will have 240,000 square feet of prime office space.

Omnia Architecture of Charlotte is designing and landscaping two new 40,000-square-foot, office-showroom buildings at SouthPoint Business Park in Charlotte.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

A residence designed by Dail Dixon & Associates, Architects of Chapel Hill has been selected to appear in the spring 1989 Fine Homebuilding Annual Issue on Houses. The residence of Bob and Mary Peet is one of 10 houses featured in this third annual special issue.

Wilber, Kendrick, Workman & Warren, Inc., of Charlotte received an Award of Merit from the Southern Baptists Sunday School Board's church architecture department for the design of the worship center of First Baptist Church, Charlotte. The group praised the design for making excellent use of a limited site.

Clark Tribble Harris & Li of Charlotte won the Charlotte Clean City Committee's Grand Prize for Building Design for the Rotunda, a 200,000-square-foot building for The Bissell Companies.
For the third consecutive year, the Asheville Area Section of the NCAIA has served as regional sponsor for the Scholastic Art Awards Programs. In that time, the number of entries has grown from 350 to 800. Students compete for prizes ranging from $100 cash to $4,000 in scholarships.

NAMEs AND CHANGES IN NORTH CAROLINA ARCHITECTURE

Gross Harbinson + Associates of Charlotte has become Gross Associates on the departure of Jeff Harbinson, who has elected to relocate his family to the Long Island area near family members. The firm’s offices will remain at 3040 One First Union Center.

The firm has promoted R. Timothy Middleton to Director of CADD Operations, a new service of Gross Associates.

Thomas F. Brady has joined the Greensboro office of RS&H of North Carolina, Inc., as director of quality control for the land development division. Brady is a registered professional engineer and holds bachelor and masters degrees at NCSU. His experience includes regional planning, public administration and building construction.

E. Leo Scott has joined RS&H of North Carolina, Inc., as specifications coordinator. Scott has been an architectural specifications writer since 1982, most recently with Flad & Associates of Florida, Inc. He is an active member of the Construction Specifications Institute and holds a bachelor of design degree in architecture from the University of Florida.

Michael R. Tarske has been named an associate in the firm of ENG/Six Associates, Architects, Engineers, Planners, of Asheville.

In the design and construction of the Charlotte Coliseum, architects faced two tough problems. To design a structure with over 80,000 square feet of exterior wall to be inviting and to do it on a limited budget.

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Piedmont Natural Gas is the warm-up act for every show at the new Charlotte Coliseum. And it makes sense, because only one thing is up to the challenge of heating 465,000 square feet under a 120-foot ceiling.

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Nancy C.H. Everhart and J. Kendell Gallaugher have been promoted to associates with Little & Associates Architects of Charlotte. Everhart, with the financial and computer division, joined the firm in 1986 after graduating from UNCC with a bachelor of architecture and has been responsible for designing 26 branch banks and main offices in three states. Gallaugher, AIA, a graduate of Louisiana State University, joined the education division of the firm in 1987. He has 17 years of architectural experience and has been responsible for six middle schools in North Carolina.

John D. Walker has been named an associate with The FWA Group of Charlotte. Walker has a bachelor of architecture degree from the University of Tennessee and joined the firm in 1980 as a professional in training.

Two new staff members have joined O'Brien/Atkins Associates of Research Triangle Park. K.C. Ramsay, AIA, previously director of architecture with Dewberry & Davis in Raleigh, is project manager. He is a graduate of NCSU School of Design and is a past president of the NCAIA Raleigh Section. Kevin C. Montgomery, AIA, most recently with the firm of I.M. Pei & Partners of New York City, is project architect. He is a graduate of Cornell University.

Elizabeth Snipes has joined Bohr-NBBJ of N.C., as director of interior design. She has seven years’ experience in the field and previously worked as project interior designer for O'Brien/Atkins. A graduate of NCSU, with bachelor degrees in environmental design and architecture, Snipes is in the process of becoming a registered architect.

McCulloch England Associates Architects has added three new staff members: P. Gordon Horne, AIA, with a bachelor of environmental design from NCSU, is project architect; David M. Hite, with a master of architecture from Clemson University, is project designer; Carole Clark is marketing coordinator.
Polyurethane Lumber Bends Into Shape

Imaginative Materials Group (IMG) has developed Billee-Bord, a flexible polyurethane lumber that allows framers to construct radius windows and other arched designs by simply bending to the desired shape, into a shape as tight as a 2-foot radius. Billee-Bord can be cut, nailed, painted, screwed and drilled with conventional wood working equipment, and it is available in standard lumber sizes. It is effective for such innovative architectural designs as curved walls, arched doorways, spiral staircases and radius windows. Billee-Bord eliminates drywall and arch- aids on the inside of window openings, leaving a clean, perfect reveal. In addition, it saves labor costs by cutting time by a third on a traditional arched window, for example, and it is energy efficient. For more information, contact Millard Thacker, IMG president, 1580 Industrial Ave., Norco, CA 91760, or phone (714) 279-8033.

New Surveying Instrument Opens Vistas

Cubic Precision Survey Systems Division has introduced the world’s first hand-held surveying instrument with a visible, solid state laser. The device, which requires no reflector, can measure distances to 100 feet with a margin of error no greater than the width of a ball point pen. Users aim the new product, called the Red Dot, at a point to be measured, pull a trigger, and a red laser beam instantly measures the line-of-sight distance. More substances, including wood, brick, stone, metal and even vegetation can serve as measurement targets. Range is easily increased with reflective tape or highway reflectors. Distance measurement of up to 8,400 feet is capable with a single reflector prism. For more information, contact Cubic Precision Survey Systems Division, 1306 S. Washington Street, PO. Box 821, Tullahoma, TN 37388, or phone 1 (800) 251-1171.

Ready-Made Architectural Accents are “Like-Wood”

Russell Enterprises has developed a selection of architectural accents of high-density polyurethane that eliminate many problems with wood, such as shrinking, splitting, warping and insect attack. They include a selection of 25 “Like-Wood” elliptical and half round window headers, mantel and pediment units, with five pediment styles and quarter round gable louvers. In all, more than 500 architectural accents of polyurethane are available. These have a primed and painted coating of Space Age white acrylic paint that serves as a final coat or a prime coat. For more information, contact Russell Enterprises, Dept. AP, 2600 Boyce Plaza Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15241, or phone 1 (800) 376-1076.

Sliding Doors Get Tighter Seal

Intek Weatherseal Products Inc. has introduced a weatherseal system that can make sliding patio doors as energy efficient as hinged doors. The system, called Roll Model, uses a thermoplastic elastomer weatherstrip with Arloc slip coating and a Lexan polycarbonate sill that enables a patio door to roll smoothly and easily but still seal tightly. It also contains interlocks with an integral snap-in weatherstrip for easy installation. The interlocks help hold the stationary and operating panels together, resisting deflection with high wind loads. A new door bottom weatherstrip simplifies the interface and puts all the weatherstrip on a single plane for better sealing. For more information, contact Intek Weatherseal Products Inc., 800 East 10th St., Hastings, MN 55033, or phone (612) 437-7700.
See What Happens
And A Great Building

These are the winners from the 1988 Architectural Brick Design Awards. Each represents an idea brought to life by some of North Carolina's finest architects and architectural firms. A panel of independent judges reviewed work submitted from around the state — and were impressed by the brick in architecture that they saw. Congratulations to the winners, and we hope to see more of your work next year.

AWARD OF HONOR
Walkway and Fountain View
Building/Structure: Moore Square Station
Raleigh, North Carolina
Architectural firm: PDA, P.A.

AWARD OF HONOR
Piers and Fountain View
Building/Structure: Moore Square Station
Raleigh, North Carolina
Architectural firm: PDA, P.A.
When Great Minds Product Get Together.

**AWARD OF HONOR**

Entry View
Building Structure: North Tryon Street Post Office
Charlotte, North Carolina
Architectural firm: Gantt Huberman Architects

**AWARD OF MERIT**

Interior View
Building/Structure: YWCA
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Architectural firm: Edwin Bouldin Architect, P.A.

**AWARD OF HONOR**

Front View
Building/Structure: North Tryon Street Post Office, Charlotte, North Carolina
Architectural firm: Gantt Huberman Architects

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